

Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund: Rapid Response Window

*Rapid Response Window on women's participation in peace processes and
the implementation of peace agreements*

Call for Proposals: INGO partners (inception phase)

Deadline for Proposals: Friday 28 May 2021

1. Introduction

Twenty years after the adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), women remain significantly underrepresented in peace and transitional processes. The changing nature of wars, protracted and asymmetrical conflicts, have increased the impacts of conflict on women, putting even more at risk their sense of identity and security within the family, community and beyond. Women's direct participation as decision makers remains the exception rather than the norm. Women from diverse settings, including Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Libya, South Sudan, the Sudan and Yemen have faced and continue to face steep obstacles, direct resistance and great personal risks in their efforts to ensure their participation in processes pertaining to the future of their countries.¹

Women's meaningful participation in peace processes remains one of the most stalled areas in the WPS agenda. Although there is evidence of the value of women's meaningful participation in peace processes and implementation, with the likelihood of reaching peace agreements, implementing those agreements and sustaining peace being significantly higher, women's meaningful participation and gender equality are too often seen as a secondary or apolitical concern to ending the conflict.² As a result, data underline that the vast majority of agreements do not explicitly address gender equality or the rights of women. To spark change, a range of actors need to be influenced, including those who may not see gender equality as central to matters of peace and security.

Diverse women's meaningful participation in peace processes is not only a question of human rights and women's rights, but one of accountability and justice, which are key to a sustainable peace. Engaging with and supporting women civil society organizations is essential to increase community-buy in, bottom up and inclusive decision-making processes to shift dynamics and broaden the issues discussed. Studies have shown that collaboration and knowledge building among diverse women groups, including linkages between women signatories and women civil society groups, contributes to better content of peace agreements and higher implementation rates of agreement provisions. This subsequently contributes to addressing root causes of conflict and supporting women in leading on reconciliation and rebuilding social cohesion, defining security, helping build gender-sensitive infrastructure and much more.

2. About the Rapid Response Window (RRW)

In order to accelerate the implementation of the WPS agenda, in October 2019, in his annual report on WPS,³ the UN Secretary-General called on the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) to open a rapid response window on women's participation in peace negotiations and the implementation of peace agreements.

Building on existing efforts, tools and networks, the RRW addresses funding gaps for women peacebuilders and women's civil society organizations to influence and participate in peace processes. Under the oversight of the

¹ UN Secretary General Women, Peace and Security Annual Report, 9 October 2019, S/2019/800 p.6

² UN Women, Christine Bell (2018), Accessing Political Power: Women and Political Power-Sharing in Peace Processes, p.4

³ S/2019/800 p.37

WPHF's Funding Board's Task Force, the WPHF has taken a participatory approach to setting up the RRW through consultations with women peacebuilders and diverse stakeholders and experts.⁴

The RRW aims to empower women's civil society organizations to define their strategies and lead their initiatives. Its overall objective is to support short-term, strategic initiatives to enhance women's meaningful participation at tracks 1 and 2, during all stages of national, subnational or international peace processes.⁵ The WPHF refers to a 'peace process' as a political process to resolve conflict through peaceful means – usually a mixture of politics, diplomacy, negotiations, mediation and dialogue in different areas. This could include, for example, enhancing women's leadership and engagement in political processes, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs, constitution making, security sector and judicial reforms, ceasefires, and wider post-conflict reconstruction and recovery decision-making processes.

INGO partners of the RRW will support the implementation of successful RRW proposals, including through grant management. The scope for requests for support provided by the RRW is purposely diverse and open to encompass demands to support women's meaningful participation through urgent interventions. While the scope is large, initiatives will be short in duration aiming to address rapidly a specific gap with an identified impact-specific action at different stages. Funding support under the RRW is open to **track 1 and track 2 peace processes in ODA eligible countries**,⁶ beyond the eligible countries for the WPHF.⁷

The RRW contributes to WPHF outcome 4: **increased representation and leadership of women in formal and informal peace processes**.

3. Funding structure of the Rapid Response Window

Flexibility in the type of support, timing and funding amounts is key to responding to women's organizations and women groups' needs to influence and participate in peace processes, both formally and informally, at the national, subnational and international levels, for tracks 1 and 2. The RRW has two funding streams: (i) Direct Support and (ii) Short-Term Grants.

3.1. Direct Support

Direct support means that the RRW directly funds services that contribute to women's participation in peace processes, for example by covering costs for logistics support and/or consultancy services. An organization requests direct support because it has identified a service gap specific to a peace process and can benefit from a punctual intervention to address the gap.

3.2. Short-Term Grants

Short-term grants under the RRW will last a maximum of six months. Grants will be disbursed through the RRW's INGO partners for local and national CSO-led projects that address diverse barriers to women's influence and participation in peace processes or the implementation of a peace agreement.

⁴ This includes women peace activists, CSOs, INGOs, UN Women Country Offices, Women Mediator Network, DPPA, PBSO, MPTFO, UN operations teams on processes, Member States representatives and more.

⁵ **Track 1:** high-level negotiations involving country leadership or governments, often led by the UN or multilateral regional organizations.

Track 2: dialogues or problem-solving workshops involving leading figures in society, often led by mediators or (I)NGOs. Some peace processes take a multi-track approach with activities conducted and/or linked at multiple or all tracks. For more information see *Basics of Mediation* p.3: [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Basics of Mediation.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/Basics%20of%20Mediation.pdf)

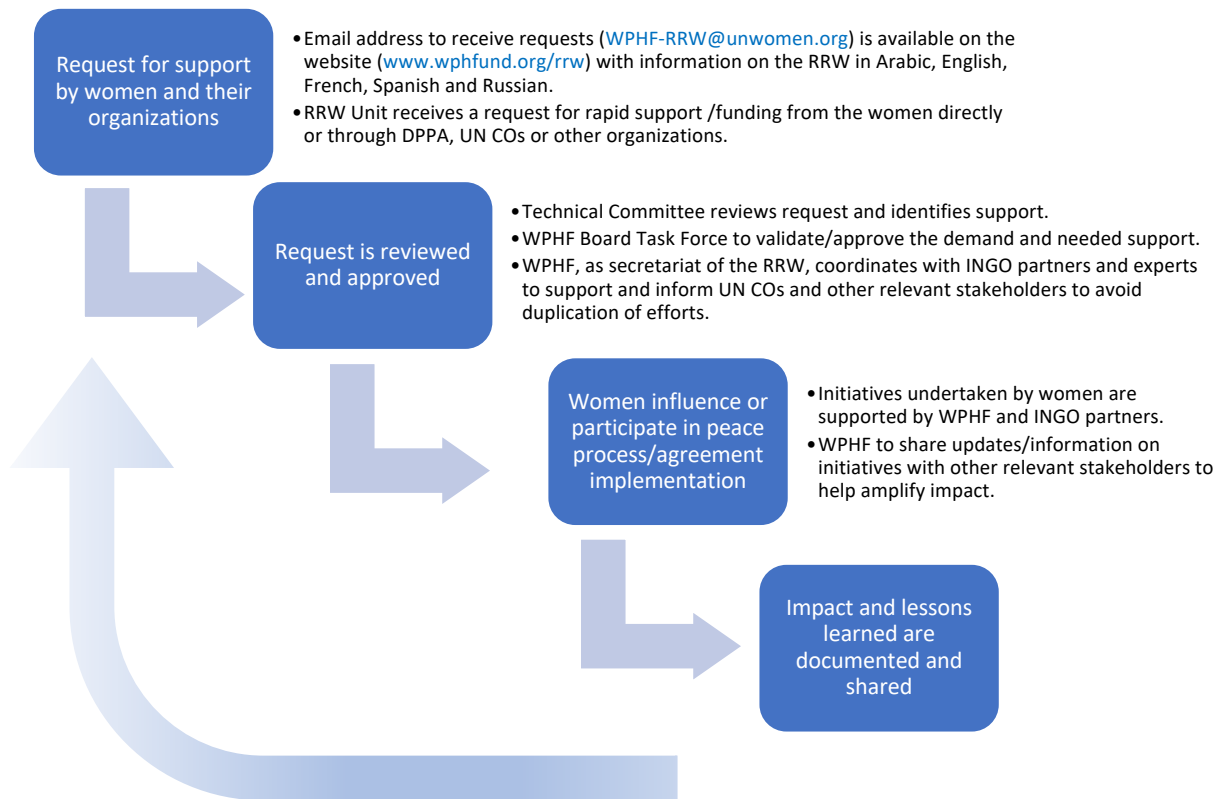
⁶ <http://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm>

⁷ <https://wphfund.org/eligible-countries/>

4. Role of INGOs

Both funding streams – (i) Direct Support and (ii) Short-Term Grants – will benefit from partnership with an established list of INGO partners of the RRW. Partnerships with INGOs are critical in order to identify swiftly the needs and type of support to be provided to local and national NGOs and to ensure the rapid deployment of funds, particularly with regards to the disbursement of short-term grants. The INGO partnerships mechanism of the RRW is currently in an **inception phase**.⁸

Figure 1: overview of the RRW process



4.1. Direct Support

INGO partners may support requests for Direct Support if the specifications of the request align well with an INGO's geographical reach and/or technical strengths. A Technical Committee, including some INGO partners, will feed into the WPHF's decision-making process for Direct Support applications.

Examples of the types of support that INGO partners may provide include:

- Managing logistical arrangements (travel, visa, daily subsistence allowance, childcare, access for persons with disabilities, etc.);
- Provide technical and strategic support.

⁸ Expected to last until December 2021.

4.2. Short-Term Grants

INGO partners will support requests for Short-Term Grants when the specifications of the request align well with an INGO's geographical reach and/or technical strengths. The selected INGO partner will be responsible for managing grant support to the local/national CSO once an application has been successful. A Technical Committee, including some INGO partners, will feed into the WPHF's decision-making process for Short-Term Grants applications.

Examples of the types of support that INGO partners may provide include:

- Grant management, including providing technical and strategic support, capacity-building and guidance, knowledge management, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

4.3. Types of Requests from local and national CSOs

Through both direct support and short-term grants, the RRW will work in partnership with INGOs to finance technical and/or logistical services, activities and initiatives that facilitate women's participation in peace processes and in the implementation of peace agreements. Examples of the types of requests and initiatives include but are not limited to:

- Travel and other logistical support (flights, daily subsistence allowance, childcare, visas, etc.);
- Expertise and technical support to identify entry points and stakeholders, to strategize, access support and connection with key stakeholders for bilateral meetings/consultations/dialogues and more;
- Coaching of women delegates and observers to peace negotiations;
- Advocacy and lobbying campaigns for women's inclusion in peace and political processes;
- Advocacy and lobbying campaigns for women's inclusion in the implementation and monitoring mechanisms of peace agreements;
- Language support including translations of key documents and interpretation in decision-making processes;
- Evidence-based advocacy and collection of data to feed into a process;
- Preparatory sessions and capacity-building for women participating in decision-making processes;
- Consultations and community engagement to feed into a specific process;
- Coalition building and strategizing to influence a specific process;
- Advocacy events and meetings, cross-border dialogues;
- Organizing and drafting participatory declarations/demands to influence decision-making processes.

4.4. INGO partnership types

Applications must specify whether the INGO is applying as a partner to either one or both of the funding streams of the RRW. INGOs will answer this Call for Proposals in **ONE (1)** of the following ways:

- Supporting the implementation of Direct Support
- Supporting the implementation of Short-Term Grants
- Supporting the implementation of both Direct Support and Short-Term Grants

5. Eligibility criteria

INGOs who submit applications to this Call for Proposals will undergo a technical review based on the answers in the Proposal Template.

INGOs applying to be a WPHF RRW partner should be able to demonstrate the following:

5.1. Experience in and commitment to supporting women's meaningful participation in peace processes

The organization should have significant technical expertise on supporting women in fragile and conflict-affected contexts to participate in peace processes and/or the implementation of peace agreements. The organization should demonstrate how their technical expertise has strengthened local and national CSO-led initiatives on this issue.

The organization should have a track record of longstanding commitment to women's influence and meaningful participation in track 1 and track 2 peace processes and/or the implementation of peace agreements.

5.2. Geographic Reach and Languages

The organization should indicate the region(s) in which it works in the Proposal Template⁹ and should have recent experience of working with local and national CSOs in that context on projects relevant to the RRW.

The organization should indicate in which languages it is able to operate.

5.3. Partnerships

The organization should be experienced in practices of equal partnership with and capacity-building of local and national CSOs in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

5.4. Grant-making (only applicable to those supporting the Short-Term Grants stream)

The organization should be experienced in practices of grant-making and sub-granting to local and national CSOs in fragile and conflict-affected contexts.

This includes the ability to release funds and/or provide support in a short timeframe to meet the activity-based needs of their partners who are often operating in crisis contexts. It may also include technical guidance and capacity-strengthening depending on the type of initiative.

5.5. Duration

During the inception phase of RRW INGO partnerships, the organization will work together with the RRW for 1 year. No single civil society project supported through the RRW will last longer than six months, although INGO partners may support several RRW projects at one time.

5.6. Budget

The total budget requested by the INGO should not exceed 400,000 USD.

5.7. Registration

The organization should be a legally registered entity whose vision and mission have an international scope. RRW INGO partners may be legally registered anywhere. **Proof of legal registration (or legal status) is required.**

6. When, where and how to apply

6.1. Submitting your application

- Applications to the inception call for INGO partners should be received by **18:00 (New York/US Eastern Time) on Friday 28 May 2021.**

⁹ Africa (excluding MENA); Americas; Asia & Pacific; Europe & Central Asia; Middle East & North Africa

- Application documents should be submitted in **.doc, .docx, or .pdf** format. No other formats will be accepted.
- Applications are only accepted in **English**.
- Application packages should be emailed to: WPHF-RRW@unwomen.org.
- The WPHF will acknowledge receipt of application through a confirmation email. If you do not receive the confirmation email within 2 working days, please contact the WPHF.
- Only shortlisted applications will be contacted for next steps.
- You may **not** make changes to your application after it is submitted.

6.2. Checklist: components of the application package

- Proposal fully completed – *mandatory*
- Proof of valid legal registration or status of the organization – *mandatory*

6.3. Evaluation criteria

As you write your application, please keep in mind that proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Institutional Commitments and Capabilities

- Alignment with and commitment to WPHF outcome 4 – increased leadership and representation of women in peace processes – and the RRW's objective to support women's participation in peace processes and in the implementation of peace agreements.
- Technical expertise and experience relevant to women's influence and meaningful participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements.
- Geographic reach and language capability.
- Experience in practices of equal partnership and capacity-building.
- Experience as a grant-making organization and in equal partnerships with local and national CSOs (*only applicable to INGOs proposing partnership support that includes the Short-Term Grants stream*).

Programme Management and Monitoring

- Experience in and understanding of Do No Harm Approach for women peacebuilders and WHRDs engaged in initiatives who face additional security risks.
- Identified risks and mitigation measures.
- Clear monitoring and evaluation methodology and resources.
- Knowledge management experience.

Budget

- Proposal budget falls within the funding limits of the Call for Proposals.
- The indirect costs are lower than or equal to 7%.

7. Useful resources

- The WPHF's website www.wphfund.org
- The WPHF's page on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office's Gateway: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>

- The WPHF's Twitter account: [@wphfund](https://twitter.com/wphfund)
- M&E and Results Based Management Terms. The OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation available in English, French and Spanish. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf>

8. About the WPHF

Composed of representatives from donors, United Nations entities, and civil society organizations, the WPHF is a global pooled funding mechanism which aims to re-energize action and stimulate a significant increase in financing for women's participation, leadership and empowerment in peace and security processes and humanitarian response. The WPHF is a flexible and rapid funding mechanism. It supports quality interventions by civil society organizations designed to enhance the capacity of local women to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities.

The WPHF breaks silos between humanitarian, peace, security, and development finance by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership, and empowerment across all phases of crisis, peace and security, and development. It addresses structural funding gaps for women's participation in key phases of crisis, peace and security, and development by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance. Notably, it will ensure a timely investment in conflict prevention after receipt of early warning signals from women and will accelerate the dispersal of development assistance after successful peace negotiations. It recognizes that peace cannot be created nor sustained without investment in civil society organizations. Therefore, the WPHF invests in strengthening civil society organizations, particularly in grassroots women's organizations, with the required financial and technical support.

The overall goal of the WPHF's theory of change is to achieve **peaceful and gender equal societies**. Achievement of this goal requires that women are empowered to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding, and recovery. Since its launch in 2016, the WPHF has supported over 200 civil society organizations and is present in 20 countries or groups of countries.

The WPHF is governed by a Funding Board at the global level, which comprises four UN entities (currently UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and PBSO), four donor Member States (currently Austria, Canada, the European Union, and Germany), as well as four civil society organisations (currently ActionAid International, ICAN, GPPAC, and the Women's Refugee Commission).

UN Women acts as the WPHF's Technical Secretariat at the global level. The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) is the administrative agent for the Fund.