

**Background note on the Special Address of Her Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development**

**Annual Session of the Executive Board**

**Monday, 26 June 2023**

**Hybrid event in the Auditorium at WFP headquarters and on Zoom**

The world faces a global hunger crisis of unprecedented proportions. [Three hundred and forty-five million people](#) are projected to be acutely food insecure in 2023 across 79 countries with WFP operational presence and where data is available. This is an increase of almost 200 million people more than early 2020 (pre-COVID-19 pandemic). Making matters worse, food prices have increased, inflation has spiked, and women continue to bear the brunt. In order to address these challenges and increase impact, the World Food Programme (WFP) is set on prioritising women as primary recipients of humanitarian cash transfers that benefit the entire household, and transferring money in a way that reflect women's needs, preferences, and experiences, as reflected in the upcoming Cash Policy to be presented to the Board on June 26. When women have accounts in their names and are confident using them, they can be financially resilient, save or access loans, and build a future for themselves and their family. It means that families and entire societies flourish - women can break the cycle of poverty and hunger, enabling WFP to truly save and change lives.

Her Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands has served as the [United Nations Secretary General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development](#) (UNSGSA) since 2009 and as Honorary Patron of the [G20's Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion](#) (GPFI) since 2011. As Special Advocate, Her Majesty is a leading global voice on advancing access and usage of affordable, effective, and responsible financial services that lead to positive outcomes in people's lives. In her advocacy engagements she places emphasis on financial health, the need to reduce the financial inclusion gender gap and inclusive green finance. Her Majesty raises awareness, serves as a convener, encourages leaders, and supports actions to expand financial inclusion at a global and country level, in close collaboration with partners from the public and private sector.

WFP's Cash-based Transfers Division has been in close contact with Her Majesty's UNSGSA Office throughout the past years given Her Majesty's strategic role and alignment with WFP's vision on digital financial inclusion for women through cash transfers.