ANNEX IV

Investing in individual fundraising

Background – why invest in individual fundraising?

1. In 2025, humanitarian needs continue to rise while government funding declines. This widening gap has forced WFP and other humanitarian organizations to scale back the assistance they provide and focus on responding to the most urgent crises. In this context, support from the private sector, particularly from individuals, has become increasingly important. Individual contributions provide vital, flexible funding that enables WFP to respond where needs are greatest and to maintain critical operations in a challenging funding environment. To continue harnessing the potential of individual fundraising, an investment of USD 20 million is sought for 2026 as the second tranche of a multi-year investment of USD 100 million for the period from 2025 to 2030.

2. Investment in individual fundraising is a key strategic shift for WFP, enabling the organization to diversify its donor base and increase the proportion of flexible funding it receives. Up to 30 percent of contributions from individuals *are fully flexible*, which is a higher percentage than that of contributions from WFP's traditional donors.[1] The investment will also support the accelerated production of dynamic information material from WFP field operations, helping to provide more engaging narratives for engaging potential donors. Individual fundraising offers a relatively stable and predictable revenue stream, particularly through regular giving, which is less vulnerable to political shifts or budgetary constraints than institutional funding. With a scalable, "digital-first" infrastructure and access to a largely untapped global market, individual giving provides high flexibility and strong growth potential, enabling WFP to respond more effectively to emerging needs.

3. Funding from individuals and private sector entities around the world represents a growing portion of the overall funding raised by organizations in the humanitarian and development sector. For WFP and its peers,[2] individuals contributed a total of USD 11.5 billion in 2024, or 60 percent of all their income from the private sector. Despite record growth, however, individual fundraising at WFP accounts for just 1.3 percent of the overall individual giving market, implying that there is significant potential for further growth.

4. Since 2020, WFP has invested in building a unique model for raising funds directly from the public, using mainly digital channels. This model has the potential to mobilize up to USD 1.3 billion between 2025 and 2030, provided that additional investment is secured.

5. With the first investment of USD 20 million for 2025, WFP is increasing its efforts to expand the regular donor base of supporters who will provide WFP with reliable income year after year. The expansion into new markets and new channels – through television advertising, the piloting of face-to-face fundraising in five markets and telemarketing – is setting the foundation for a large supporter base delivering flexible sustainable income. As part of this strategy, WFP has secured free advertising space from major advertisement platforms, significantly amplifying its outreach efforts at no additional cost. WFP is on track to reach the USD 138 million target set out in the 2025 investment proposal.

6. The second investment of USD 20 million will be used mainly to increase WFP's presence on digital and established offline channels – leading social media channels, television advertising and face-to-face fundraising in the markets with the highest returns, and

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[1] WFP. 2025. *Flexible Funding 2024: Annual Report on Impact of Flexible Resources*.

[2] Data from the International Fundraising Leadership Forum, a group of 18 international organizations in the humanitarian and development sectors.

telemarketing – while expanding into new markets, and optimizing the mobile application for, and experience of, web-based supporters. The investment will also enable WFP to increase its partnerships with national associations, work to secure stronger roles in large markets and further scale up its engagement with philanthropists.

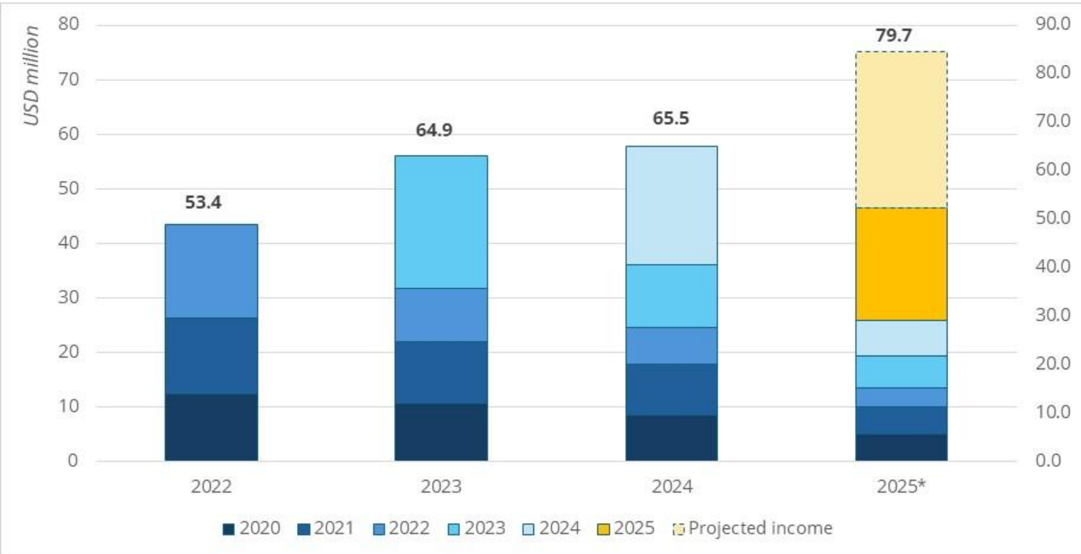
7. In the first half of 2025, the consulting firm Bain & Company carried out a pro-bono review of the existing fundraising strategy. The review indicated that Bain's income projections were in line with WFP's ambition of reaching a cumulative income of USD 1.3 billion through individual giving by 2030. The expansion in 2025 demonstrated that there is still significant untapped potential from increased placement on digital channels.

Income projection and performance

8. WFP's performance in individual fundraising in 2025 demonstrates robust growth and considerable room for further development. By the end of July 2025, individual fundraising efforts had yielded USD 69 million in revenue, putting WFP on a strong trajectory towards the 2025 target of USD 138 million.

9. After recruitment, a supporter's "lifetime value" – the cumulative contribution made during the supporter's period of engagement with WFP – increases every year of their engagement. Acquisition costs are incurred in only the initial year, resulting in higher overall returns compared with single donations. On average, in three years, a regular giver generates USD 421, more than four times the USD 100 generated by a one-time giver. The cumulative lifetime value of recurring supporters continues to rise, as shown in figure A.IV.1. The figure shows how the cohorts of supporters from 2020 to 2025 continue to donate for years after their initial engagement. Data include only WFP's income, but a similar pattern is observed for WFP friends' organizations. Data for 2025 include projected income from donations made until the end of the year.

Figure A.IV.1: WFP's income from individual fundraising, excluding friends' organizations, by recruitment cohort, 2022–2025 (*USD million*)



* Data for 2025 are incomplete.

WFP's approach to creating a successful and sustainable programme

10. The growth of the individual fundraising programme will be sustained by a reinvestment approach, whereby a portion of the funds raised from individuals is reinvested into future fundraising activities.

11. WFP allocates between 5 and 29 percent of each individual donation to future marketing and operational expenses. Given the increased revenue from individual fundraising, the funds available for reinvestment each year are expected to rise between 2025 and 2030, from USD 103 million in the absence of additional investment to USD 217 million with the expected additional investment. This creates a multiplier effect as each contribution not only supports immediate operations but also facilitates the acquisition of new supporters.

Budget

12. Most of the USD 20 million investment requested will be allocated to strengthening the proven global digital model through the placement of advertisements in key countries and seven language markets, with a focus on recruiting regular supporters. A minor portion of the investment will be used to optimize the use of the tools and technology needed to fundraise and to expand partnerships.

13. By the end of July 2025, 97 percent of the USD 20 million allocated for 2025 had been utilized. In total, including the reinvestment funds, the programme had spent USD 23 million by July 2025. Between 2020 and 2024, the programme invested a total of USD 122 million and generated an income of USD 463 million for WFP, representing a substantial return on investment.

TABLE A.IV.1: BUDGET OVERVIEW, 2025–2030 *(USD million)*

	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Investment from the unearmarked portion of the General Fund	20	20	20	15	15	10
Reinvestment (retained income)	22	26	31	38	47	52
Total funding available	**43***	**46**	**51**	**53**	**62**	**62**
Markets and channels, including media, budget	32	35	39	41	49	49
Technology budget	2	2	2	2	2	2
Operational budget	9	9	10	10	11	11
Total budget	**43**	**46**	**51**	**53**	**62**	**62**

Markets and channels budget: covers mainly media costs – advertising through social media, television advertising, face-to-face channels and the agency costs for placing advertisements in certain media outlets.

Technology budget: covers the technology behind the mobile application and web-based donation platforms.

Operational budget: covers mainly staff and staff-related cost that contribute towards the acquisition and retention of donors.

* Includes savings from previous years.

Investments from the unearmarked portion of the General Fund for 2027–2030 are indicative and subject to performance and funding availability.

Return on investment

14. In 2024, individual fundraising generated USD 116 million with USD 21 million being spent for the fundraising programme, including media investments, infrastructure and payroll costs.

15. In the absence of further investment, the individual fundraising model would be expected to yield a total of USD 714 million from 2025 to 2030. During this period, USD 103 million would have been allocated for reinvestment into the fundraising programme.

16. With an investment of USD 100 million over the same period, of which USD 20 million was disbursed in 2025 and USD 20 million is requested for 2026, and based on the results of the

previous phase of the individual fundraising programme and the first half year of the 2025 investment, an additional USD 602 million would be generated, bringing the total income to USD 1.3 billion. With the USD 100 million investment in individual fundraising, the income stream for WFP is expected to stabilize at approximately USD 300 million per year.

Figure A.IV.2: Individual fundraising programme: projected impacts of increased investment versus no investment, 2020–2030

How to measure success?

17. WFP's KPIs for the individual fundraising programme focus on the total funds raised each year. These metrics are critical for assessing the effectiveness of WFP's fundraising efforts and the expansion of its supporter base. The investment of USD 20 million, along with reinvestment amounts, is projected to result in a total income of USD 163 million in 2026 with increases as shown in figure A.IV.2.

- As of 31 July 2025, WFP had been able to secure more than 64,000 regular givers out of the target of 82,000 in 2025, strengthening the foundation for sustained flexible income. The long-term objective is to increase the share of income received from regular donors from 37 percent in 2025, to more than 50 percent in 2028 and beyond.
- KPI I: Fundraising income – USD 163 million in 2026.
- KPI II: Percentage received as fully flexible funding – 30 percent.

TABLE A.IV.2: INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISING PROGRAMME, KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TARGETS, 2025–2030

KPI	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Income from individual fundraising *(USD million)*	138	163	196	236	279	304
% of fully flexible funding	30	30	30	30	30	30