Call for Proposals
Syria

Call Opens:	14 January 2026
Deadline for submission:	2 February 2026
Submit application package	Complete online form: **https://share.hsforms.com/1OpUOnh22TdemsZyo_Iiu4wctfxv**

1. Objectives and Purpose of the Call for Proposals

The overall purpose of this call for proposals is to provide grants to local women and young women's rights civil society organizations in Syria focused on peacebuilding and recovery. Particular emphasis is placed on supporting grassroots and emerging women's organizations, including those working in partnership with smaller or informal women networks rooted in the targeted communities. The call for proposals specifically contributes to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) overall goal of contributing to contributing to peaceful and gender equal societies.

Initiatives should aim to reach women and girls experiencing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as those excluded due to geographic location, ethnicity, disability, age, displacement status, among others and which is in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and the principle of leaving no one behind.

2. Country Context Linked to Call for Proposals

Humanitarian needs in Syria have reached an all-time high, with 16.5 million people requiring humanitarian assistance, marking the highest number since the crisis began in 2011. The situation has worsened due to ongoing economic deterioration, lack of livelihood opportunities, and the lingering impact of the February earthquakes, despite more than three years having passed. Women and girls face heightened protection, economic and social risks, particularly in their pursuit of food, income, employment, and safety, as community resilience and social cohesion continues to erode under mounting pressure. Meanwhile, the conflict in Lebanon has compounded Syria's crisis by disrupting trade routes, straining an already fragile economy, and increasing security risks across the region.

Following the political developments of 08 December 2024 and the establishment of an interim governing authority, additional vulnerabilities have emerged amid ongoing economic challenges and institutional constraints. At the same time, the evolving context presents limited but important opportunities to support recovery and stabilization, provided that inclusive, conflict-sensitive, and resilience-oriented approaches are pursued.

As of 23 January, UNHCR reported that nearly 210,000 Syrians have crossed back to the country since 08 December 2024. This includes the return of more than 20,100 Syrian refugees from Jordan since 08 December, of which 91 per cent are returning for the first time. Furthermore, the return of over 400,000 Syrians since early 2025 has placed significant pressure on limited local services, Furthermore, the return of over 400,000 Syrians since early 2025 has placed significant pressure on already overstretched local services, contributing to increased needs related to shelter, health, food security, and social protection. Further returns are anticipated, which may compound existing vulnerabilities, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Women and girls are disproportionately affected by these dynamics. They continue to face barriers in accessing essential services, legal protection, sustainable livelihoods, and safe participation in public and community life.. At the same time, women remain key actors in sustaining families, supporting community cohesion, and facilitating local-level recovery efforts, often through informal networks and voluntary initiatives. Hence, empowering women and integrating their voices into decision-making offers a strategic opportunity to reinforce community resilience and drive sustainable recovery.

Over 90% of the population lives below the poverty line as a consequence of protracted conflict, previous sanctions, and regional instability. Meanwhile, significant reductions in Official Development Assistance (ODA) have further constrained humanitarian and recovery efforts, disproportionately affecting local civil society organizations, particularly women-led and women's rights organizations, whose operational and financial sustainability remains fragile. Across Syria, the lack of safety, public services, and persisting economic challenges continue to weigh heavily on communities and hinder humanitarian response. Many households are unable to put food on their tables due to reduced purchasing power, limited employment opportunities, especially in rural areas—and liquidity constraints. Cash withdrawal limitations continue to affect NGOs, contractors, and service providers, directly impacting aid efforts. Critical infrastructure, including electricity networks, roads, and waste management, urgently needs rehabilitation and repair after nearly 14 years of conflict.

In this worsening humanitarian landscape, strengthening the capacity of local NGOs / CSOs, and particularly women led organizations WLOs, women rights' organizations, and community-based women networks is essential. Prioritizing women's empowerment, their meaningful participation in community decision-making and recovery processes, and their equitable access to essential services, livelihoods, and legal protection is critical. A gender-responsive and locally driven approach that places local women and both formal and informal women's networks at the center of peacebuilding and recovery efforts is fundamental to addressing immediate needs and supporting effective, inclusive, and sustainable recovery.

3. Scope (Location and Duration)

The WPHF will fund qualifying projects only in the following areas: Sweida, Quneitra, Homs, Lattakia, Tartous, Daraa and Aleppo.

Multi-country projects, or projects outside the geographical focus will NOT be accepted.

CSOs can apply for grants for projects implemented for a duration of **2 years (24 months)** maximum.

4. Eligibility

4.1. Who can apply and receive funding?
National, regional or local/grassroots women or young women led, women's rights, youth rights, feminist, or civil society organizations with a proven track record working with women, young women and girls in forced displacement, are eligible to apply. Organizations who are also led by women who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including displaced and returnee women, women with disabilities, and women from ethnic or marginalized communities, etc., are encouraged to apply, particularly displaced persons, disabilities, ethnic minorities, etc.

> **Women's Rights or Feminist Organization:** The organizations must have gender equality and women's rights at the core of their official mission/vision statement. The organization's experience should clearly reflect addressing multiple/intersecting forms of discrimination and advancing gender equality and women's rights and aim to address the underlying drivers/systems/structures, including patriarchy and gendered power dynamics, and work to transform these.

Women-Led Organization: must be headed by a woman as director/head of organization.

Youth Focused Organization: To be considered "youth focused", the organization's core mission/vision must focus on supporting the social, economic and political participation of young women and young men and addressing multiple/ intersecting forms of discrimination against young women and men. WPHF will provide specific attention to youth focused organizations supporting young women, advancing gender equality and peacebuilding.

Young Women Led Organization: must be headed by a young person aged between 18 - 29 years old who serves as director/head of organization

The following are **NOT** eligible to apply for a grant from the WPHF:
- International non-governmental organizations;
- Government agencies or institutions;
- UN agencies or UN Country Teams;
- Private individuals;
- Private sector entities;
- Universities, Think Tanks or Education or Research Institutions

4.2. Do we need to be legally registered as an organization to apply?

YES, for the lead applicant. The lead applicant organization must have legal status with the competent national authority (namely Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL) in Syria) in the eligible country of project implementation and must submit proof of legal registration with the application package. Note that articles of incorporation are not proof of legal status.

NO for co-implementing or consortium partners. Co-implementing partners are not required to provide legal registration, we encourage to work and coordinate with women-led groups under-registration- only the lead applicant organization have to be legally registered.

4.3. Can we apply in partnership or consortium with other organizations?
YES. Joint projects with other local women's rights, youth focused, or women or young women led civil society organizations are encouraged. Joint projects in partnership with other local women's rights, young women-led, and civil society organizations which are led by marginalized groups including those who are forcibly displaced, living with disabilities, indigenous, etc. are also encouraged.

For joint projects, only the lead organization is required to meet the eligibility criteria. For joint projects, the roles and responsibilities of <u>each</u> organization must be clearly detailed within the application template.

4.4. May we apply for funding for an ongoing or existing initiative or project?
YES. The WPHF accepts proposals for ongoing projects funded by other donors. However, the specific value added of the contribution should be clearly outlined.

4.5. Does my organization have to contribute to the project budget?
NO. Civil society organizations are not required to contribute to the budget.

4.6. Can we use artificial intelligence (AI) to write our proposals?
Civil society organizations are encouraged to write in their own voice. WPHF does not evaluate proposals based on the quality of the writing, but rather the content and alignment to the call for proposals. Please also be aware of the risks in using AI, including identifying information being public, data security, generic information, etc. Proposals which are plagiarized will be excluded.

5. Type of Funding

Under this call for proposals, WPHF is accepting applications for both institutional/core funding and programmatic funding. An organization (lead applicant or co-implementing partners) can submit one application for institutional funding, AND/OR one application for programmatic funding.

Organizations who apply for both institutional and programmatic funding need to submit two separate applications packages based on the related templates of each stream as noted in Section 6.

Institutional Funding: (USD $2,500 - $30,000)	AND/ OR	Programmatic Funding: (USD $30,000 - $200,000)
Aims to reinforce the institutional capacity of women's rights/led organizations that have a specific focus on women and young women in forced displacement in their mission, that have project activities that are led by women and young women who are forcibly displaced and/or that have displaced women and young women as staff members. It aims to ensure they are able to sustain themselves and to improve their impact. Prospective applicants will need to demonstrate how the current context affects their institutional and financial capacities and how the funding would support them as an organization. It will finance a limited range of activities to support the development or strengthening of a CSO's institutional capacity.		This funding stream will finance projects which aim specifically to fund programmatic activities aligned with the following impact area: **WPHF Impact Area Peacebuilding & Recovery:** Enhanced social cohesion, peacebuilding and economic empowerment of women and young women in crisis and conflict settings
The purpose of this funding stream IS NOT to finance programmatic activities. Organizations who apply for institutional funding should have a mandate aligned to the objectives of the call for proposal.		

Please read through the WPHF Indicator Tip Sheets for guidance on the results framework (Section 10 below) and required indicators in the attached proposal template.

6. Application Package

Applicants are required to use only the WPHF templates provided. DO NOT submit photos or additional documents other than the ones listed.

☐ Institutional Funding Proposal Template (download)

AND/OR
☐ Programmatic Funding Proposal Template (download)

AND

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☐ **Proof of valid legal registration or status of the lead organization** (if you are in the process for renewal, please share proof)

6.1 How to Submit a Proposal

Online: Applicants should submit online using the following link, including uploading the proposal template and registration certificate: **https://share.hsforms.com/1OpUOnh22TdemsZyo_liu4wctfxv**

Email submissions are **not** eligible.

Deadline: Application packages are to be received no later than 2 February 2026 by 11:59pm Geneva CET

Please Note:
- Applications can be submitted online in English or Arabic.
- Attachments can be uploaded on the online form in .doc, .docx, or .pdf format.
- Legal registration certificates can be uploaded on the online form in jpeg, doc., docx., or pdf format.
- All documents should be submitted together as one package.
- You may not make changes to your application after it is submitted.
- Proposal templates, including any annexes cannot be altered. Incomplete applications, or use of different templates will not be considered.
- Please DO NOT resend your application unless you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within three days.

7. Obtaining More Information about the Call for Proposals

An information session will be organized with prospective applicants on **Monday 26 January 2026 from 11 am - 12:30 pm Damascus time**. Please click on the link below to join the session at the specified date and time:

Zoom link: https://undp.zoom.us/j/85331215481

Questions can be sent to the **UNDP Country office** to syria.ngo@undp.org, syria.gender@undp.org.

Please allow a minimum of 72 working hours for responses to any questions.

8. Evaluation Criteria

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

Institutional Funding Evaluation Criteria (Stream 1)	Programmatic Funding Evaluation Criteria (Stream 2)
Project Objectives ☐ Organization's mandate is aligned with WPHF's theory of change and mission aligns with the WPHF impact area ☐ Clear rationale how the current crisis affects the organization's institutional and financial capacities ☐ Clear outputs and activities which contribute to strengthening CSOs institutional capacity and how the organization will be sustained	**Project Objectives** ☐ Organization's mandate is aligned with WPHF's theory of change and overall project responds to the specific call for proposal and impact statement. ☐ Definition of clear expected results which respond to the current conflict/crisis with a women peace and security and/or humanitarian lens, and taking account of best practices of gender-responsive approaches ☐ Clear and realistic outputs and activities planned to accomplish the expected results, and achievable within the time frame ☐ Ensures meaningful participation of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as those marginalized

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☐ Identification of risks and appropriate mitigation measures	and excluded due to poverty, ethnicity, disability, age, geography, migratory status, among others which are in clear alignment with Agenda 2030 of leaving no one behind.
Budget ☐ The budget includes indirect operational costs at the allowed level (no more than 7.0%) ☐ The budget is sufficient and reasonable for the activities proposed and takes the scale of problems into account	**Programme Management and Monitoring** ☐ Identification of comprehensive risks and appropriate mitigation measures ☐ Identification of relevant and appropriate feminist monitoring and evaluation approaches, including Do no Harm, and including management structure of the project
	Collaboration and National Ownership ☐ Promotion of national and local ownership and collaboration in developing and establishing activities, and specific objectives to build the capacities of national and local players.
	Budget ☐ The budget includes indirect operational costs at the allowed level (no more than 7.0%) ☐ The budget is sufficient and reasonable for the activities proposed and takes the scale of problems into account

9. Next Steps After Submission of Proposals to WPHF

After the close of the call for proposals, the following will take place:

▶ Submitted proposals which are complete and received within the timeline will be screened for compliance based on the requirements of this call for proposals (longlisting).

▶ Longlisted proposals will undergo a technical evaluation by WPHF based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section 8 above. Those which score over 50/100 will be shortlisted.

▶ A National Steering Committee (NSC) will convene to review the shortlisted proposals and will select proposals based on the available funding. The NSC may also make recommendations on the revision of budgets of proposals.

▶ Only selected CSOs for funding will be contacted directly by email by the UN country Management Entity of the WPHF (UNDP).

▶ Please note that this process can take up to 4-5 months after the closure of the call for proposals.

▶ We encourage you to visit https://wphfund.org/calls-for-proposals/ for future funding opportunities.

10. Useful Resources

- The WPHF's website www.wphfund.org
- Impact and Indicator Tip Sheet Institutional Funding
- Impact and Indicator Tip Sheet: Impact: Peacebuilding and Recovery
- Project Design and Proposal Writing for Women-Led CSOs Working in Conflict and Crisis Contexts: Recording and PowerPoint Presentation

About the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

The WPHF is a global pooled funding mechanism which aims to stimulate a significant increase in financing for women's participation, leadership, and empowerment in peace and security processes and humanitarian response. The WPHF is a flexible and rapid financing mechanism. It supports quality interventions designed to enhance the capacity of local women to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities. The overall goal of the WPHF's theory of change is to contribute to **peaceful and gender equal societies**. Achievement of this goal will require that women are empowered to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding, and recovery. Since its launch in 2016, WPHF has been supporting over 1,700 civil society organizations and is present in 48 countries.

The WPHF is governed by a Funding Board at the global level, which is comprised of four UN entities (currently UN Women, UNHCR, UNFPA and PBSO), four donor Member States (currently Germany, the United Kingdom, France, and Norway), as well as 4 Civil Society Organizations (currently She's the First, Reach Out Cameroon, Women for Women International, and Politics 4 Her).

At the country level, the final selection of shortlisted proposals will be undertaken by a National Steering Committee, which is comprised of UN agencies, civil society organizations, donor representatives and governments.