



Vice Minister for Administration and Finance, Ministry of Women's Affairs, Afghanistan.

Palwasha Kakar, born in Nangarhar, Afghanistan in 1966, serves as a Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Women's Affairs for the Government of Afghanistan. Born to an educated family, Kakar graduated from the faculty of social sciences at Kabul University and became a teacher.

Throughout much of the 1980s and 1990s, Kakar and her family were displaced because of the Soviet occupation or fighting among the Mujahedeen.

When public teaching became impossible, she joined a United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) program and eventually created the only home school for girls in the eastern zone during the Taliban reign.

Because of her activities, her husband was briefly jailed and her family later forced into exile in Pakistan. Back in Afghanistan in 2001, Kakar served again as a Unicef trainer, this time creating the first council of women in the City of Herat.

She then served as program manager in the eastern office (covering the Provinces of Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, and Noristan) of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, where she documented, at great risk to her personal safety, human rights violations and the crimes of warlords during the civil war.

As Deputy Minister, Kakar has been seeking ways to surmount the challenging patriarchal norms which prevail in Afghanistan.

Kakar was awarded a Woman PeaceMaker fellowship in 2006 by the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice of the [University of San Diego](#).