



**Women's Peace &
Humanitarian Fund** 

A United Nations & Civil Society Partnership

~~INSTABILITY~~ **INVEST IN WOMEN** 
~~EMERGENCIES~~ **RESPOND TO CRISIS**
~~WAR~~ **BUILD PEACE**



WPHF STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Strategic Plan 2023–2025 (the Strategic Plan or SP) aims to advance the Fund's mission and guide its work for the next three years. A subsequent implementation plan will further articulate the Strategic Plan's key components and operationalization details.

This Strategic Plan is WPHF's first ever and is the result of a consultative process with a wide range of WPHF partners, in particular the members of its Funding Board and women civil society leaders working in conflict and crisis settings (local women's rights and women-led CSOs). Findings of the WPHF 2022 Annual Survey and civil society recommendations of the Berlin Declaration 2023, as endorsed at the Global Women's Forum for Peace and Humanitarian Action organized by WPHF and the German Federal Foreign Office in May 2023, contributed to this Strategic Plan. Based on analysis of the latest world developments and emerging trends in women, peace and security and humanitarian action (WPS-HA) spaces, and particularly their impact on women and girls, the document also draws on lessons and reflections of the progress and challenges identified by WPHF in past years.

WPHF will continue to channel flexible and quality programmatic and institutional funding and capacity support to women peacebuilders, humanitarians and human rights defenders working at the forefront

of WPS-HA issues across the globe. WPHF works to address the unique needs and amplify the expert voices of frontline women civil society leaders of all ages and diversities, leveraging their added value and unlocking their power to reach the most marginalized communities, and to effectively break the silos among the world's most pressing peace and security, humanitarian, development and human rights challenges.

WPHF embraces a human-rights based, women-centered approach that focuses on women and girls, especially those who are most marginalized, excluded or face different forms of intersectional discrimination. By directly supporting women's rights and women-led organizations -with a prioritization of constituent-led organizations- WPHF intentionally nurtures their leadership in solving their countries and communities' most pressing issues, while recognizing and addressing the structural root causes of the inequalities they face.

Rooted in feminist values, seven interconnected principles define WPHF's funding model and drive the Fund's grant-giving decisions and partnership building strategies: demand-driven approach; local actors' ownership; accessibility and reach; flexibility; sustainability and resilience; mutually enabling partnerships and accountability; and intersectional approach.

Working across the humanitarian-

development-peace-human rights nexus and anchored in a theory of change with the overarching goal to contribute to more peaceful and gender equal societies, WPHF will focus on integrated approaches across its six outcome areas: (1) Enabling Environment for WPS; (2) Conflict Prevention; (3) Humanitarian and Crisis Response; (4) Conflict Resolution; (5) Protection of Women and Girls; and (6) Peacebuilding and Recovery. The success in achieving these six outcomes is underpinned by two key strategies that will support local CSOs' transformative and sustainable change: providing flexible core financing to CSOs in the form of institutional funding; and fostering global learning and coalition building to the community of WPHF CSO partners.

For the period 2023-2025 WPHF will also deepen and articulate new strategies exploring a range of cross-cutting areas. These have been identified as important areas to be further explored by the Fund that can help better respond to the overlapping complexities of current crises: the nexus between WPS-HA and food security, the nexus between WPS-HA and climate change, digital inclusion and safety in the WPS-HA space, safety and wellbeing of women civil society leaders working in WPS-HA as well as the youth peace and security agenda.

Recognizing the need to yield transformative results and impact at scale, and based on a funding gap analysis and in line with the UN Secretary General's call to action for women's organizations and human rights defenders in crisis situations,

the Strategic Plan sets a resource mobilization target of USD 300 Million between 2023 and 2025, enabling the reach of more than 3,500 local women's organizations and the direct transformation of the lives of approximately 13.5 million people.

To meet this ambitious goal, WPHF will work on diversifying and deepening its donor base and has identified 3 main drivers of growth for the Fund (i) further position local women's organizations as legitimate humanitarian responders to unlock further humanitarian financing for their work; (ii) explore new innovative partnerships with UN entities, to ensure earmarking of funding for local women's organizations and serve as the go-to mechanism for implementation; and (iii) expand its reach to private sector sources through targeted advocacy and communications and unlock new funding from corporations, foundations, philanthropists and the general public.

To implement this ambitious goal, WPHF will continue to operate through its current three mechanisms providing flexible and quality funding to address the varying needs and priorities of local women's CSOs and individual defenders, namely: (1) the Regular Funding Cycle, which offers CSOs programmatic and institutional funding (towards WPHF six outcome areas); (2) the Rapid Response Window on women and peace processes, which supports women's influence in formal peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements; and (3) the Funding Window for Women Human Rights Defenders, which delivers direct

advocacy support and protection funding to individual peacebuilders and human rights activists in crisis settings. In parallel, WPHF will continue to invest in building local women's CSOs capacity through the WPHF L-Hub and encouraging coalition building and exchanges, for stronger and more sustainable impact. At the same time, the Fund will assess, improve and revise its business practices and existing

mechanisms to be fit for purpose to deliver on its expanded goal, while remaining agile and efficient to respond to emerging needs. This will include increased management capacity, further decentralization of the Fund's operations aligned with the UN reform, and more diversified partnerships with UN entities and civil society organizations to deliver funding.



GLOBAL CONTEXT & EMERGING TRENDS

Humanitarian crises and threats to peace are more common than ever before. Emerging and protracted conflicts, the rise of authoritarian regimes, global emergencies and humanitarian crises pose grave and unprecedented threats to international security, sustainable development and human rights. While the number of people forcibly displaced due to conflict, natural disaster, persecution and human rights violations is the highest on record, women and girls continue to face disproportionate impacts, hitting harder those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Threats to the fundamental rights of women and girls, LGBTQIA+ communities and other marginalized groups are on the rise with conflicts and humanitarian emergencies exacerbated by the global climate crisis, food insecurity, violent extremism and the reverberations of the deadliest global pandemic in a generation.

The backlash against women's rights – including hate speech and gender-based violence – is growing and prevents women's meaningful participation in peace and security processes, political decision-making, and humanitarian action. According to the UN Secretary General (UNSG), the world is witnessing an alarming reversal of generational gains in women's rights, despite evidence that gender equality offers a path to

conflict prevention and sustainable peace.

More than two decades after UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) – and its subsequent resolutions – women continue to face barriers to participate in peace and security negotiations and humanitarian decision-making at all levels. In 2021, women represented only 19% of the conflict parties' delegations in UN supported peace processes – a decrease from 2020 – with even lower participation in processes not led by the UN¹. Although evidence shows the increased engagement of local women-led organizations in humanitarian planning in various contexts, serious challenges remain in multiple areas, including in terms of humanitarian access, recognition within the humanitarian cluster system and consistent participation in community driven and bottom-up approaches². Besides this, women human rights defenders (WHRDs) are increasingly suffering targeted attacks aiming to silence their advocacy and prevent them from participating in public life³. In his Annual Report on women, peace and security (WPS) the UN Secretary General raised serious concerns regarding the protection of WHRDs⁴. Since 2018, more than one-third of women briefers at the Security Council have been subjected to reprisals and intimidation⁵.

Despite these challenges, women working on the frontlines of conflict and crisis have proven to serve as engines of progress, agency and action, supporting their communities and addressing the underlying causes of conflict and inequality on the ground.

Women play critical roles leading local movements to prevent conflict, respond to humanitarian crises, prevent and address sexual and gender-based violence, build back better from COVID-19, fight against the shrinking democratic and civic spaces and hostile environments severely targeting them, and forge lasting peace in their communities, working across the human rights-peace and security- development nexus, often at grave risk to their own lives. Women human rights defenders⁶, peacebuilders⁷ and activists challenge systems linked to violence, they contest patriarchal norms to foster a culture of peace, question political power structures and aim to upend gendered power relations⁸.

Local women's organizations are well placed to foster transformative and sustainable change in complex environments. They continue to mobilize key stakeholders, hold decision-makers to account, mediate tensions and successfully stand up for human rights and peace. Women leaders and their local organizations reach remote areas where basic services are often disrupted or non-existent and continue to innovate and adapt their approaches and ways of working to build a more secure, peaceful and gender-equal future for all. Evidence shows that when women

are included in local decision-making and crisis response, they expand the reach and impact of humanitarian aid, accelerate economic recovery, advance gender equality, prevent radicalization and create more sustainable peace.

In order to unlock their potential, the needs of local women's organizations shall be prioritized, their contributions acknowledged, and the transformative impact of their work supported. Dedicated financing for local women peacemakers, peacebuilders, humanitarians, WHRDs and their civil society organizations working in crisis and conflict-affected settings is an urgent priority. Despite the recommendations made by the UNSG in 2020⁹, bilateral aid in support of feminist, women-led and women's rights organizations and movements in fragile or conflict-affected countries has decreased¹⁰. Context-based analysis indicates that funding continues to be largely project-based, marked by year-to-year uncertainty, and misaligned between the priorities and needs identified by women's organizations and those of donors. In 2021, only 9% of all partners receiving funding from country-based pooled funds were women-led organizations¹¹. Although this was an improvement from previous years, much more needs to be done. These figures add to the already alarming situation in which the gap between funding and humanitarian needs is higher than ever according to the UN Secretary-General, with a 72% shortfall in 2021 for funding aimed at preventing and responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies¹².

The world is at a historic inflection point and being called on to take bold and decisive action to support local, transformative, scalable, women-led solutions to build more peaceful, equal and resilient societies. Building on his goal to multiply by five the funding that goes to women's organizations by the end of 2030, the UNSG has committed to raise USD 300 million in the next three years for women's organizations and human rights defenders in crisis situations, urging the international community to strengthen support to local women's civil society groups, reverse the financing deficit for gender equality and the protection of women and girls' human rights in conflict-affected countries, and continue to advocate for women's meaningful participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes at local, national, regional and international levels. Only with solid political and financial commitment can the international community reverse current trends, adapt to meet the new realities of the evolving world and rise to the challenge to ensure local, frontline women's groups have the urgent support they need to respond to crisis and build lasting peace.

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Let us galvanize the donor community's support for universal compliance with the target of allocating a minimum of 15% of official development assistance to conflict-affected countries to advancing gender equality [...] including multiplying by five direct assistance to women's organizations.

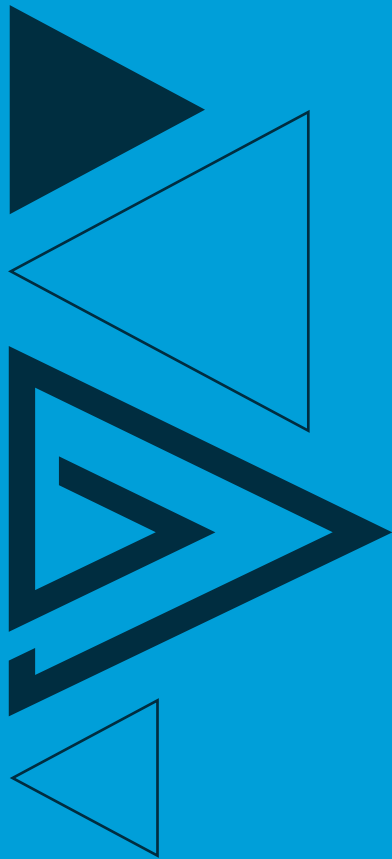
ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
United Nations Secretary-
General,
October 2020

WPHF: WHO WE ARE & OUR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

About the United Nations Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund

WPHF Mission Statement

The United Nations Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) supports local and grassroots women’s civil society leaders and their organizations in conflict and crisis settings worldwide. WPHF mobilizes and channels flexible and quality funding and capacity support to women peacebuilders, humanitarians and human rights defenders working at the forefront of Women Peace Security and Humanitarian Action (WPS-HA) issues across the globe. WPHF works to address the unique needs and amplify the expert voices of frontline women civil society leaders of all ages and diversities, leveraging their added value and unlocking their power to reach the most marginalized communities and effectively break the silos between the world’s most pressing peace and security, humanitarian, development and human rights challenges.



The establishment of WPHF was the result of years of persistent and dedicated work and advocacy of women’s civil society organizations, in primis led by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP) and Cordaid, who advocated for dedicated funding to locally based organizations for the implementation

of UNSCR 1325 – and supporting resolutions on WPS - and promoted a funding mechanism that would convene donors, UN entities and civil society organizations in one global partnership¹³. Included as a recommendation of the Global Study on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 (2015) requested by

the UNSG, and acknowledged by the UNSC in its resolution 2242 and by the UNSG in all his reports on WPS since 2015 as one avenue to attract resources, coordinate responses and accelerate policy implementation, WPHF was established based on the evidence that women’s meaningful participation is vital to successful conflict prevention, humanitarian action and peacebuilding.

As a UN multi-partner trust fund, WPHF invests in local and grassroots women’s organizations as strategic actors putting forward comprehensive, innovative, sustainable and locally-owned solutions for peace and resilience in crises settings. It provides flexible programmatic and institutional financing to civil society as well as direct logistical support to women peacemakers, peacebuilders and human rights defenders to leverage their strategic positions and expertise in bringing about structural change and addressing the underlying causes and consequences of conflict and crisis. Fulfilling its mandate to serve as a global learning center for local civil society organizations working on the frontlines of crises, WPHF also supports knowledge sharing among its CSO partners by facilitating connections, enhancing skills and facilitating peer exchanges to strengthen the capacity and resilience of CSOs during, after and sometimes outside of WPHF support. WPHF’s mandate is also to widen the pool of strong local civil society organizations working on women, peace and security and humanitarian action (WPS-HA) issues.

“ [WPHF is] the best tool that we have in the United Nations to channel funds to women’s organizations in conflict-affected countries.

SIMA BAHOUS
UN Under Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director.
Briefing to the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women Peace and Security, March 2023.



WPHF brings three unique benefits to enhance women's engagement in peace, security and humanitarian action, namely it:

1

Breaks silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum.

2

Addresses structural funding gaps for women's participation in key phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum, by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance.

3

Improves policy coherence and coordination by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies across all actors: multilateral and bilateral entities, national women's machineries; and local civil society organizations.

WPHF complements and co-finance strategic interventions with other financing instruments. In the WPS sector, complementarity and coordination with the UN Peacebuilding Fund, among others, is ensured at global and country levels. In humanitarian settings, the WPHF not only enables women's organizations to access humanitarian funding mechanisms but also complements existing humanitarian financing instruments investing in local women's organizations to ensure that women's needs are incorporated into humanitarian response. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator and the UN Humanitarian Country Team ensure that there is no duplication with country-driven initiatives. WPHF also contributes to global collective efforts to accelerate concrete actions and financial commitments in support of the women, peace and security agenda and gender equality in humanitarian programming, policy and coordination, such as the Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action (WPS-HA) Compact, among others.



Supporting the Global WPS-HA Agenda

Sustaining Peace Agenda

In 2016, for the first time, the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council adopted two resolutions identifying the "Sustaining Peace" approach as a priority during all the stages of the conflict cycle requiring it to take place simultaneously with peacekeeping, development and humanitarian activities. WPHF was established as a concrete tool to implement sustaining peace resolutions, with a key aim of breaking the silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance. The WPHF places a strong focus on conflict prevention, which is at the heart of the sustaining peace agenda. To ensure a coordinated approach while guaranteeing national ownership, WPHF serves as a platform among different UN entities and is inclusive of civil society organizations both as beneficiaries and decision-makers.

The World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain

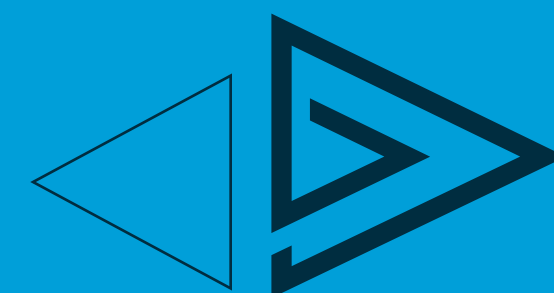
WPHF responds to the core commitments endorsed at the High-Level Roundtable on Women and Girls at the World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul in May 2016, where key stakeholders agreed on the need to support local women and women's organizations by placing them as leaders in humanitarian work. As a mechanism supporting local, grassroots and community-based organizations in fragile settings, the WPHF is a strategic tool for donors to implement their commitments under different work streams of the Grand Bargain's (2016) humanitarian financing reforms: Localization, Quality Funding, Participant Revolution, Humanitarian-Development Nexus, among others.

Advancing the 2030 Agenda

WPHF contributes directly to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and embraces the principle of "leaving no one behind", which is at the heart of the Fund's mandate and operations, as well as core to the Fund's intersectional approach to reach the most marginalized and address inequalities. WPHF is an innovative tool for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and localizing the commitments of the 2030 Agenda (with a specific focus on SDG 5 and 16) to national specificities of conflict-affected and fragile countries.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders

Responding to a major funding gap for the protection and participation of women human rights defenders and peacebuilders, WPHF offers a concrete instrument for implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders (General Assembly Resolution 32/144, 1999), which recognizes the important contribution of human rights defenders to peace, sustainable development and human rights, and creates an enabling environment to reinforce their work. It furthermore enacts the recommendations of a subsequent General Assembly Resolution of 2014 (68/181) which stresses the important role of WHRDs in protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms.



Governance

The governance of the WPHF is multi-level, functional and decentralized to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations. At the global level, the Funding Board serves as the guiding and supervisory body and is composed on a rotational basis of representatives of four UN entities, four largest donors to the Fund, and four civil society organizations. As a partnership between Member States, the UN and civil society, WPHF provides Board members equal participation and decision-making over the Fund's strategic direction and funding decisions. Looking ahead, the Board will continue to leverage on its unique multistakeholder membership to deliver on its mandate. The Funding Board is supported in its duties by the Global Technical Secretariat, which offers operational support to the Fund. UN Women hosts the WPHF Technical Secretariat at the global level, ensuring that dedicated funding is accompanied by technical expertise, political support, and the appropriate partnerships.

For each funding mechanism, the Fund has put in place dedicated structures and processes that are appropriate to their specific needs and ways of operating. For its regular funding cycle, in order to ensure flexibility and country ownership, the governance arrangements are aligned with the UN reform and combine the Funding Board with country-specific national steering committees, chaired

by the UN Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator. Overall, the partnership coordination and Fund's operations are core functions of the Funding Board at the global level, National Steering Committees at country level – all supported by the Global Technical Secretariat.

The Fund's administration is held by the UNDP Multi Partner Trust Fund Office, which receives financial contributions to the Fund from a diversity of donor partners and assists the WPHF in allocating funding to implementing entities in a coordinated manner. The Fund implementation is carried out through UN entities and/or Non-UN Organizations. Among others, the Management Entity for CSOs ensures timely disbursements of funds to partners CSOs in accordance with the decisions of the country level Steering Committee and technically supports CSOs in the implementation of WPHF-funded projects.

WPHF Key Results to Date (2016-2022)

Since its establishment in 2016, WPHF has supported more than 914 women's rights and women-led civil society organizations and women human rights defenders and peacebuilders in more than 32 countries, directly touching the lives of 3.6 million people (72% women and girls) through their projects and initiatives. Over 72% of these organizations are local or sub-national organizations and almost half have received United Nations funding for the first time, supporting women who reach remote areas where services are often disrupted or non-existent.

Throughout the years, WPHF has demonstrated to be an effective and agile funding mechanism with the ability to strategically leverage its assets and adapt its systems when needed in order to respond swiftly to emerging crises and changing needs.

➤ Between 2020-2022, marked by war, crisis and unrest, WPHF mobilized its partnerships and rapidly responded to emergencies in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Haiti, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Syria using tailored approaches and strategic mechanisms fit to meet the unique challenges of each context and reaching over 407,447 women and girls over the two-year period.

➤ In the wake of the global pandemic, the WPHF opened the COVID-19 Emergency Response Window¹⁴ to support 72 local women's rights organizations to prevent and respond to the gendered impacts of COVID-19 in their communities, as well as safeguard their existence, adapt and strengthen their capacities through institutional funding.

➤ In 2020, WPHF created a Rapid Response Window on Women's Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements (RRW) in response to an identified gap for rapid and flexible funding support for civil society-led initiatives to influence peace processes and peace agreement implementation, and a direct request from the UN Secretary General¹⁵. In two years, the RRW has provided 19 short-term grants and responded to 14 direct support requests from women peacebuilders and women's CSOs to influence formal peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements in 15 countries.

➤ Similarly, an alarming increase in the requests for support from women human rights defenders in fragile settings, particularly from Afghanistan, as

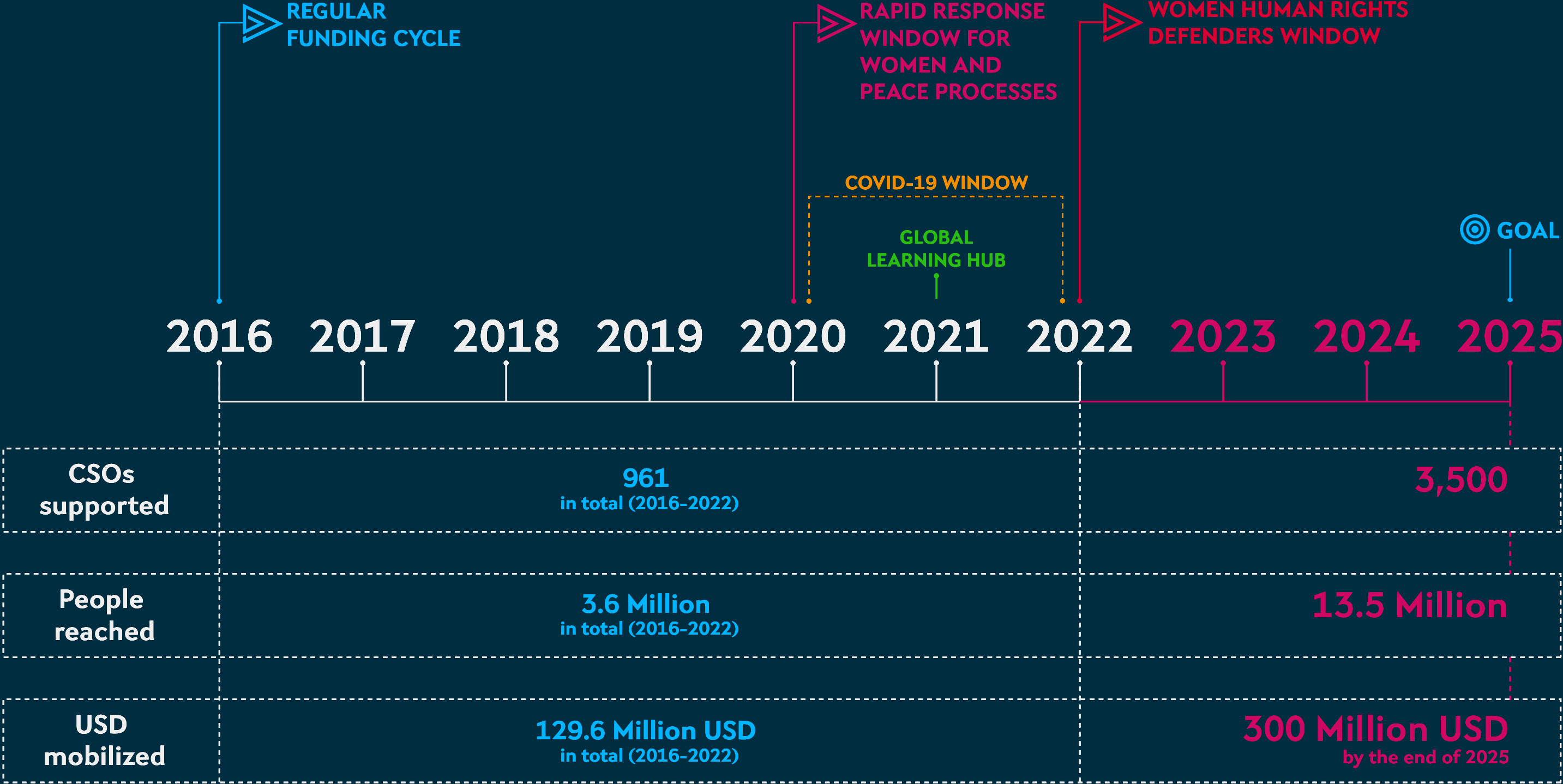
well as the numerous calls for a dedicated funding mechanism for WHRDs, including from civil society organizations¹⁶ and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, led to WPHF to establish the WHRDs Funding Window in 2022. In its first six months, the WHRD window had supported 83 WHRDs from 17 countries working in and/or from conflict and crisis settings in the form of rapid, flexible assistance to protect themselves and to advance their advocacy efforts.

Beyond the provision of financial support, the WPHF has also strengthened capacity sharing between women peacebuilders and humanitarians and enhanced the long-term institutional development of local civil society organizations thanks to the Global Learning Hub (L-HUB). Established in 2020, the L-HUB has connected CSO partners and supported their organizational and operational capacity through a digital platform, online trainings, knowledge resources, with 55 webinars and exchanges convened addressing topics such as strategic planning, gender sensitive M&E, resource mobilization, skills for coalition building, climate security risks, disability inclusion, mainstreaming youth, anti-corruption, prevention of sexual harassment and abuse and digital security.

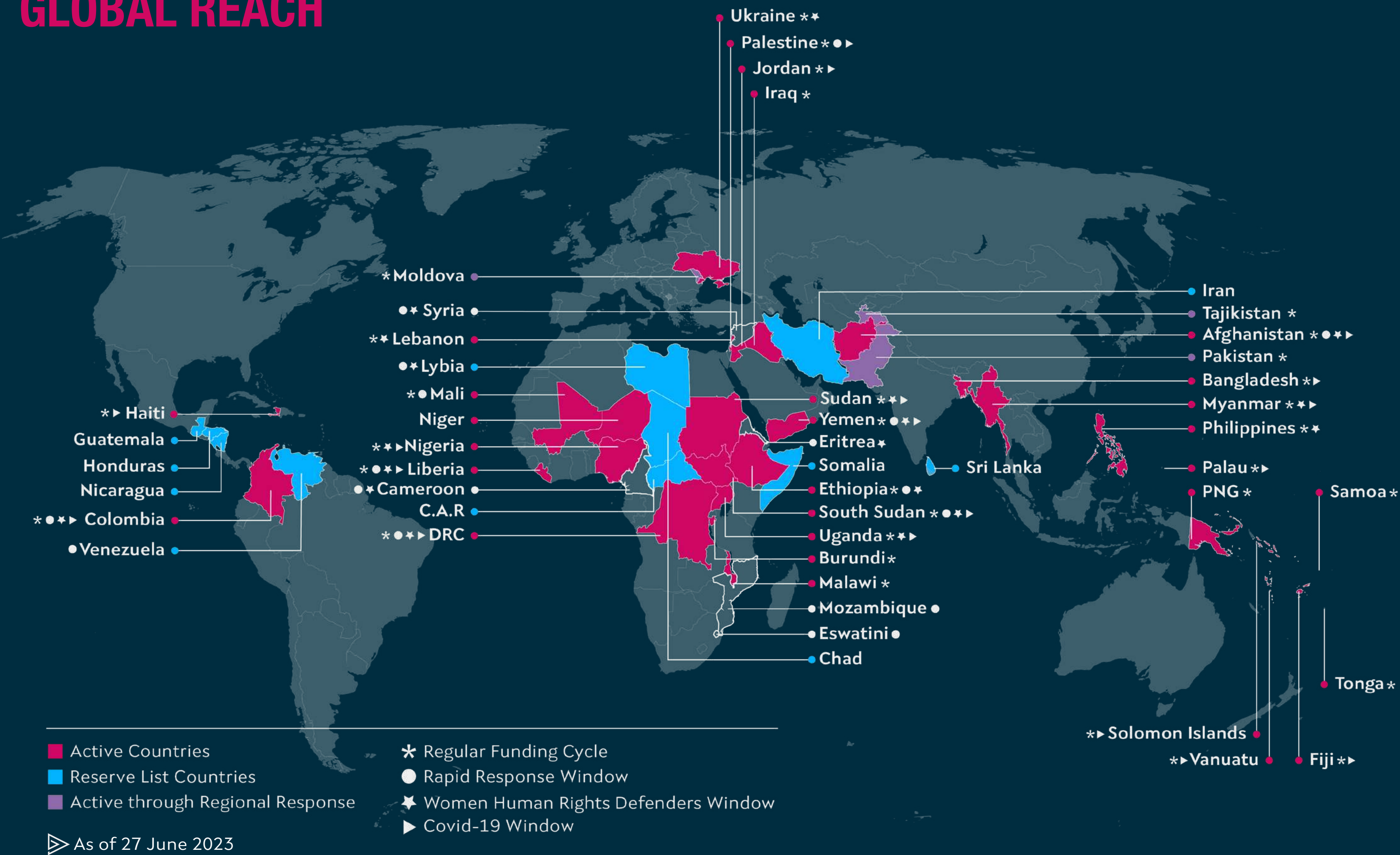


KEY MILESTONES

2016-2022



LOCAL IMPACT GLOBAL REACH

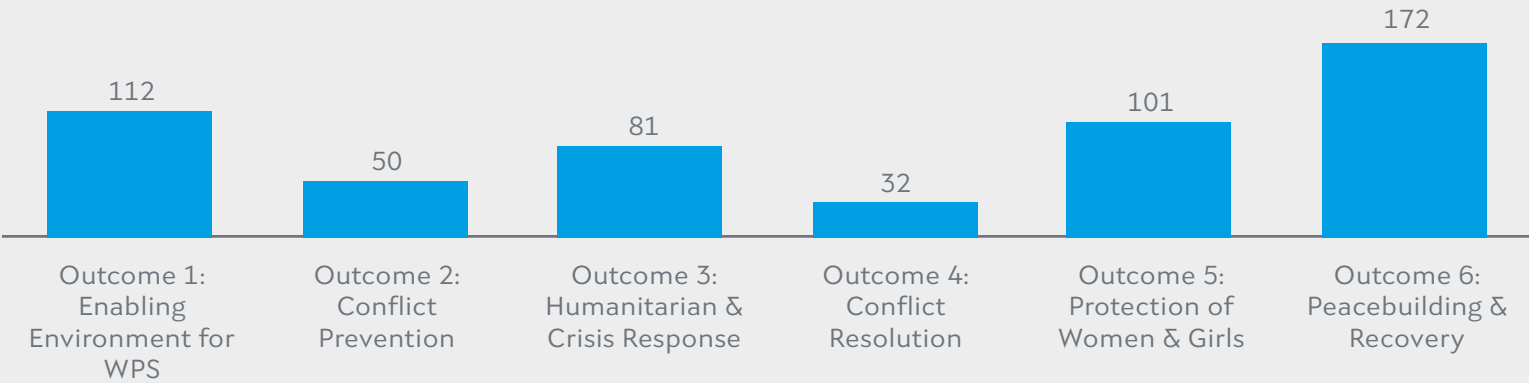
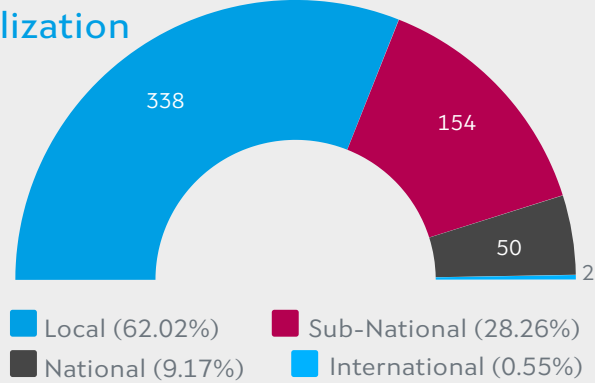



WPHF IN NUMBERS

2016-2022

Approved Grants 545	Number of Countries 32	CSOs Supported 914	CSOs financed by UN for the first time 47.3%	Average size of grants 130,806 USD	Types of CSOs 92.0% women's rights and/or led 4.0% youth focused and/or led	Resources Mobilized 129,583,275 USD
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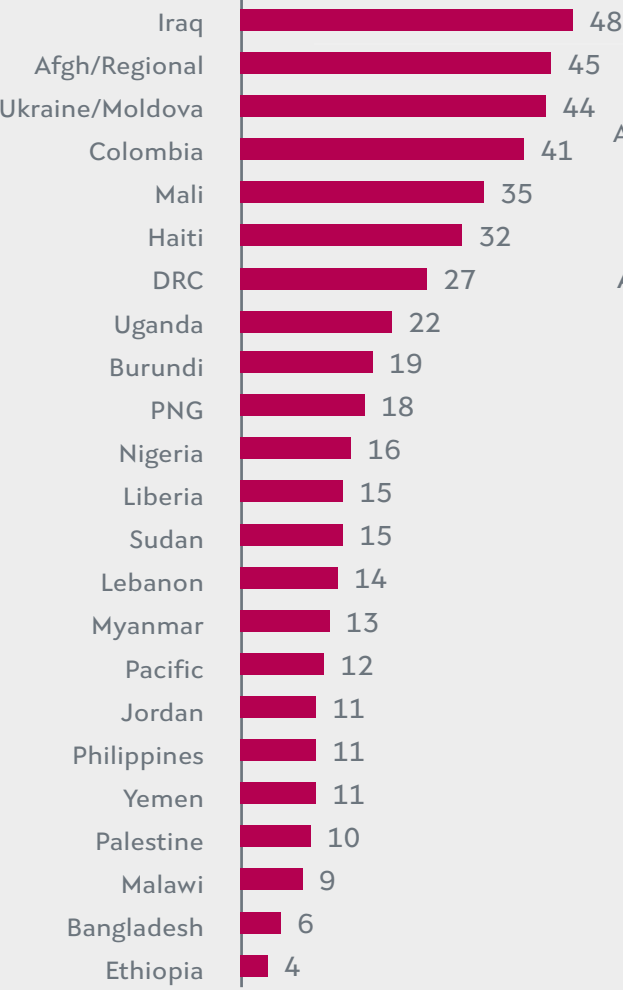
Localization



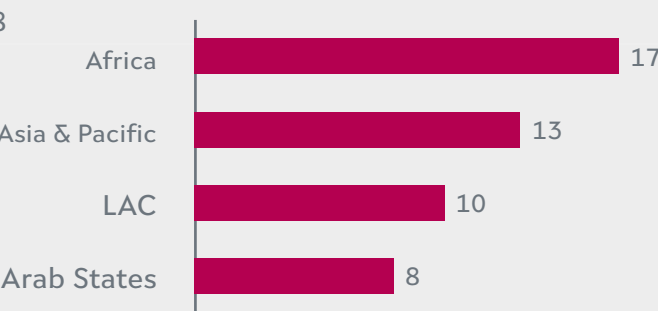
 CSOs Led by a Forcibly Displaced Person
27.7% (of 242 CSOs)

Lead CSOs 22%
Co-Implementing Partners 45%

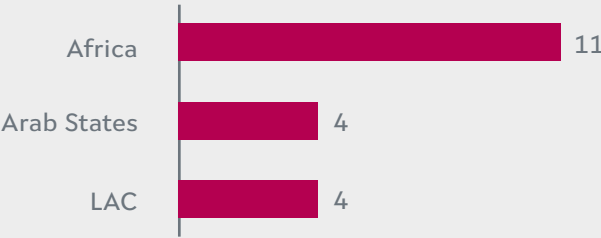
Regular Funding Cycle (478)




COVID-19 ERW (48)



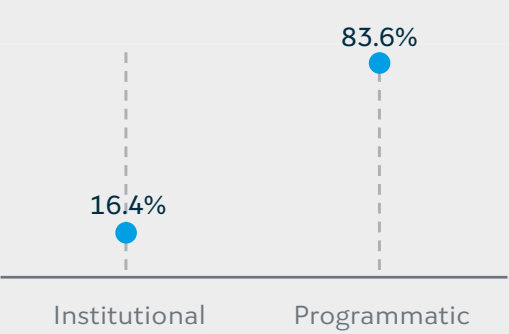
Rapid Response Window (19)



Window on WHRDs

 83 women human rights defenders supported through advocacy and safety net support in 17 countries

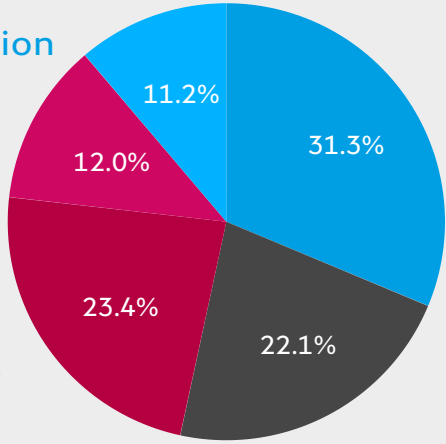
Grants by Stream



Allocated Funds by Region

78.1 million USD

Africa
Arab States
Asia & Pacific
LAC
Europe & Central Asia




Leaving No One Behind

 Improving the situation for women who are forcibly displaced (refugees and IDPs)
45%

 Improving the lives of women and men living with disabilities
45%

 Prevention and services for survivors of SGBV
45%

 Advocating for the rights of LGBTQI communities
45%

 Projects targeting youth and young women's active participation
45%

 Projects supporting Indigenous and Ethnic Minorities
45%

 Projects focused on Climate Security
18 (3.3%)

 Beneficiaries (2016-2021)
3.6 million directly served
72% women and girls
17 million indirect beneficiaries



DELIVERING ON OUR MANDATE: WPHF'S STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2023-2025

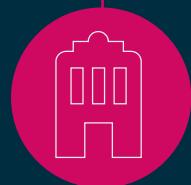
The WPHF Strategic Plan 2023-2025 provides a framework to guide its work over the next three years and outlines the key priorities identified through close consultations with its CSO partners, Funding Board and wide range of partners, including from results of the WPHF CSO Annual Survey and the Global Women's Forum held in Berlin in 2023. Following WPHF's Board approval of this Strategic Plan, an implementation plan will be developed, providing detailed information on processes and strategies to deliver on it.

Our 2025 Target

Recognizing the need for bold commitments to yield transformative results and impact at scale, and based on a funding gap analysis conducted in 2022¹⁷, **the Fund has set the goal to mobilize USD 300 Million in the next 3 years to effectively deliver on its mandate and scale up the impact of local women's groups in fragile settings.** Together with its government, UN and civil society partners, WPHF is calling on the world to step up financial commitments to meet the critical needs and support the transformational impact of local women's organizations worldwide. **This exponential investment growth will allow WPHF to expand its reach and support more than 3,500 local women's organizations working in conflict and crisis countries and directly transform the lives of approximately 13.5 million people.**

WPHF Outcomes

Anchored in the shared theory of change articulated in Tracking implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)¹⁸, WPHF will contribute to the above aspirations through financing local interventions of women leaders and women's organizations across six key outcomes contributing to the overarching goal of achieving inclusive and sustainable peace. The accomplishment of this goal will require that women are empowered to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding, and recovery. Results in these areas constitute the outcomes of WPHF's theory of change.



OUTCOME 1
Enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments: enhanced role of civil society organizations in advocating for and ensuring accountability on WPS commitments.

This will require evidenced-based advocacy and technical support to ensure the adoption of quality, locally relevant accountability frameworks that meet emerging threats and challenges (including violent extremism), and that address attitudinal structural discrimination and harmful social norms. Accountability frameworks, including National Action Plans on resolution 1325 must be financed and monitored to ensure implementation. This will require the empowerment of national women's machineries, civil society, and the UN system.



OUTCOME 2
Conflict prevention: increased meaningful participation and decision-making of women in conflict prevention processes and response.

Women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention can only materialize if three conditions are in place. First, favorable attitudes of parties to the conflict and affected communities towards women's participation in conflict prevention must be promoted. Second, local women's organizations must have the capacity to identify and respond to threats by establishing networks, early-warning systems and mechanisms that offer opportunities for dialogue and peaceful engagement. Finally, women's conflict prevention mechanisms must be connected to national and international reporting and response systems.



OUTCOME 3
Humanitarian and crisis response: enhanced participation and leadership of women in humanitarian planning and response.

Ensuring that the humanitarian/crisis response planning, frameworks and programming are informed by gender analysis and needs assessments, requires both the technical tools as well as direct support to local women's organizations to engage effectively in humanitarian planning and programming. It will also require that women's organizations are given a more meaningful role in service delivery, and actively participate and exercise leadership in camp coordination and management, as leading actors in the response.



OUTCOME 4
Conflict resolution: increased representation and leadership of women in formal and informal peace processes and/or implementation of peace agreements.

Addressing systematic discrimination and harmful social norms that prevent women's full and equal representation and participation in formal and informal peace negotiations is critical to increasing their role in these processes. Increasing the availability of gender expertise and capacity of mediators in the negotiations are also crucial. Finally, women's organizations will require support to strengthen their leadership capacity, negotiation skills and abilities to influence and build consensus.



OUTCOME 5
Protection of women and girls: enhanced safety, security and mental health of women and girls' and their human rights respected.

Ensuring that women and girls' safety, physical and mental health and security are assured, and their human rights respected, requires measures that prevent acts of violence, facilitate access to services for survivors of violence, and strengthen accountability mechanisms. Prevention includes putting in place operational mechanisms and structures that strengthen the physical security and safety for women and girls. This covers both UN peacekeepers and national security forces. It also includes strengthening the capacity of the gender machineries and women's organizations to identify and report on gender-based violence, including in contexts of violent extremism. Access to services includes access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive services, psychosocial support services, and legal redress and justice which should be provided simultaneously and easily in response to survivors' particular needs and preferences. Protection of women and girls will also require that international, national and non-state actors are responsive and held to account for any violations of the rights of women and girls in line with international standards.



OUTCOME 6
Peacebuilding and recovery: improved socio-economic recovery and political participation of women and girls in peacebuilding contexts.

In order to ensure that women's and girls' specific needs are met in conflict and post-conflict situations, women must have the capacity and opportunity to meaningfully participate in recovery planning. They must also benefit from peacebuilding and recovery investments. Women's economic empowerment in both agricultural activities and entrepreneurship is particularly relevant in this regard. Finally, sustained peace will require post-conflict institutions and processes that are gender responsive.



The success in achieving these six outcomes is underpinned by **two key strategies that will support local CSOs’ transformative and sustainable change** in their communities and help WPHF continue to deliver on what it does best: integrated and comprehensive response and solutions driven by women and girls’ priorities and needs.



Firstly, the WPHF will continue to provide increased quality funding¹⁹ to local women-led and women’s right organizations and human rights defenders in crisis situations, with a particular focus on providing **Institutional Funding**. Such flexible support translates into core, unrestricted funding that enables organizations to deliver on their mission, as safeguard to their existence, and strengthen their

capacities and adapt in conflict and humanitarian contexts. WPHF has mainstreamed institutional funding through all its outcomes and regular calls for proposals and will aim to increase the institutional funding given to civil society progressively throughout the three-year implementation of this Strategic Plan, while regularly assessing and adapting to needs and potential challenges.



Secondly, the WPHF will sustain its investment in **Global Learning and Coalition Building**. The WPHF recognizes the importance of peer learning, networking and movement building to strengthen the technical and operational capacity and impact of CSOs, foster a more coordinated response to the needs of women and girls in crisis contexts as well as in global decision-making spaces and counter the shrinking civic and democratic space. Capacity sharing and development between CSOs is a WPHF cross-cutting strategic objective that will be applied through all WPHF funding mechanisms including encouraging CSOs to apply in consortium with grassroots

organizations and through providing training, knowledge exchanges and small grants for peer learning and mentoring. Moreover, knowledge sharing, research and documenting lessons learned will be fostered to replicate and amplify women’s CSOs best practices across countries and regions. Among others, throughout 2023-2025, WPHF intends to step up efforts to mobilize resources for global learning and coalition building, through the WPHF Global Learning Hub, to accelerate exchange of experiences and solidarity, reinforce coordination between CSOs at national and regional levels and amplify the CSOs’ influence on the WPS-HA global scene.

WPHF THEORY OF CHANGE & RESULTS FRAMEWORK



CONTRIBUTE TO MORE PEACEFUL AND GENDER EQUAL SOCIETIES



WPHF significantly contributes to local civil society organizations increased participation in women peace and security and humanitarian processes.

Cross-Cutting Areas of Focus

While sustaining its commitment and support for local civil society projects aligned with its six outcomes, for 2023-2025, WPHF will deepen and articulate new strategies exploring a range of cross-cutting areas of focus, which have been identified by the WPHF Funding Board as well as by WPHF CSO partners through the WPHF 2022 Annual survey²⁰ and the [Berlin Declaration](#) building on the Global Women's Forum 2023's recommendations²¹, as important aspects that can help better understand and respond to the overlapping complexities of the current crises. Each cross-cutting area of focus will be implemented differently, depending on their nature, the evolving global and local contexts, resources mobilized and partners' engagement. The SP implementation plan will outline the different operationalization modalities for each area of focus.



WPS-HA AND CLIMATE SECURITY

Climate change is recognized as the ultimate "threat multiplier" and its effects are closely linked to women, peace and security. Evidence shows that climate change can increase the risks of violent conflict, create risks to human security, and challenge conflict recovery and peacebuilding. The WPHF seeks to further invest, including via a thematic call for proposals, in women-led initiatives aimed at climate change mitigation and adaptation as it relates to conflict prevention, humanitarian and crisis response, and socioeconomic recovery and peacebuilding, recognizing that women are powerful agents of change, capable resource managers and central actors in tackling climate change.



WPS-HA AND FOOD SECURITY

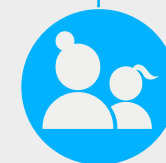
Although food insecurity is gender neutral, its impacts are not. Armed conflicts, soaring inflation and economic shocks, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and displacement – underlying drivers of the increase in food insecurity – drive millions of people to the brink of starvation and create ripple effects for women and girls' health, protection, education and livelihoods. The WPHF acknowledges and supports women's organizations' instrumental work across the nexus of food security, sustainable peace, and gender equality²² and will support their leadership in ensuring gender-responsive policies, planning and response to the hunger crisis, including through a thematic call for proposals.



DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SAFETY IN THE WPS-HA SPACE

Digital inclusion and safety have become increasingly important for the work of women leaders and WROs in crisis settings. Digital technologies can facilitate access to valuable resources to women advocates' work; they can be powerful tools for advocacy,

awareness raising and networking. Women leaders and WROs in conflict settings are also often at risk of digital reprisals, harassment, surveillance and other forms of online violence, perpetuating or expanding existing patterns of gender-based violence and inequality. WPHF will invest in ensuring the safe and secure use of digital technologies and protecting online privacy and security, including but not limited to, facilitating knowledge generation, knowledge exchange and training opportunities through the WPHF Global Learning Hub.



YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA

Women and young people have been traditionally excluded from peace and security efforts. Acknowledging the similarities and synergies between gender and age-based inequalities, WPHF seeks to align with the Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agenda²³ more intentionally²⁴. WPHF recognizes the roles young women play in crisis, conflicts and post-conflict settings, as well as the different ways they are affected by them, and is committed to intensify efforts to support young women organizations' agency and resilience as agents of change in their communities as a basis for greater social cohesion and sustainable peace. Specifically, WPHF will intensify efforts to better understand and respond to their specific needs, including enhanced access to funding, and will identify key strategies for targeted outreach and dedicated support. Acknowledging that women have different and changing needs, the Fund stands behind women of all ages and diversities and is engaged to invest in intergenerational dialogue.



SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF WOMEN CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERS WORKING IN WPS-HA

Physical and mental well-being as well as safety of local civil society leaders, peacebuilders, humanitarian responders and human rights defenders are key priorities for WPHF. Gender inequality and the normalization of conflicts are among the many contributing risk factors of the exhaustion, burnout and trauma that are increasingly denounced among activists working in conflict/post conflict affected settings and fragile contexts. In the next three years, WPHF intends to fill in the financing gap reported by local women civil society leaders in this regard by, among others, providing funding opportunities for protection and self-care, while supporting initiatives covering psychosocial assistance for CSO partners, development of internal policies for staff protection and healing, with particular focus to locally led, locally owned and innovative approaches to trauma-healing which respect the local cultures and worldviews and build on contextual and ancestral knowledge.

WPHF Grant-Making Principles

Seven interconnected principles define WPHF's funding model. Guided by the [United Nations Programming Principles](#) which center on the clear commitment to leave no one behind, and rooted in feminist values, these principles drive WPHF's grant-giving decisions and partnership building strategies. Responding to the needs and challenges of women and girls in crisis contexts as effectively and efficiently as possible stands at the core of these principles, driving WPHF's strategy, systems and processes. WPHF embraces a human-rights based, women-centered approach that focuses on women and girls in all their diversity, specifically those who are most marginalized, excluded or face different forms of intersectional discrimination. By directly supporting women's rights and women-led organizations -with a prioritization of constituent-led- organizations- the WPHF intentionally nurtures women's voices, their leadership and their claims to social, political and economic resources, while recognizing and addressing the structural root causes of the inequalities they face.

1 Demand-driven

Considering the unique complexities and diversity of challenges faced by women and girls in each and every conflict and humanitarian context, the Fund supports civil society's own contextually relevant strategies, without prescriptive limitations, only within the umbrella of the WPHF outcome areas. By directly channeling resources to women's rights and women-led organizations' own identified priorities, WPHF contributes to fund feminist movements as key drivers of positive and gender-transformative change.

2 Local actors' ownership

As an essential component for impact and sustainability, the WPHF grant-making model calls for decentralized and participatory decision making. Country-level multi-stakeholder partnerships, including women's rights civil society organizations, UN entities and donors, determine how the funds will be distributed, and take responsibility to achieve results through responses that are country led and tailored to their unique contexts. WPHF also leverages UN reform and places the WPHF allocation at country level under the authority of the RC/HC.

3 Accessibility and reach

WPHF understands that key agents of change include both informal and formal groups at the grass-roots level and individual activists and leaders, who are usually the hardest to reach constituents. Through its three funding mechanisms, WPHF aims to reach to as many local women organizations and women human rights defenders as possible, by doing targeted outreach

at country level, making application processes accessible and multilingual, simplify the application template, and constantly re-evaluating its tools to ensure maximum clarity, and minimal bureaucracy and burden on applicants. WPHF will apply a pronounced approach aiming at decreasing the number of unfunded, irrelevant or ineligible applications by ensuring regular exchange of information with prospective applicants through online information sessions and website updates, while increasing the number of selected project proposals by increasing the funding available through resource mobilization. WPHF will intensify efforts to reach organizations led by or with a focus on specific groups, such as; young women, displaced and refugee women; women heads of households, including widows; older women, LGBTQIA+; and ethnic and religious minorities. Acknowledging the challenges that unregistered CSOs face in receiving funding, WPHF is exploring options to exceptionally waive the legal registration eligibility requirement in cases where legal registration may not be possible, has expired or cannot be renewed due to political contexts.

4 Flexibility

Recognizing the constantly evolving nature of crises, as well as the complexities of the needs and challenges experienced by women and girls, as well as the for the WPHF grant-giving is flexible and allows for project adaptation. WPHF provides CSOs and WROs with long-term, quality funding, coupled with programmatic and operational support during the grant implementation period, that is appropriate to meet context-specific needs.

5 Sustainability and resilience

Recognizing the critical role played by CSOs, especially women's organizations, in sustaining gender equality transformational change beyond project duration, and with the objective of building long-term capacity and resilience in rapidly changing environments, WPHF's understanding of sustainability expands beyond programming results, to include organizational sustainability and resilience. WPHF offers a dedicated funding stream for institutional strengthening, with flexible resources to support the organizations' core operational needs. In addition, WPHF's Global Learning Hub (L-HUB) accompanies local women's CSO, by providing resources and opportunities for capacity sharing, knowledge exchange and peer learning through online and in person activities including global convenings and small grants for peer learning and mentoring. WPHF also accompanies WHRDs by providing training and spaces for capacity sharing and peer learning. WPHF will place more intentionality in supporting local CSOs staff's safety and wellbeing (including individual and collective self-care), recognizing the challenges encountered by CSOs in the frontlines in conflict settings, and the additional safety and security threats that feminist activists face as they confront power structures.

Mutually-enabling partnerships and accountability

WPHF brings an intentional awareness to the intrinsic unequal power dynamics of grant-making relationships, identifying ways in which these can be minimized, by enabling the needs and priorities of grant recipient organizations to shape the process. WPHF recognizes that holding CSO partners accountable for initiatives and financial resources entrusted to their management carries an equal responsibility for the WPHF to ensure that partners are aware of and have the capacity to deliver on expectations and requirements. To WPHF, all partners – donors, civil society, UN agencies – are essential allies collaborating in pursuit of collective action, for change for the benefit of women and girls in crisis and fragile contexts. Civil society is also fully involved WPHF's decision making processes at global and country level, helping to shape and identify priorities of the Fund. WPHF invests in creating spaces for learning among partners and across partners, drawing and sharing lessons from joint efforts for collective learning. Internally, WPHF is committed to a culture of constant reflection, self-assessment and adaptive learning to ensure that its processes and systems are aligned with and allow to operationalize these principles.

Intersectional approach

To leave no one behind, the Fund recognizes underlying structural inequalities and intersectional vulnerabilities that people may face throughout their lives and acknowledges how various parts of people's identity overlap such as race, sex, gender, sexuality, class and ability. The Fund intends to respond adequately to women and girls' specific needs by applying an intersectional approach to reach the most marginalized and analyzing inequalities, taking into consideration factors and characteristics often associated with discrimination and exclusion and recognizing that these may vary according to local contexts. Likewise, integrated programs will be encouraged to provide support to women responders as agents of change, who lead crisis response and peace building efforts at local and national level.



WPHF STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION 2023-2025

Funding Mechanisms

WPHF operates under three funding windows: the Regular Funding Cycle, the Rapid Response Window on women's participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements, and the Women Human Rights Defenders Window for the protection and participation of women human rights defenders in/from crisis and conflict settings. Through each of these funding mechanisms, the WPHF aims to respond to the varying needs and priorities of women's rights organizations and individual defenders with flexible and quality funding.

➤ Regular Funding Cycle

The Regular Funding Cycle is WPHF's first funding mechanism and is planned to remain the largest in the next three years covered by this Strategic Plan. It is a country-based funding mechanism which provides both institutional and programmatic funding to local civil society organizations to support their work on women, peace and security and humanitarian action. The eligible countries under the Regular Funding Cycle are determined and revised yearly by the WPHF Funding Board based on a clear rationale and WPHF's added value for intervention, as well as a concrete contribution to WPHF's mandate and priorities. In regions facing similar conflict-related or humanitarian challenges, the Funding Board might also decide on multi-country allocations. The totality of WPHF funds is allocated to or in support of civil society organizations.

The grantmaking process under the RFC is decentralized at country level and aligned with the UN reform, where a national-level steering mechanism – an inclusive multi-stakeholder platform between the government (when applicable), the UN, donors and civil society – manages in close

collaboration with the Fund Secretariat the WPHF allocation, including project-level approval following a public Call for Proposals. The Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC) chairs the steering committee. A UN agency is designated to act as Management Entity for the grants, and as such provides technical assistance and capacity building to the CSO partners as well as supports monitoring and reporting processes. In exceptional cases, WPHF holds targeted Calls for CSOs that have already benefited from WPHF achieving good results to sustain and scale the impact in a second phase of their projects.

Under the Regular Funding cycle, an emergency response mechanism enables in exceptional cases a fast-tracked grant allocation process to women's rights organizations on the frontlines of a crisis via a targeted Call for Proposals and under the approval authority of the RC/HC.

➤ Rapid Response Window on Women's Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements

Established in direct response to the recommendation of the UNSG in 2019, the Rapid Response Window on women's participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreement provides concrete tools for addressing the technical, logistical and financial barriers faced by women peacebuilders and women's civil society organizations to influence and participate in formal peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements. Specifically, it provides financing for strategic, short term and urgent services and initiatives led by women to increase women's influence in national, subnational and international formal peace processes through two differentiated streams:

- Direct Support: A CSO requests a logistical

and/or technical service in order to ensure women's meaningful participation in a formal peace process/peace agreement implementation. The RRW Unit, or an INGO partner, purchases and arranges the service on behalf of the CSO. The CSO benefits from the service to enable women's influence and/or participation in the formal peace process or implementation of the peace agreement.

- Short-Term Grants: A CSO requests a small grant to implement a project that addresses women's meaningful participation in a formal peace process/peace agreement implementation. A partner disburses and manages the grant and provides capacity building support to the CSO.

➤ Funding Window for Women Human Rights Defenders

Responding to the growing calls to action for dedicated funding mechanisms to support WHRDs working on the front lines of human rights and peace, and building on existing mechanisms and lessons learned, WPHF established in 2022 the Women Human Rights Defenders Window. This is dedicated to providing flexible funding support to WHRDs from/working in crisis and conflict affected countries who are working for the promotion of human rights and inclusive peace. With the aim to support their protection and participation, its design was informed by close consultations with several WHRDs as well as UN and INGO representatives and is constantly being reviewed to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety of the WHRDs.

The WPHF funding Window for WHRDs offers two support streams to WHRDs from/working in conflict and crisis affected countries:

- Safety Net: flexible funding to cover urgent costs related to the security of at risk WHRDs (e.g. short-term livelihood, security equipment).
- Advocacy Support: direct logistical support to arrange and cover logistical expenses (transportation, visa fees, accommodation, daily subsistence allowance) for WHRDs looking to participate in meetings, events or decision-making processes that contribute to advancing human rights and peace.



Scaling up Operations to Meet Goals and Emerging Needs

To ensure that WPHF remains fit to respond with agility and efficiency to emerging needs and urgent situations, as well as to deliver on the ambitious goals set in this Strategic Plan (SP), WPHF will assess, improve and revise its business practices and existing mechanisms. The Fund will build on its proven model, mid-term review, and ongoing self-assessment processes and collection of lessons to determine the best strategies that will enable this optimization and scaling process. These will be articulated in the SP implementation plan, which will be informed by the preliminary findings of the upcoming WPHF evaluation, and subsequently adjusted as needed based on the final evaluation report²⁵. The analysis underpinning the plan will consider different possible funding scenarios determining adjustments in the structure and composition of the Secretariat, and will include the exploration of viability and impact of the following measures, among other:

1

Widening its geographical scope: WPHF would explore the possibility of expanding its global reach to additional countries, as new global developments arise, to respond to existing demand. WPHF would prioritize support to countries with the highest needs and funding gaps, while supporting women's organizations in all eligible countries to accelerate overall progress.

2

Maximizing the potential of its funding mechanisms: in alignment with its flexible and demand-driven approach, WPHF will consider the possibility of upscaling its funding mechanisms with a view to increase their reach and enhance their efficiency. WPHF may consider increasing the scope of its funding windows as well as the amount of funding delivered to local CSOs by diversifying the number of UN Entities serving as Management Entities for civil society organizations on the ground. In addition to UN Women and UNFPA, WPHF will consider expanding to others, such as UNHCR.

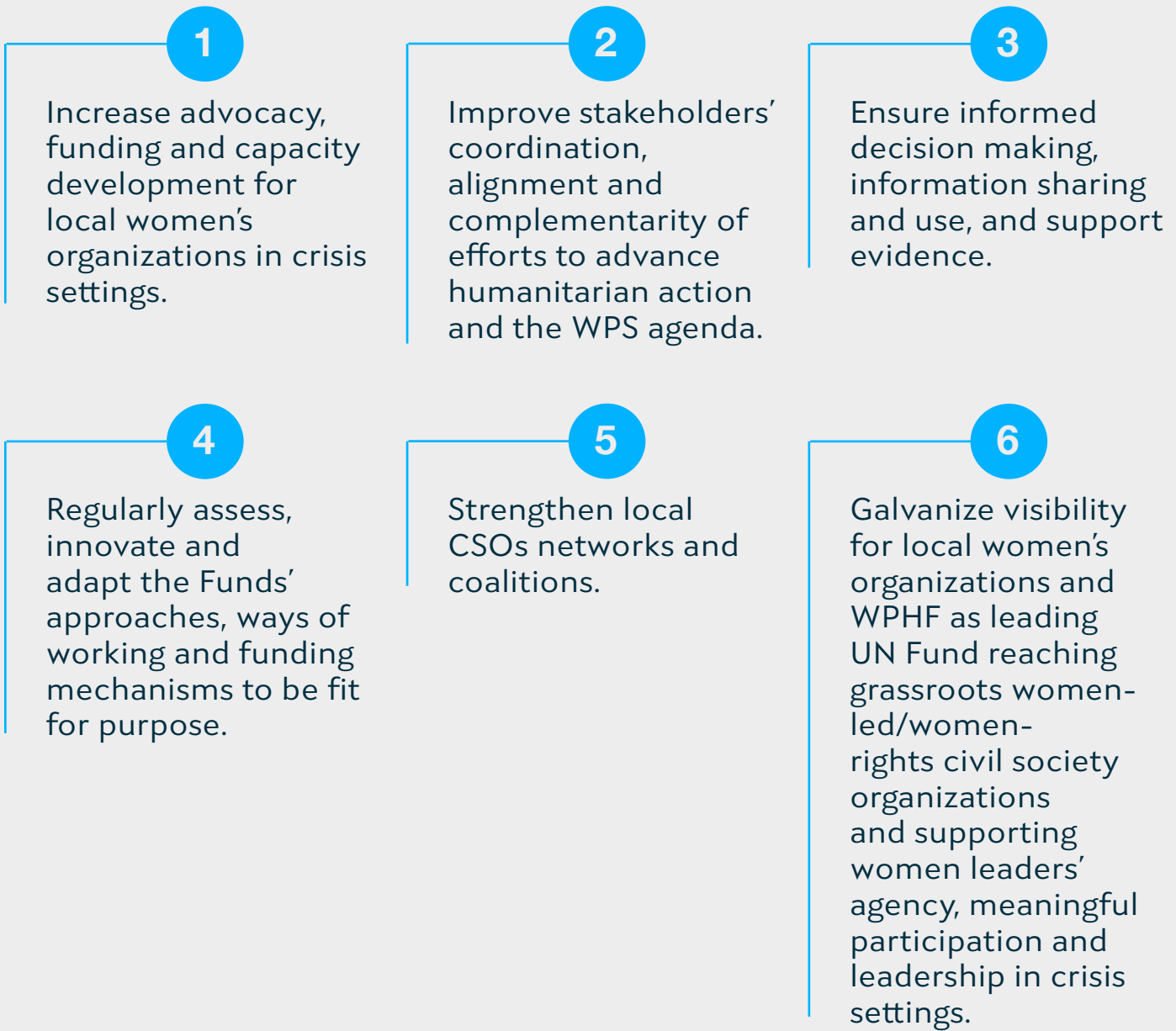
3

Deepening its decentralization model: WPHF will deepen its already decentralized model to be able to deliver at scale, further relying on regional and in country capacity.

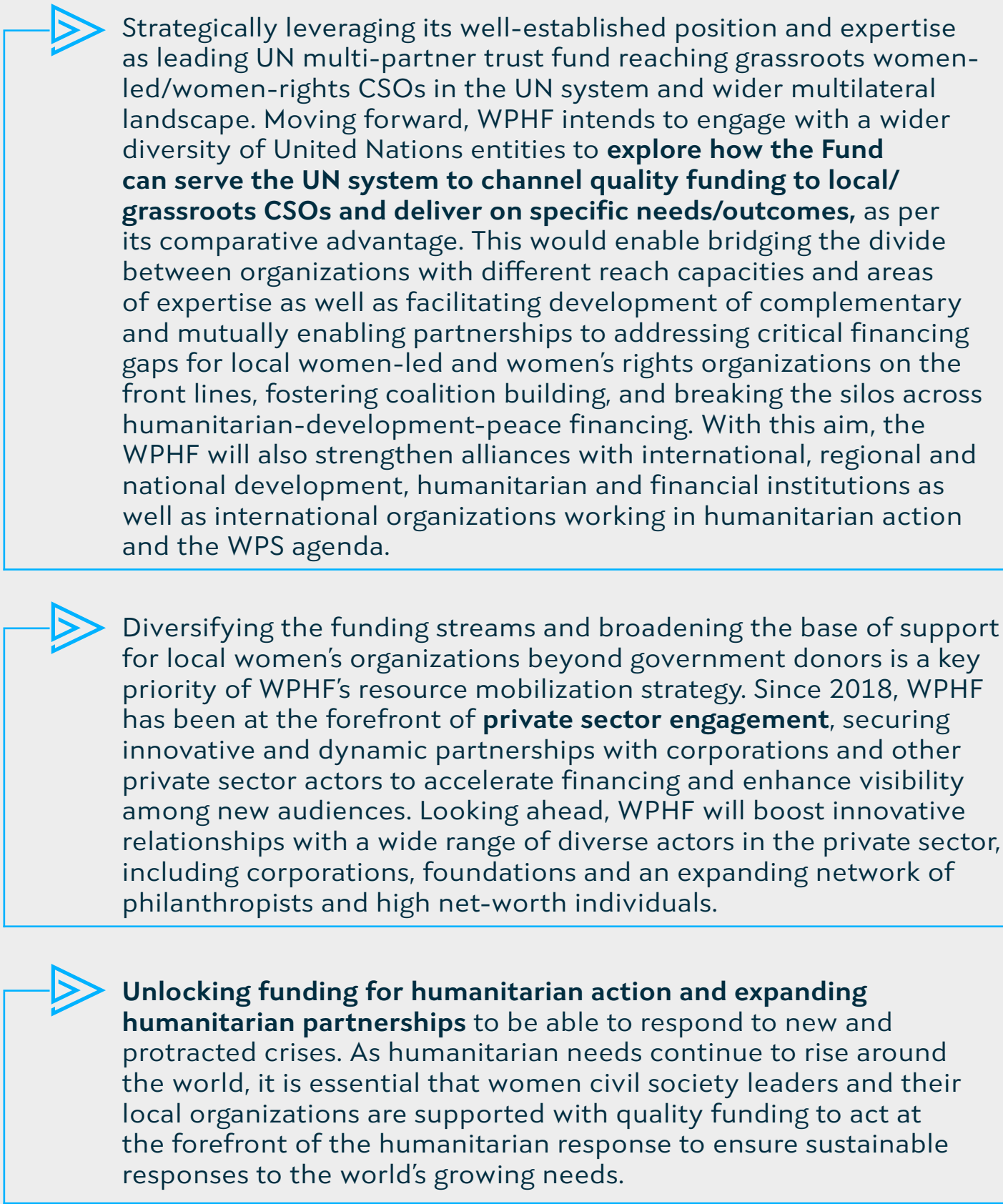
Strategic Partnerships

Everyone has a crucial role to play to support women leaders on the front lines of crises. Delivering results at the speed and scale needed to reach Agenda 2030 depends on strong and close partnerships with a diverse range of actors working towards common goals. Aiming at driving the UN reform, as well as reinforcing the leading role of the UN RC/HC at country level, the WPHF intends to deliver effective programs across countries with the inclusive collaboration of multiple equal partners, each contributing with distinct expertise and complementary roles. The next three years will see WPHF strengthening these existing partnerships and building new ones. WPHF will use its convening power to continue to consolidate strategic alliances with local, national and international actors.

WPHF’s multisectoral and multistakeholder partnerships will leverage the diverse capabilities, resources and knowledge of our partners towards following objectives:



The WPHF’s ambitious goal requires bold, innovative and flexible solutions that build on strategic public and private partnerships as well as collaborations with traditional and non-traditional partners at all levels. In the next three years, WPHF will continue to consolidate and broaden its donor base and attract new resources to accelerate transformative change. The Fund has identified three priority areas of collaboration for strategic advocacy and resource mobilization:





WPHF INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

Funding Objectives

In its eighth year of operation, WPHF has cemented its position as a multi-donor trust fund – having secured steadily increasing investments from a variety of sources. With a total USD 130 million mobilized since 2016, WPHF has received generous donations for its work from 20 governments/ governmental bodies and three private sector entities. Following its establishment seven years ago, the WPHF exponentially expanded its operations since 2021 and is now envisioning 2023-2025 as a phase to sustain its growth and secure its sustainability through sizable, predictable and multi-year contributions. **WPHF's 2023-2025 funding vision is to attract, leverage and invest sufficient and quality financial resources enabling a timely, effective and efficient delivery of its mandate to support women's organizations, in alignment with its grant-making principles.**

Specifically, the Fund has the following strategic funding objectives:

1

Operate a quantitative leap in its funding, doubling its annual revenue to meet USD 300 million by the end of 2025 in line with the UN Secretary General's recommendation to enhance women's participation in peace and security²⁶.

2

Increase percentage of unearmarked and softly earmarked funding received to be able to respond to rapidly changing contexts.

3

Increase percentage of multi-year and long-term funding commitments, especially among key existing donors, to ensure predictability of the financial support available to women's organizations in protracted crisis environments and the sustainability of the investments, especially in the context of the humanitarian-development-peacebuilding nexus.

4

Diversify the donor base, including by engaging new government donors and increasing private sector partnerships, to leverage a

stronger diversity of resources and expand the community of funding partners.

5

Ensure sufficient resources to sustain WPHF's Institutional Funding and Capacity Building strategies. While they do not constitute standalone outcome areas, these are central to the Fund's mission and require dedicated resources.

6

Seek a balanced investment across 6 WPHF outcomes, to avoid that the ever-increasing demand for emergency response to new conflicts and disasters, entails overlooking and underinvesting in protracted crises, or in crisis prevention and preparedness as a strategic area with high potential for mid- and long-term impact.

7

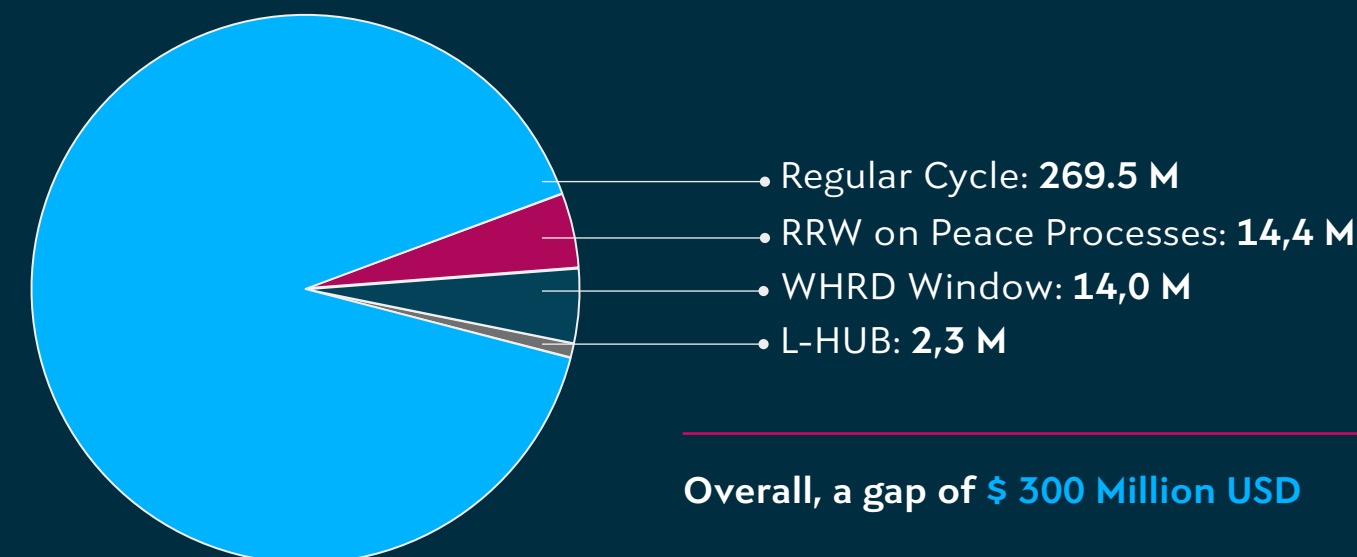
Secure an emergency reserve fund to be able to rapidly react in cases of unexpected crises of considerable dimension and reach where a fast response is of essence.



Funding Targets

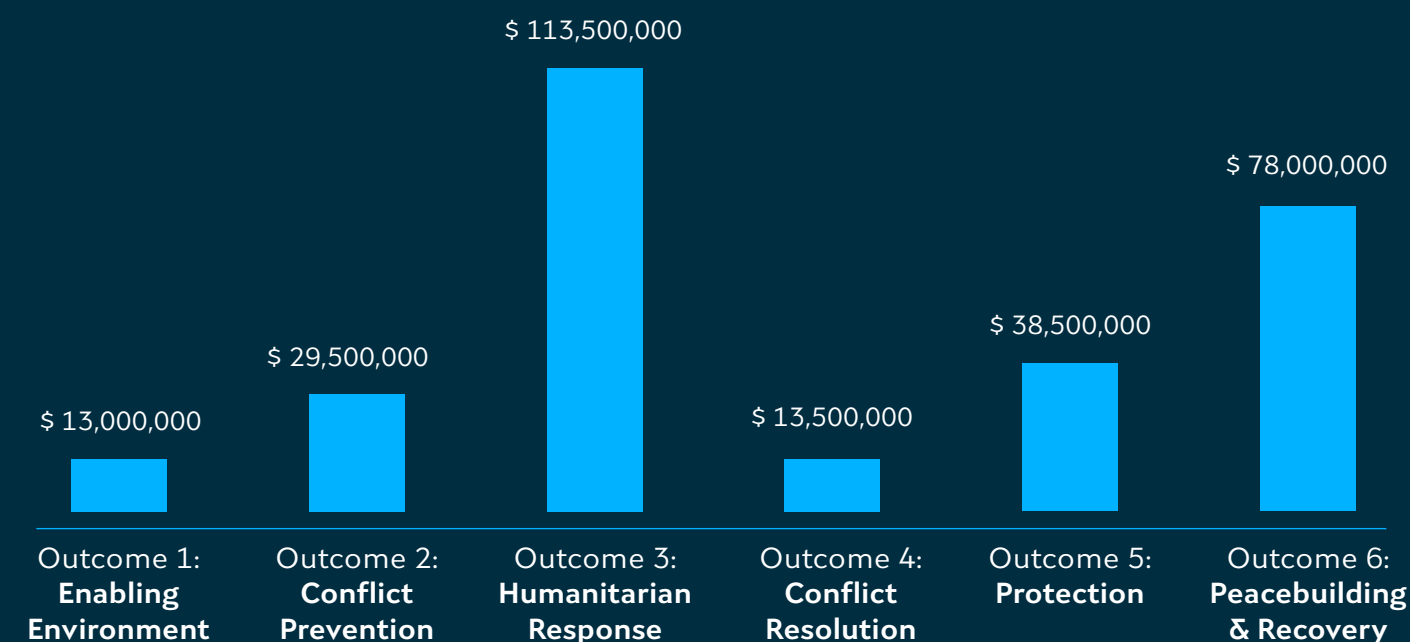
The demand for funding from women CSOs in crisis contexts is soaring. Overall, although WPHF has allocated over 77 million USD to CSOs by the end of 2022, this represents only 5% of all funding proposals received²⁷. While in the past 3 years the proportion of proposals received that have been funded has gradually increased, 27% of received proposals for our Regular Funding Cycle in 2022 were funded and there is still a significant gap between the number of eligible and technically sound proposals received and the ones that received funding.

WPHF Funding Gaps 2023-2025



Overall, a gap of **\$ 300 Million USD**

WPHF Funding Gaps 2023-2025 (per Outcome)





Based on a funding gap analysis (see table), the WPHF has set its funding target at USD 300 million for the period 2023-2025 to be able to reach 3,500 local women's organizations working in conflict, fragile and crisis countries to directly transform the lives of approximately 13.5 million people.

On International Women's Day 2023, the WPHF launched its INVEST-IN-WOMEN Global Campaign, to accelerate support, amplify the voices, unlock the power and scale up impact of local women's organizations working to build peace and respond to crisis in the face of a rapidly evolving world. With this, together with its government, UN and civil society partners, the WPHF is calling on the world to step up financial commitments to meet the critical needs and support the transformational impact of local women's organizations worldwide and joins the UN Secretary General's call to action and appeal to raise USD 300 million in the next three years for women's organizations and human rights defenders in crisis situations.



When women get involved in decision-making, it's not just good for women and girls, but for everyone. They understand the needs and challenges of the wider society and make decisions seeking the common good.

MAY SABE PHYU

Human rights defender, peace advocate and WPHF-supported partner from Myanmar



WPHF heard our cry and gave us voice to express our issues and concerns ... The support WPHF provides to women peace mediators is so important; it puts them at the heart of all activities, ensuring they're trusted within the community.

ESTHER OMAM

Civil society leader and WPHF Rapid Response Window-supported partner from Cameroon



We need funds like the WPHF to strengthen women's participation and leadership in decision-making spaces, and make their voices heard in international platforms.

NOHORA ALEJANDRA QUIGUANTAR

Indigenous youth leader, environmental human rights defender and WPHF partner from Colombia

ACCOUNTABILITY & QUALITY ASSURANCE

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING PRINCIPLES

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) at WPHF is based on results-based management approaches, and three key principles: i) utilization focused; ii) Do No Harm approaches and iii) use of gender-sensitive and feminist monitoring and evaluation (M&E) approaches.

● Utilization Focused

Data collected through monitoring and evaluation processes must be useful to make decisions, for learning, to demonstrate change and even be used to advocate. Data collection is based on what is ‘needed’, not what is simply ‘nice’ to know. Data collection should be undertaken with a specific objective and use in mind to ensure it does not increase the workload of staff or burden populations that WPHF serves.

● Do No Harm

Monitoring and evaluation must not come before the safety and security of beneficiaries and communities. It is critical to examine the context and situation to ensure it is safe for staff, volunteers, and beneficiaries alike to participate in data collection processes. Alternative, flexible and adaptive methods should be used to reduce the negative impact M&E could cause participants.

● Gender Sensitive & Feminist M&E

The quest for data and information should draw on gender-sensitive and feminist M&E approaches, including participatory design, informed consent. Findings should be shared back with targeted communities and should cover all intersecting forms of vulnerabilities. M&E processes must also serve to amplify the voices and experiences of women, youth, and girls.

The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan will be managed and monitored specifically through three results-based management tools – i) the WPHF Results Framework which focuses on key performance measurements at a programmatic level across WPHF’s six outcome areas and which is based

on the Theory of Change for peaceful and gender equal societies; ii) the monitoring and reporting framework for WPHF’s fund level indicators as approved by the Board, and iii) through the development of key performance indicators (KPIs) against both strategic objectives and cross-cutting areas of focus.

WPHF RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND THEORY OF CHANGE

The WPHF results framework and associated indicators will be measured on an annual basis with the submission of country level reports and consolidated at a global level against WPHF’s 21 outcome level indicators. Drawing on a nested model, whereby partner civil society organizations (CSOs) select among a set of impact level indicators (equivalent to WPHF’s Outcome Indicators) during calls for proposals, WPHF will aggregate key results on an annual basis based on country-level reports by management entities. To ensure context-specific M&E, CSO partners will develop their own outcome-level and output-level statements and indicators.

During the selection stage of CfPs, WPHF will continue to review CSO partner results frameworks and provide technical input to ensure gender sensitive and Do No Harm approaches are used. At the country level, management entities will be responsible for the daily monitoring and demonstration of country-level results.

Capacity building and sharing will also continue to be a key approach for WPHF and throughout the strategic period, a series of Monitoring Evaluation Reporting related webinars will be carried out with CSO partners

through WPHF’s Global L-HUB. To date, ten webinars on topics covering feminist approaches to M&E, results-based management, use of excel and data visualization, measurement of women’s coalitions, among others have been conducted.

At the Fund level, WPHF will draw on its six performance indicators as outlined in its Operations Manual approved by the Funding Board and track against key milestones set by the Fund. These milestones will be revisited in the first year of the Strategic Plan’s implementation to ensure the current targets are relevant. Ensuring an iterative approach to M&E, WPHF will periodically revisit its outcome level indicators to ensure they remain responsive. Key performance metrics will also be tracked through the MPTF Office results management system.

A global management information system (MIS) will be used to track all grants at WPHF, providing information on various indicators, including people served, types of organizations, UN first time funding, coverage, funding amounts, among others. The MIS will integrate any new indicators or KPIs for the monitoring of the Strategic Plan and its objectives. This will allow WPHF to provide real-time information to the Funding Board and other stakeholders on key metrics.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES

WPHF will monitor the implementation of its key strategic objectives of increased quality funding to local women's rights/led organizations and the investment in global learning and coalition building. This will include monitoring institutional funding and unearmarked funding to local organizations as well as drawing on WPHF outcome indicators of continuity and personnel retained as a result of institutional support. For the latter priority, WPHF will continue to measure the effectiveness of global learning initiatives, the utilization rates of acquired skills and knowledge by CSO partners, among others.

In addition, it will track the progress of the nine key strategic funding objectives and report against the Strategic Plan annually. WPHF will use a tagging system to monitor progress on the cross-cutting areas of focus, in order to track the number of project interventions with a focus on the climate security and food security, as well as the number of youth-focused or young women-led organizations and co-implementing partners to demonstrate its commitment to YPS agenda.

Finally, based on the aforementioned funding gap analysis, WPHF, through its global management information system will continue to track local women's organizations and their co-implementing partners working in conflict, fragile and crisis countries and the people they

serve, including those led by forcibly displaced persons and the various intersectional identities of people they serve, as identified by country priorities (e.g., disability, LGBTQIA+, indigenous groups, etc.). It will produce and disseminate monthly dashboards against its key indicators.

DATA TO INFORM PROGRAMMING AND LEARNING

WPHF will use data and evidence to inform decision-making and learning across the fund. Through periodic reflection sessions with country offices, CSO and NGO partners, WHRDs, and other stakeholders, WPHF will use information to improve the operationalization of windows and share best practices on WPS-HA programming.

Starting in 2023, WPHF will carry out a Fund-wide external evaluation against OECD-DAC criteria. The findings from this evaluation will help to inform not only the progress against WPHF funding windows, but to help inform the progress of the Strategic Plan. The Board may commission additional independent reviews against the Strategic Plan to determine its implementation.

Finally, on an annual basis, in addition to the CSO Annual Survey on WPS-HA, WPHF will produce a global WPS-HA index based on a set of internationally recognized and standard set of indicators to demonstrate the trends that are occurring in WPHF targeted countries and to take stock of the women peace and security and humanitarian action (WPS-HA) context and the

participation of local women's rights organizations (WROs) in this space. Piloted in 2021, the index will help inform funding allocation decision-making of the Fund, and to increase funding to WROs in crisis and conflict affected countries. This index will also be used to contribute to global dialogue and advocacy efforts around

WPS-HA for increased support and funding channeled to local women's rights organizations in crisis and conflict settings, as well as will provide a snapshot and subsequent trends on WPHF's overall expected impact of contributing to more peaceful and gender equal societies in the countries it supports.

Risk Management

The WPHF's risk management framework identifies the potential events that may affect the WPHF adequate functioning, a timely grant delivery and an effective and safe project implementation.

The Multi Partner Trust Fund Office, as the Administrative Agent for the Fund, is accountable for the proper use of funds entrusted to it, including through the WPHF. Under this accountability framework, the WPHF Secretariat, hosted by UN Women, follows all applicable rules, regulations, policies and procedures, reports to the Funding Board on issues related to risk, and carry out an annual risk assessment review, updating its risk strategy, including the ranking matrix and risk monitoring table, as needed.

The WPHF structures its risk analysis in terms of the source of risk²⁸:

- **The broader context:** risks emanating from the broader country context. For example: the risk of state failure, or return to conflict.
- **The fund's governance/strategy:** risks emanating from the fund's ties to a broader governance or aid architecture. For example: fund allocations not aligned to strategic objectives and/or poorly prioritized fund allocations.
- **The fund's programmes and operations:** risk emanating from programme design and implementation. For example: weak capacity of implementing partners; diversion of funds; poorly designed fund interventions.

In line with the UNDG risk management framework²⁹ and in order to leverage its risk management potential, the WPHF has developed a risk management strategy to accelerate delivery and increase fund impact, ensure that fund operations 'do no harm', verify that funds are used for their intended purpose, and build risk management capacity of national institutions.

The WPHF's risk management strategy starts with a shared understanding by the Funding Board of the main risks facing the Fund. Once the risks are identified, the Secretariat conducts a risk assessment to rate each risk and ensure an appropriate level of response. Information is sought from various sources including internal incident data, audits, key informant interviews, questionnaires and open-source data³⁰. Consideration is also given to the specific risk drivers and outcomes. For each risk, the likelihood that it may materialize and the impact or consequence it would have in the absence of any mitigating actions (i.e., inherent risk levels) is estimated. The results of such an assessment are presented in a risk ranking matrix.

The risk management strategy is reflected in WPHF's grant allocation criteria, including geographic and thematic priorities and project partner selection criteria. All projects applying for funding need to comply with the Fund's risk policy, tolerance, and other requirements (e.g., do no harm analysis).

WPHF monitors any possible changes in the identified risks, mitigation strategies and their implementation at two levels:

- **Monitoring of the risks**

(likelihood, impact, new risks). The frequency of monitoring depends on the nature and level of the risk. For example, security risks may require frequent monitoring, whereas monitoring the health of a banking system may take place every 6 months.

- **Monitoring of the treatment**

measures itself for effectiveness and potential second-order risks.

In addition, the WPHF Secretariat regularly screens any possible emerging challenges that can pose new risks and potentially impact the work of the CSO partners and project delivery, including global challenges such as COVID-19, and reassesses and reacts as and when necessary and to prioritize critical responses.



THE WPHF INVEST-IN-WOMEN HIGH LEVEL SUMMIT OCTOBER 2023

The [WPHF Invest-In-Women](#) High Level Summit will convene governments, civil society leaders, UN entities, celebrities, philanthropists and the private sector at UN Headquarters on the sidelines of the UNSC Open Debate on Women Peace and Security in October 2023. The summit will constitute a milestone moment and opportunity for UN Members States to announce ambitious new financial commitments to invest in the transformational power of women on the front lines.



FOOTNOTES

1) 2022 UNSG Annual Report on Women Peace and Security. Retrieved: [UN Documents for Women, Peace and Security: Secretary-General's Reports \(securitycouncilreport.org\) S-2022-740](https://www.un.org/en/peace-keeping/secretary-general/reports/2022-annual-report-on-women-peace-and-security).

2) Ibidem.

3) UN Secretary-General, Report on Women and Peace and Security, S/2022/740, October 2022, paragraph 11.

4) Report of the UN Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740) October 2022.

5) Supporting Women Human Rights Defenders, Internal Guidance Note, UN Women, August 2020.

6) The WPHF identifies Women Human Rights Defenders as women or those who identify as women who individually or in association / coalition with others, formally or informally, act to promote or protect human rights, including women's rights, in a peaceful manner, at the local, national, regional, and international level in conflict and crisis affected contexts. This aligns with the definition of human rights defenders of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Based on the UN Special Rapporteur Reports about human rights defenders A/HRC/16/44 (2010) para 30 and A/HRC/40/60 (2019), para 12 and UN General Assembly resolution 68/181 (2013).

7) WPHF identifies women peacebuilders as women and young women, or those who identify as women, who actively participate in prevention and resolution of violent conflicts, social cohesion, protection of civilians and recovery efforts for a lasting peace. Examples include women mediators, members of national dialogue, truth & reconciliation committees, demobilization, disarmament and reinsertion programs, and women human rights defenders.

8) UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. Commentary to the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. July 2011. Web. January 2014. page 19.

9) S/2020/946.

10) Report of the UN Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740) October 2022.

11) Report of the UN Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2022/740) October 2022.

12) Ibidem.

13) To know more about the establishment of WPHF, please read the latest version of the WPHF Operations Manual in the WPHF website.

14) The COVID-19 Emergency Response Window was operational from April 2020 to 2022.

15) UN Secretary General Women Peace and Security Annual Report, 9 October 2019, S/2019/800, p.37

16) This includes the 2021 Open Letter to Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in advance of the annual Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security signed by 373 feminist organizations from 88 countries. October 2019. <https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/open-letter-un-wps-whrds-october-2021/>

17) In 2022, WPHF conducted an analysis looking at needs, priorities, absorption capacity of the country level Management Entities, funding allocations, assessment of emerging issues and other available data on WPHF active countries and existing funding mechanisms to establish the funding gap for women's organizations in the areas of peace, security and humanitarian.

18) In UN Women Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security. New York. October 2012.

19) Flexible, multi-year, programmatic and core funding.

20) WPHF launched a survey in January 2023 among WPHF CSO partners to take stock of the space and support for local women's organizations in peace, security and humanitarian action (WPS-HA) in countries where WPHF is channelling funding. The [survey results](#) (Annex D of the 2022 Annual Report) demonstrate that more than half of organizations ranked food security, gender equality and peace as a priority area and need, followed by climate change; digitalization/use of digital tools/technology and/or innovative approaches; youth and WPS-HA agenda; and disability mainstreaming.

21) Eighty-seven local women peacebuilders, humanitarian responders and human rights defenders convened in Berlin in May at WPHF's second Global Women's Forum for Peace and Humanitarian Ac-

tion (GWF2023), which was organized by WPHF in partnership with Germany's Federal Foreign Office (GFFO). The global convening culminated with the adoption of the groundbreaking Berlin Declaration 2023, an outcome statement reflecting a wide range of women's civil society voices defining local women's organizations' key priorities and calling on the world to take action and invest in their transformational work in conflict and crisis settings across the globe. To know more about the GWF2023 please visit WPHF's [website](#).

22) In 2022 the WPHF undertook a survey among previous and current CSO partners 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 as custodians of food and food preparation in their households, and as advocates for more gender-responsive food systems and equal land rights. A striking 98% of respondents said that they are ready to take on leadership roles in food security issues. [add link to survey brief]

23) [United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR\) 2250 \(2015\)](#) is the first international policy framework that recognizes the positive role young people play in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism, and building peace. The UNSCR 2250 was followed by the [independent progress study on youth, peace and security: the missing peace \(2018\)](#) and [UN Security Council Resolution 2419 \(2018\)](#).

24) [United Nations Security Council Resolution \(UNSCR\) 2250 \(2015\)](#) is the first international policy framework that recognizes the positive role young people play in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism, and building peace. The UNSCR 2250 was followed by the [independent progress study on youth, peace and security: the missing peace \(2018\)](#) and [UN Security Council Resolution 2419 \(2018\)](#).

25) The WPHF evaluation is expected to be completed on the first quarter of 2024.

26) UNSG remarks to the Women's Civil Society Town Hall, New York, 13 March 2023. Retrieved: [here](#)

27) The Rapid Response Window and the Women Human Rights Defenders Window have supported an

average of 4% of the proposals received, and under the Regular Funding Cycle, 11% of the received proposals were awarded a grant.

28) Risk: the uncertainty that affects the outcome of activities or interventions (DFID, 2011). Risk assessment: the process to determine the nature and extent of risk by analyzing hazards and evaluating existing conditions of vulnerability that together could potentially harm exposed people, property, services, livelihoods, and the environment on which they depend. A comprehensive risk assessment not only evaluates the magnitude and likelihood of potential losses but also provides full understanding of the causes and impact of those losses (UNDP, BCPR Factsheet - Disaster Risk Assessment). Risk management: to all activities required to identify and control exposure to risk that may impact results. The role of risk management is to limit exposure to an acceptable level of risk in relation to the expected gain by taking action to reduce the probability of the risk occurring and its likely impact (DFID, 2011).

29) UNDG (draft March 2015).

30) UNDG (draft March 2015).

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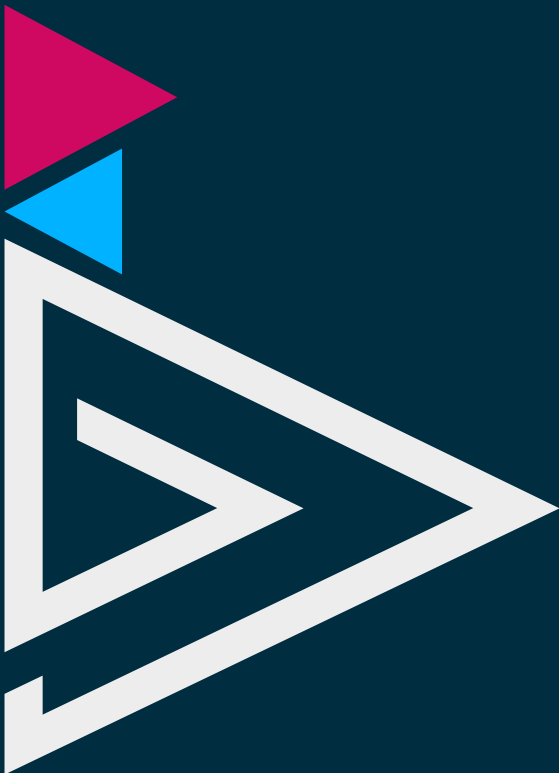
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GLOSSARY

CfP	Call for Proposals
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GFFO	Germany’s Federal Foreign Office
GNWP	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
GWF	Global Women’s Forum for Peace and Humanitarian Action
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexual, Asexual, and others
L-HUB	Global Learning Hub
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MPTF	UNDP Multi-partner Trust Fund Office
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD-DAC	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee
OHCHR	United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner
RC/HC	Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator
RFC	Regular Funding Cycle
RRW	Rapid Response Window
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SP	Strategic Plan
UN	United Nations
UNDG	The United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United National Security Council
UNSCR	United National Security Council Resolution
UNSG	United National Secretary General
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WPHF	Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPS	Women Peace and Security
WPS-HA	Women Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action
WROs	Women’s Rights Organizations
YPS	Youth Peace and Security





Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund

A United Nations & Civil Society Partnership