

April 2025

WPHF IN SYRIA

BACKGROUND

Syria continues to face deep humanitarian challenges after more than 13 years of conflict, exacerbated by economic collapse, prolonged displacement, drought, and the lasting impacts of COVID-19. As of 2025, an estimated 16.7 million people require humanitarian assistance, with over 7 million internally displaced. More than 12 million people face acute food insecurity, and over 90% of the population lives in poverty. Women and girls — particularly those heading households or living in displacement — face heightened risks of gender-based violence, poverty, and exclusion from services, livelihoods, and decision-making spaces.

The fall of the Assad regime in late 2024 marked a historic turning point and has opened limited, but meaningful space for civic engagement and dialogue. Civil society organizations, including women-led groups, are beginning to reassert their role in shaping Syria's future. However, the transition remains fragile, with localized violence, power struggles, and instability posing ongoing threats to safety and accountability. Women human rights defenders (WHRDs) and peacebuilders continue to operate in a high-risk environment, requiring protection and support.

Despite these obstacles, Syrian women's rights organizations remain at the forefront of humanitarian response, recovery, and peacebuilding efforts. Yet, the funding gap for women-led initiatives is growing, limiting their ability to scale impact and respond to rising needs and threats. Continued and flexible support — including for digital access, protection, and local leadership — is critical to sustaining and expanding their contributions in this new and uncertain chapter for Syria.

ALIGNING FUNDING WITH NEEDS

Recognizing the pivotal role of women in peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts, WPHF aims to address funding gaps faced by local women's CSOs in Syria, emphasizing the urgent need for strengthening the leadership, inclusion and decision-making of local women's organizations in humanitarian planning and response and the protection of women and girls.

FOCUS AREAS¹:

Institutional Funding To strengthen the institutional capacity and sustainability of organizations.

Programmatic Funding:



Outcome 3: Humanitarian & Crisis Response

To enhancing participation and leadership of local women's organizations in humanitarian planning and response.



Outcome 5: Protection of Women and Girls

To enhance safety, security and mental health of women and girls' and their human rights are respected.

WPHF BY THE NUMBERS: SYRIA

18

projects implemented by 21 civil society organizations (57% women's rights/led and 10% youth focused/young women led). Of which:

- ▶ 29% support survivors of SGBV
- ▶ 18% support populations who are forcibly displaced
- ▶ 12% support people living with disabilities
- ▶ 18% target adolescents and youth

78%

of projects are implemented at the local/community level

2.49

million USD allocated to date in support of local women peacebuilders, human rights defenders, and humanitarians since the fund's establishment in 2016

47%

of CSOs financed for the first time through the UN

57,679

(97% women and girls) direct beneficiaries reached as of December 2024

Estimated needs of local women's CSOs in Syria: \$5 MILLION USD

WPHF RESPONSE IN SYRIA

Active in Syria since 2022, WPHF has supported 18 projects involving 21 local women's organizations, and 16 WHRDs, through all its funding mechanisms, with a total investment of 2.59 million USD. These initiatives are dedicated to empowering women leaders and their organizations in humanitarian and crisis response following the earthquake, conflict resolution, and enhancing the protection of women and girls.

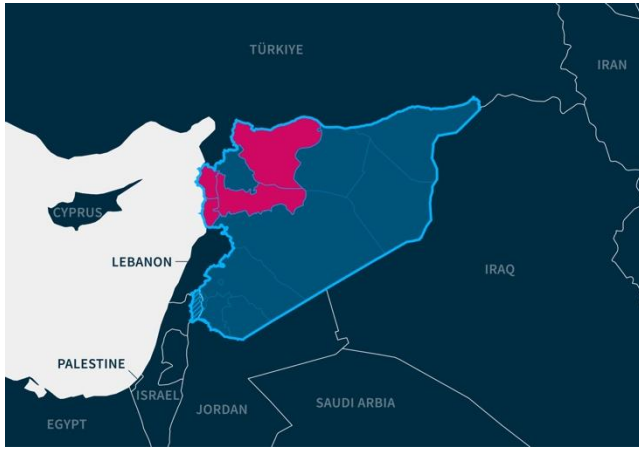


Some of us don't have the luxury to go to our governments and reach out for support, and many of the countries in the Global South don't have youth representation. Funds such as WPHF, which supports youth civil society organizations and young women peacebuilders working in conflict and crisis-affected countries, are the only way we can exist.

Ruby
WHRD from Syria

¹Outcomes 3 and 5 are current priority outcomes for funding in Syria's Country Allocation Proposal, pending finalization.

WPHF PRESENCE IN SYRIA



REGULAR FUNDING CYCLE

Active in Syria since 2020, the Regular Funding Cycle has launched two Call for Proposals through its emergency track supporting 14 CSOs and their projects with a total investment of 1.9 million USD. To date, 57,157 people (97% women and girls) have directly benefited from humanitarian response and the protection of women and girls from these CSO partners.

Key Results (2023-2024):

- **Women enhanced their participation in decision-making in humanitarian and crisis response.** Since 2023, 94 women and young women enhanced their participation in decision making in humanitarian and crisis response after the earthquake and the country's continuing crisis. This has involved the development of crisis plans due to the recent influx of Lebanese refugees to Syria, and the implementation of several community initiatives that have increased social cohesion, particularly at displacement response centers.
- **Increased access to sexual and reproductive health services in humanitarian settings for women and young women.** In 2024, over 13,000 women and young women accessed SRH services as well as menstrual hygiene kits to support menstrual hygiene through mobile teams in Qurdaha, Banyas, and Aleppo, which also provided reproductive health services and information. These services have helped reduce anxiety and stress related to pregnancy or reproductive health issues by also offering psychosocial support. SRHR services as well as access to medical care to 3,316 women and adolescents was also provided, enhancing the health autonomy of women and young women to make informed decisions about their reproductive health.
- **Strengthened leadership by youth in addressing crisis and conflict.** 147 youth (70% young women) have actively taken up leadership positions in the planning and implementation of local initiatives to promote social inclusion of youth impacted by the crisis. The establishment of a youth-friendly space in Jableh has provided a safe space for over 800 youth to engage in and create an environment for peer-led awareness initiatives for youth in the region.
- **Enhanced economic empowerment of women and access to essential health services.** Approximately 140 vulnerable women improved their vocational and

interpersonal skills, which equipped them to successfully enter the labor market and achieve economic self-sufficiency amidst the ongoing crisis. Additionally, over 6,000 women and girls received reproductive health and psychosocial support, focusing on antenatal care, family planning, STI treatment, and GBV awareness.

- **Improved Institutional Capacity and Continuity through Institutional Funding.** Through institutional funding, two organizations have retained 66 staff who were at risk of losing their positions through the payment of salaries and operational expenses for their organizations in order to continue their mandates. This has enabled the organizations to develop and update humanitarian management plans, safeguarding policies, human resource policies, continue resource mobilization with other donors, and strengthen their internal capacity through staff training on project and financial management.

RAPID RESPONSE WINDOW ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PEACE PROCESSES AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE AGREEMENTS (RRW)

Active in Syria since 2022, the RRW has directly supported four short-term grants with 6 CSOs, and three direct support initiatives focused on enhancing women's active participation in peace processes. To date, over 509 people have directly benefited from interventions in Syria as a result of women peacebuilders participation.

Key Results:

- The Centre for Civil Society and Democracy (CCSD), in partnership with ICAN, increased women's participation in Syria's Constitution-making process, and amplified their voices in key international forums such as the UN General Assembly, bridging the gap between women in Syria and the ongoing global political and peace processes outside the country.
- Dawlaty enhanced the participation and advocacy efforts of women on arbitrary detention and forced displacement through direct support to share key recommendations with UN Member States in New York and Washington, D.C., contributing to the adoption of a UN resolution on June 26, 2023, that recognizes the impact of missing persons on women, and welcomes the work of survivor, family groups, and women's organizations, in their work towards seeking truth and accountability.
- Through direct support, the Syrian Women Political Movement (SWPM) met with UN Special Envoy for Syria in Geneva, as well as the president of the Syrian Negotiation Commission, and other key stakeholders from the UN to discuss women's inclusion in peace and political processes involving Syria. During Women, Peace and Security week in October 2024, SWPM representatives also travelled to New York to meet with representatives from Canada, the Netherlands, Iraq, Norway, Slovenia, Denmark, and Pakistan to advocate for advancing UNSCR 2254 and particularly women's role in all political processes in Syria.

WINDOW ON WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

In Syria, through its Safety Net Stream, the WPHF Window on WHRDs has provided protection grants to 14 WHRDs (36% young women between 18 and 29 years), including their 30 dependents, who have faced arbitrary arrest and detention, judicial harassment, intimidation, harassment against family members, and threats to stop their activism. These WHRDs have been financially supported for relocation, livelihood costs, access to medical care, equipment and with legal assistance to continue their work as activists. This support proved key to preserving their safety and sustaining the fundamental work as WHRDs. In addition, through its Advocacy Stream, the Window on WHRDs has supported a young WHRD to attend the Women Deliver conference at CSW67 in Belgium, providing opportunity for her to highlight and to advocate for the issues of young refugee women.

GLOBAL LEARNING HUB

Since 2020, the [WPHF Global Learning Hub \(L-HUB\)](#) fostered capacity strengthening, knowledge sharing and movement building across the global network of supported CSO partners through online events, dissemination of knowledge resources, peer learning grants, and in-person global convenings. All of WPHF partners have access to the L-HUB's tools and opportunities even after the end of their projects. In addition, to date, the L-HUB has funded 42 peer learning and mentorship grants over \$411,000 USD with 84 CSOs to support their growth, resilience and coalition building across the world.

Key Results:

- Nine CSOs from Syria have engaged at least once in the L-HUB training or peer exchange webinars since 2022. In addition, two CSOs from Syria have shared their expertise as speakers at a L-HUB peer exchange webinar on feminist peace processes and at the [Berlin Global Women's Forum for Peace and Humanitarian Action in 2023](#), and one WHRD from Syria has facilitated a training webinar on public speaking skills in 2024.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

WPHF is supporting women-led and women's rights civil-society organizations in Syria, such as:

- **Altigana Organization for Developing Women Skills Syrian Youth Council (SYC)** aimed to respond to women and girls' emergency and basic needs in the aftermath of the earthquake through psychosocial, protection, health support, as well as professional skills development, including workshops and small grants. SYC established a Youth Friendly Space (YFS) in Jableh, Lattakia, the only one in the city, equipped with training materials and resources to create an enabling and innovative environment for young women and men. As a result, 846 youth (557 young women and 289 young men) used the center and a youth volunteer network was formed. Following awareness raising sessions, workshops, and vocational trainings, 10 small grants were awarded to nine young women and one young man for the establishment of small businesses, enhancing both their entrepreneurial skills and increasing their ability to provide for themselves and their families. Additionally, 1,141 women and girls accessed GBV response services and referrals.
- **Sanad Youth for Development Organization (SANAD)** aimed to strengthen their organizational capacities to better respond to crises and improve their response for Syrian women and girls who were affected by the earthquake. As a result of institutional funding, they developed gender-inclusive protection, risk management, financial and HR policies and procedures, and strengthened the capacities of their staff and volunteers through disaster and crisis management and protection awareness workshops. They also introduced new technological tools and developed a database to improve project and beneficiary data management and protection.
- **Mosaic for Relief and Humanitarian Development (MOSAIC)** aimed to enhance the protection of earthquake affected women and girls' rights, including pregnant and lactating women, displaced persons, girls under the marital age, and those at risk, through the establishment of a center and integrated mobile teams. As a result, 827 women and girls have increased access to sexual and reproductive health services, mental health and psychosocial support, and GBV prevention services through the newly established center and mobile teams, 77% of whom are more aware of their rights and self-protection mechanisms against discrimination.

HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THE PROTECTION AND WORK OF WOMEN LEADERS IN SYRIA?

- Contribute to closing the funding gap of USD 5 million for women's initiatives through WPHF's Response in Syria by the end of 2025.
- Amplify the Voices of Our Partners: [Watch](#) and share the human rights defenders we support as they call on the world to [#InvestInWomen](#) and their transformational work on the front lines.
- Advocate for increased recognition and support of WPHF initiatives in Syria and globally, especially in conflict and crisis-affected areas.

EXPLORE THESE RESOURCES TO FIND OUT MORE

[Syria Country Overview](#)

[Amplify the voices of WPHF partners in Syria:](#)

- [Ruby Haji Naif, Women Now for Development](#)



WPHF IN ACTION

OUR VISION TO ENHANCE SUPPORT FOR WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINES

The United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is a multi-partner trust fund mobilizing urgently needed financing for local women's organizations and WHRDs working on the frontlines to respond to crisis and build lasting peace. Guided by a range of civil society, government, and UN actors, WPHF supports women and their local organizations in fragile settings around the world across six outcome areas through three key funding mechanisms:

1

Regular Funding Cycle

Provides institutional and programmatic funding to local civil society organizations to support their work on women, peace and security and humanitarian action.

2

Rapid Response Window for Women and Peace Processes

Addresses short-term strategic interventions aiming at ensuring or strengthening women's meaningful participation in track 1 and track 2 peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements.

3

Funding Window for Women Human Rights Defenders

Supports the advocacy and the protection of women peacebuilders, humanitarian responders and human rights activists from crisis countries.

WPHF GLOBAL LEARNING HUB

Learn more about the WPHF Global Learning Hub (L-HUB), an innovative initiative providing training, knowledge exchange, mentoring opportunities and resources for women's rights organizations and individual women human rights defenders receiving WPHF support worldwide.



[WPHFUND.ORG/L-HUB](https://wphfund.org/l-hub)

JOIN THE WPHF [#INVESTINWOMEN](#) GLOBAL CAMPAIGN AT [WPHFUND.ORG/INVESTINWOMEN](https://wphfund.org/investinwomen)



Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund

A United Nations & Civil Society Partnership

CONFLICT
DISASTER
INEQUALITY

INVEST IN WOMEN
RESPOND TO CRISIS
BUILD PEACE



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