



WE NEED WOMEN!

PRESS RELEASE - 8 MARCH 2023

Although women represent almost half of humanity, they are still struggling to take their rightful place, and particularly in contexts facing severe humanitarian crisis.

In Afghanistan, living conditions continue to deteriorate, especially for women and girls. An estimated 6.5 million women will be in urgent need of humanitarian assistance to survive this year along with 21.7 million men and children.

17 million Afghans will not be able to feed themselves; including 6 million just one-step away from famine – one of the highest figures in the world. In particular, infants, young children and their mothers are most at risk of malnutrition.

13.2 million Afghan women and children under five will be in need of health assistance in 2023, while health facilities suffer from a lack of female aid workers.

Infant mortality rate in Afghanistan is among the highest in the world – particularly in rural areas, as few as 3 percent of deliveries are attended by a skilled professional. On the other hand, every 100,000 live births, 638 women die due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

The role of women is vital when identifying and addressing women and children needs.

Humanitarian impact on millions of women and children accessing services:

Without women's participation life-saving assistance for 23.7 million Afghans, of which 51% are women and girls, prioritized to receive multi-sector humanitarian assistance in 2023 will be at stake. The number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in 2023 has already increased by 54 percent in the last two years.

Without women's participation in humanitarian response, cultural barriers will limit women's access to humanitarian aid; in particular, widows, female-headed households and women with special needs. An [assessment by UN Women](#) reflects that aid organizations in Afghanistan are already seeing an increased impact on their access to women.

Without women's participation, aid organization will not be able to deliver safe, principled, effective and quality humanitarian assistance to millions of Afghans.

The last two decades have seen tremendous efforts to develop a health system, including expanding access to primary health care throughout the country and training of female health

workers, resulting in significant progress towards the reduction of maternal mortality and safe births.

Without women's participation, and access to higher education the gains made in the last decades are at stake.

We need women!

Première Urgence Internationale¹ has been working in Afghanistan for more than four decades. More than 98% of **Première Urgence Internationale** staff are national, working in their own communities in full respect and accordance with the law, cultural and religious norm to provide women, men, girls and boys with life-saving health care, nutrition, mental health and psychosocial support as well as water, sanitation and hygiene services.

We need women to be part of the response to ensure quality humanitarian programming, as female aid workers are critical to assessing, delivering, and monitoring aid.

We need women to address specific assistance in fields such as mother and childcare health, post and ante natal care counselling, delivery services for pregnant women.

We need women educated, and trained female health professionals to follow the progress made in health over the past few decades, especially for women and children.

We need women to be able to assist women and girls to avoid a devastating humanitarian impact in the future, as well as on the current humanitarian crisis.

We need women at our static and mobile health facilities as well as in administrative positions, to ensure a safe, effective and principled humanitarian response.

Women are not an option; they are a major component of our societies.

For more information and interview requests, please contact:

Jessica Kühnle, Public Affairs Manager: paf.man@premiere-urgence-afg.org, +93 79 6437579

Amal Huart, Press and Communication Officer: ahuart@premiere-urgence.org, +33 7 83 42 57 19