



FOOD SECURITY FUNDING APPEAL

USD 55 MILLION



Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund

A United Nations & Civil Society Partnership

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Background

With seven years remaining to end hunger,¹ food insecurity, and all forms of malnutrition and to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world is moving in the wrong direction. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) estimates, 345.2 million people are projected to be food insecure in 2023 – more than double the number in 2020².

Food insecurity is not gender neutral and neither are its impacts. Armed conflicts, soaring inflation and economic shocks, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and displacement – underlying drivers of the increase in food insecurity – impact women harder than men, driving millions to the brink of starvation. In fact, in 2021 150 million more women than men were food insecure worldwide; a vast increase from the 18 million gender gap in 2018.³ Around the world, food insecurity and its impact on livelihoods are creating ripple effects for women and girls, including health and safety risks, increased sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and decreasing access to education. Women are forced to bear the double burden of employment and household responsibilities, becoming breadwinners as their husbands migrate in search of alternative means of subsistence.

Despite this alarming situation, only 4% of 84 global policies and plans designed to address hunger published between September 2020 and December 2021 refer to women as leaders who can play a role in food security, with 39% overlooking women entirely.⁴ Strengthening the capacities of women civil society leaders and local women's organizations is critical for the advancement of food security. Not only to empower women to increase their agency and become integral actors in their communities, but also to ensure women have key roles in food systems, access to all productive resources and decision-making in their communities. They are crucial in ensuring inclusive and gender-responsive policies, planning and response in humanitarian food assistance and applying a gender lens to the effects and impacts of conflicts on food security and vice versa.

WPHF Response

Civil Society Partners of the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) are already implementing activities contributing to food security in crisis contexts, such as enabling access to knowledge on modern gardening techniques and resilient crops, resulting in stable income for women, or providing startup grants for farmers to scale their agricultural activities. Yet, much more remains to be done.

To ensure a demand-driven and holistic response to the global food crisis, in 2022 the WPHF undertook a short survey among previous and current partners from civil society organizations (CSO) in targeted countries to hear directly from local women's rights and women-led organizations on their role in responding to food insecurity in crisis and conflict settings and to understand the needs of communities facing food insecurity. Findings revealed that women's rights organizations see themselves as having a critical role in contributing to improved food security, not only because women are custodians of food and food preparation in their households, but because of their roles as advocates for more gender-responsive food systems and equal land rights. They specifically highlighted that the role of women's rights organizations range from capacity building in modern agriculture techniques, supporting small enterprises, advocacy in women's involvement in food production systems, advocacy with government on food policies and strategies which integrate the specific needs of women and girls, addressing the impacts of food insecurity such as SGBV and intra-community conflict, and facilitating access to agriculture inputs and financial services to improve incomes. A striking 98% of respondents said that they are ready to take on leadership roles in food security issues.

As a response, the WPHF aims to invest in programmatic and institutional funding for local women's civil society organizations that advance women and girls' agency, participation, leadership, and decision-making in conflict prevention, crisis response and recovery in the global fight against food insecurity.

WPHF's Funding appeal (2023-2025): USD 55 million

In this context, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund is launching an urgent funding appeal for up to USD 55 million to support local women's organizations' leadership in responding to rising food insecurity as the world faces a global hunger crisis, within the peace-humanitarian-food security-gender equality nexus. The following WPHF impact areas have been identified as priority needs:

- ▶ **WPHF Impact Area 3** (Humanitarian & Crisis Response): Enhanced participation and leadership of women in response to the food security crisis.
- ▶ **WPHF Impact Area 6** (Peacebuilding & Recovery): Improved socio-economic recovery and political participation of women and young women in peacebuilding contexts

WPHF's Food Security Response consists of a Call for Proposal open to women's organizations that can respond to hunger and food insecurity in the eligible countries.

National and local women-led, women's rights, feminist, or civil society organizations with a proven track record working with women and girls on food security, will be eligible to apply. In particular, grassroots and local community-based organizations will be encouraged to participate. Consortiums of organizations and partnerships will be allowed and encouraged.

The Call for Proposal will make funding available for CSOs to strengthen women's participation and leadership in food security as it intersects with the peace-humanitarian-development nexus through programmatic allocations from USD 30,000 to USD 200,000 per project, and institutional funding to help sustain and strengthen women's organizations focused on addressing food security with grants between USD 2,500 and USD 30,000 per project.

"Women and girls hold the key to fighting famine."

Reena Ghelani, UN Famine Prevention and Response Coordinator

Eligible countries

Amongst the WPHF list of eligible countries, **15 countries in 4 regions** have very high, high and moderate levels of concern for acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and higher),⁵ making them priority areas for funding. These countries are:

- ▶ Ethiopia
- ▶ South Sudan
- ▶ Somalia
- ▶ Yemen
- ▶ Nigeria
- ▶ Afghanistan
- ▶ Sudan
- ▶ Burundi
- ▶ Niger
- ▶ Uganda
- ▶ Malawi
- ▶ Haiti
- ▶ Mali
- ▶ Central African Republic
- ▶ Democratic Republic of the Congo

Management Arrangements

As per WPHF procedures, a global Call for Proposals will be prepared and launched by the WPHF Secretariat in close coordination with the UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and a UN agency, who will act as Management Entity in the grant-making process. The Call will detail the nature and scope of the funding and types of interventions that are encouraged.

The WPHF Global Secretariat will conduct the technical review and assessment of all proposals received, and at country level, the WPHF National Steering Committees will be responsible for the final selection of proposals for their respective country. The WPHF Secretariat, together with the UN Management Entities will ensure quality monitoring and reporting on projects as well as linkages with the UN, civil society, networks of women, and member states. The organisations selected through the Call for Proposals will also be included in WPHF's Community of Practice to learn from and exchange best practices with other WPHF partners.

References

¹ According to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Goal 2 "Zero Hunger" seeks sustainable solutions to end hunger in all its forms by 2030 and to achieve food security.

² [World Food Programme, 2023.](#)

³ Care International, [HER VOICE: Listening to Women in Action](#), 2023.

⁴ Care International, [Food Security and Gender Equality: A synergistic understudied symphony](#), 2022.

⁵ Based on a classification from the USAID-funded Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET). See [FEWS NET, 2022](#) and <https://fews.net/> for more.

⁶ As per the FEWS NET classification, see 5.

About WPHF

The United Nations Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) mobilizes critical support for local and grassroots civil society organizations working on women, peace and security and humanitarian action. WPHF is a flexible and rapid financing mechanism supporting quality interventions designed to enhance the capacity of women to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities. Since its launch in 2016, WPHF has funded over 930 local women's organizations working to support women to be a force for crisis response and lasting peace in 41 countries. In addition, WPHF has supported the participation and the protection of over 100 women human rights defenders and women peacebuilders in 17 countries.