

Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
Call for Proposals for I/NGO Partner for the WHRDs window in Asia and the Pacific

Call Opens	10 February 2023
Deadline for Submissions	10 March 2023
Apply at	WPHF-WHRD@unwomen.org

1. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is seeking to identify a credible and experienced international, regional, or national Non-Governmental Organization (I/NGO) which can support its Women Human Rights Defender (WHRD) Window in providing emergency financial support to WHRDs from and/or working in conflict and crisis contexts in Asia and the Pacific, notably Afghanistan and Myanmar.

The call for proposals contributes to WPHF's Impact Area 5 of ***Enhanced safety, security and mental health of women and girls' and their human rights respected***, and which will track and measure:

1. Number of WHRDs supported through flexible funding (by country of origin)¹;
2. Amount of funding transferred to WHRDs (by country of origin); and
3. Types of support, guidance or referrals provided to WHRDs.

In the first six months of full operations, WHRD Window has received a significant number of applications from Afghanistan and Myanmar. To respond effectively to this demand, the WPHF is looking to strengthen collaborations with I/NGOs with regional expertise and strong connections with women / human rights defenders in Asia and the Pacific, to support WHRDs from and/or working in crisis and conflict situations this region. The WPHF is therefore inviting I/NGOs with experience supporting women/ human rights defenders and peace activists in fragile and conflict-affected contexts in Asia and the Pacific to apply for this opportunity. Organizations need to have a proven track record working on women's and human rights, following feminist and human-rights-based principles, addressing protection issues of women and girls, and transferring money quickly and safely to WHRDs at risk.

2. ABOUT THE WOMEN'S PEACE AND HUMANITARIAN FUND (WPHF)

Composed of representatives from donors, United Nations entities, and civil society organizations, 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 aims to be rapid and flexible, in advancing 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

¹ Please refer to Annex A of the proposal template for the results framework and associated results and indicators.

investment in civil society organizations. Therefore, the WPHF invests in strengthening civil society, particularly at the grassroots level, with the required financial and technical support.

The overall goal of the WPHF's theory of change is to contribute to **peaceful and gender equal societies**. Achievement of this goal will require that women are empowered to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding, and recovery. Since its launch in 2016, WPHF has been supporting over 900 civil society organizations and is present in 32 countries or group of countries through 24 funding allocations.

3. ABOUT THE WPHF WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS WINDOW

WHRDs face many threats and challenges in conflict and post-conflict areas. They face increased risk of violence by state and non-state actors because they challenge entrenched political power structures, gendered power relations, patriarchal notions of the role of women in the family and society, and toxic masculinities. WHRDs are at higher risk of experiencing sexual violence and rape and are targets of femicide, sexual violence, attacks against their sexual and familial reputations, violence within the home and the organizations where they work, and gender-based travel bans. In 2021, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights verified 29 cases of killings of women human rights defenders, journalists, and trade unionists in eight conflict-affected countries. Even this figure is believed to be a huge undercount.² When WHRDs face targeted violence, it is often with the aim of discrediting their work and deterring, or forcibly excluding them from a decision-making process.

In January 2022, the WPHF launched a specific WHRD Window to address the gaps in support to WHRDs from and/or working in conflict and crisis-affected countries. The Window's overall objective is to assist WHRDs in these settings by providing flexible funding that assists their protection and increases their advocacy efforts to promote women's rights and reflect women's needs in political decision-making, peacebuilding, and humanitarian response. In order for this Window to remain flexible and adapt to the evolving needs of WHRDs, their voices are kept at the core of its design and response. In 2022 alone, the Window received over 1,400 proposals from WHRDs in 60 countries.

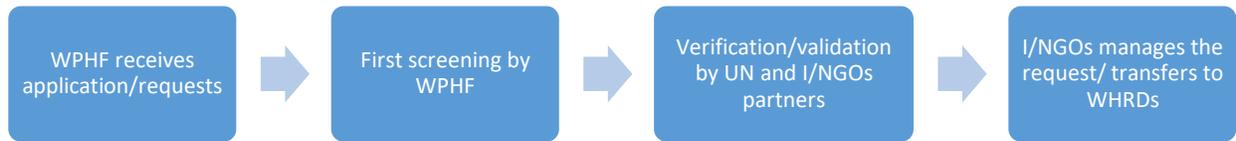
The WHRD Window offers two types of support an Advocacy Support Stream and Safety Net Stream. While the WPHF WHRD Unit provides direct logistical support to WHRDs' advocacy initiatives through the Advocacy Support Stream, the WPHF is seeking I/NGO partners to support implementation of emergency grant-making to WHRDs through the Safety Net stream.

3.2 Safety Net Stream (Flexible Funding)

The Safety Net stream provides emergency and flexible funding, currently in partnership with five INGOs, to WHRDs who are at risk in conflict and crisis-affected countries as a result of their work. This funding stream provides grants of up to USD 10,000, covering costs such as short-term livelihood and protection expenses, including, equipment (computers, security cameras, security software), internet, health/psycho-social assistance, legal assistance, accommodation, and relocation costs.

² UN Security Council (2022), the Report of the Secretary General on Women Peace and Security, para. 10

Flow chart to demonstrate Safety Net response mechanism



3.3 WHRDs Eligible under the Safety Net Stream

Human rights defenders are identified above all by what they do, and it is through a description of their actions, and the contexts in which they work, that the term can be best explained.³ WHRDs can be defined as women, or those who identify as women, who individually or in association with others, formally or informally, act to promote or protect human rights -including women's rights- in a peaceful manner. These individuals are particularly at risk when they challenge systems linked to violence, such as political power structures, gendered power relations, and patriarchal notions of the role of women in the family and society.

Under the Safety Net Stream, the WHRD Window supports WHRDs at risk from and/or working in conflict and crisis-affected countries, either in their country of origin or who remain at risk in exile, and who align with the following criteria:

- **Gender:** woman or identifies as a woman.
- **Age:** 18 years old and above.
- **Country of origin:** from and/or working in conflict and crisis-affected contexts, either in the country or relocated due to risks.⁴
- **Human rights activities:** have been peacefully leading human rights activities in or for their community, either individually or through a civil society organization.
- **Threats and risks :**
 - Demonstrate current or recent serious security risks, for herself and/or her dependents, because of her commitment to human rights and peace; and/or;
 - Demonstrate that risks are or have been such that her ability to sustain her participation in defending human rights and peace is threatened.

4. CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Due to the high number of Safety Net requests coming from Asia and the Pacific, particularly Afghanistan and Myanmar, the WHRD Window is looking to bring on board one or more additional I/NGOs to support the protection of WHRDs from/working in crisis and conflict-affected countries in this region.

³ OHCHR, Fact Sheet No.29, Human Rights Defenders: Protecting the Right to Defend Human Rights, p 2.

⁴ See for reference countries that might be eligible for support: List of matters of which the UN Security Council is seized: S/2022/10: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3952526?ln=en>

4.1 Role of I/NGO Partners

I/NGOs are critical in the delivery of the WHRD Window Safety Net operations to ensure the rapid deployment of funds to WHRDs. The roles and responsibilities of the I/NGOs will include:

- Verifying and assessing applications
- Managing rapid transfer of funds to WHRDs to address their protection needs
- Ongoing financial management and reporting of progress
- Providing any strategic support, guidance, and on-going communication with WHRDs
- Providing logistical support, referrals and/or linking WHRDs to support services
- Communicating and liaising with the WPHF, to increase efficiency of the WHRD Window and participation in an annual evaluation
- Participating in monthly coordination calls with all Safety Net NGO partners, to discuss challenges and opportunities
- Participating in quarterly calls with WPHF to update on progress, discuss challenges and lessons learned
- Contributing to knowledge management, as well as communication efforts to increase visibility of the Window and its importance

4.2 Duration of Partnership

The partnership with WPHF will be for an initial period of 12-month period. This partnership may be renewable.

4.3 Size of Grants and Funding Amount

The WPHF will grant a maximum of **\$400,000 USD** to an I/NGO and up to **\$700,000 USD** for a consortium of I/NGOs, to deliver the activities outlined in 4.1. This includes all costs related to the management of the support, including communications and logistics, monitoring and reporting, and a contribution to staff costs. Applicants are not required to contribute to the budget. The majority of this budget should be used for grants awarded directly to WHRDs (up to USD 10,000 per request).

4.4 Eligibility of I/NGOS

International, regional or national Non-Governmental Organizations which have experience working with WHRDs in fragile and conflict-affected contexts in Asia and the Pacific - specifically in Afghanistan and Myanmar - are eligible to apply. Organizations need to have a proven track record working on women's rights, following feminist and human-rights based principles, addressing violence against women and girls, and protection issues of women and girls. Organizations with language capabilities relevant to Afghanistan and Myanmar will be a distinct asset.

The following are NOT eligible to apply:

- Government agencies or institutions;
- UN agencies or UN Country Teams;
- Private individuals;
- Private sector entities;
- Universities and Education institutions

Proof of legal registration (or legal status) will be required. Applications without clear proof of legal status will be considered incomplete and will be withdrawn from the application process. Note that articles of incorporation are **not** proof of legal status.

4.5 Qualifications and Evaluation Criteria for Selection

A technical evaluation of proposals will be conducted, and will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Institutional Commitments and Capabilities

- Organization's mandate aligns with WPHF Outcome 5: Protection of Women and Girls and experience in supporting WHRDs and peace activists in fragile and conflict-affected contexts
- Experience as an emergency grant-making organization, including to individuals in crises and conflict-affected contexts.
- Proven track record of being able to transfer money quickly to support the safeguarding of women at risk, as well as the provision of referrals for additional relevant support services
- Technical expertise and experience relevant to women's protection issues
- Geographic reach inside conflict and crisis-affected countries in Asia and the Pacific, particularly in Afghanistan and Myanmar
- Language capabilities are an asset, particularly those relevant to Afghanistan and Myanmar

Program Management and Monitoring

- Experience in and understanding of 'do no harm' approach for WHRDs engaged in initiatives who face heightened security risks
- Experience identifying risks and mitigation measures, including data protection and security
- Clear monitoring, evaluation and reporting approach

Budget

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

5. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- WPHF will hold an information session on Thursday 23 February at 13:30 Geneva (07:30 EST). Register your interest for the webinar at: WPHF-WHRD@unwomen.org with the subject line of: **WPHF-WHRD I/NGO Partnership CFP Information Session.**
- Application packages can be downloaded from the WPHF website at: <https://wphfund.org/call-for-proposals-for-i-ngo-partner-in-asia-and-the-pacific/> and submission must include:
 - WPHF Proposal Template
 - Results Framework (Proposal Template Annex: A)
 - Project Budget (Proposal Template Annex: B)
 - Proof of valid legal registration
- Application packages should be emailed to WPHF-WHRD@unwomen.org with the subject line of: **WPHF-WHRD I/NGO Partnership CFP** no later than **10 March 2023, at 11:59 EST**. Applications received after that date will not be considered.
- Applications are requested in **English**.

- Applications can be submitted in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. No other formats will be accepted. Legal registration certificates can be submitted in jpeg, doc., docx., or pdf format. All documents should be submitted together as one package.
- Changes to your application after submission are not permitted.
- WPHF will accept questions related to this proposal until **7 March 2023**. Please allow a minimum of 48 hours for responses to any questions. Email questions to WPHF-WHRD@unwomen.org with the subject line of: **WPHF-WHRD I/NGO Partnership CFP Questions**.
- WPHF will aim to acknowledge receipt of the application within three days of receipt. Please **DO NOT** resend your application, unless you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within three days.
- **Only** shortlisted applications will be contacted for next steps.

6. USEFUL RESOURCES

- WPHF website <https://wphfund.org/>
- The WPHF WHRDs website <https://wphfund.org/whrds/>
- WPHF page on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office's Gateway: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>
- [WPHF Operations Manual \(2021\)](#)
- WPHF Twitter account: [@wphfund](https://twitter.com/wphfund)