



A United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund

Terms of Reference (V2)

14 March 2019 – 31 December 2025

(to be extended to 31 March 2028)

Through the name of this Fund, we honour the legacy of a women's rights pioneer.

Elizabeth "Elsie" Muriel Gregory MacGill was born in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1905. She became the first woman in Canada to graduate with a degree in electrical engineering (1927), and the first in North America to earn a master's degree in aeronautical engineering (1929). Despite being diagnosed with polio in her 20s and told she'd never walk again Elsie became a chief aeronautical engineer and headed the Canadian production of Hawker Hurricane fighter planes during the Second World War. She later ran a successful business and was a commissioner on the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada before being awarded the Order of Canada in 1971.

"I have received many engineering awards, but I hope I will also be remembered as an advocate for the rights of women and children."

- Elsie MacGill

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

A4P	Action for Peacekeeping
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCAF	The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DPO	Department of Peace Operations
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
GEM	Gender Equality Marker
GEWE	Gender equality / women's empowerment
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer
HRDDP	Human Rights Due Diligence Policy
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organization
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
T/PCC	Troop- and Police-Contributing Country
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

1. CONTEXT

The United Nations continues to deploy high numbers of uniformed peacekeepers to 14 missions, many of which are characterized by robust mandates, including for the protection of civilians. United Nations peacekeeping has evolved considerably over past decades, but the number and proportion of deployed women¹ peacekeepers remains too low. Gender equality in peace operations is an important goal in and of itself: women and men have an equal right to participate in United Nations peace operations. There is also evidence that the increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations improves operational effectiveness. Recognizing and integrating the diverse understandings, experiences and capabilities of women into all aspects of United Nations peace operations —and incorporating a gender perspective— is essential for the success of United Nations peacekeeping efforts and sustaining peace.

United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) recognized the unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls; acknowledged the contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding; and highlighted the importance of their equal and full participation, as active agents, in peace and security.² It stressed the need for women’s equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security; urged Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict; and urged the United Nations Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, especially among military observers and civilian police.³

Subsequent Women Peace and Security (WPS) resolutions reflected this ambition. Importantly, United Nations Security Council resolution 2242 (2015) specifically welcomed efforts to incentivize greater numbers of women among military and police personnel deployed to United Nations peace operations, and called upon the Secretary-General to initiate, in collaboration with Member States, a revised strategy, within existing resources, to double the numbers of women in military and police contingents of United Nations peace operations over the next five years (to 2020).⁴ United Nations Security Council resolution 2436 (2018) reaffirmed this goal; emphasized the importance of the strategy ensuring the full, effective and meaningful participation of women in all aspects of peacekeeping; and requested that the Secretary-General elaborate a revised strategy by March 2019. United Nations Security Council resolution 2538 (2020) provides clear direction for member states on how to increase the deployment of uniformed women in peacekeeping; it also addresses the need to provide adequate and appropriate infrastructure and facilities for women in missions, such as accommodation, sanitation, healthcare and protective equipment.⁵

Despite the acknowledged importance of women’s participation in peace and security, the important role uniformed women peacekeepers play, and calls to increase the number of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations, progress towards increasing the number of women has been slow. For the military component of peace operations, the proportion of women has grown from 1.84% in August 2006 to 4.16% in September 2018. For the police component, it has grown from 8.11% in February 2009 (the earliest available sex-disaggregated police data) to 11.21% in September 2018.⁶

¹ For the purposes of this document, “women” refers to all those who identify as women.

² <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/promoting-women-peace-and-security> accessed on 1 Nov 18

³ <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325> accessed on 1 Nov 18

⁴ <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2242> accessed 1 Nov 18

⁵ <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1538> accessed 23 Mar 23

⁶ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender> accessed on 1 Nov 18

The most recent attempt to remedy the failure to substantially increase the representation of uniformed women lies in the Department of Peace Operations' Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028, released in 2019,⁷ the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative⁸ announced in 2018 and the A4P implementation strategy A4P+ - priorities for 2021 – 2023, released in 2021.⁹ The Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy calls on the former Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and FieldSupport (now the Department of Peace Operations), with support from UN Women and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, to develop a dedicated strategy in consultation with troop- and police- contributing countries (T/PCCs) to significantly increase the number of women military and police officers in peace operations.¹⁰ A4P re-commits Member States to increasing the number of civilian and uniformed women in peacekeeping at all levels and in key positions, with the women peace and security agenda subsequently integrated as a cross cutting theme across the A4P+ seven priority areas.

All these initiatives acknowledge that substantially increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers requires the efforts of Member States, and in particular, T/PCCs. The United Nations is dependent on T/PCCs to prepare and deploy more women in the troop and police contributions they provide to peace operations, in order to meet the targets, and, importantly, to achieve the operational effect that women peacekeepers can provide.

However, as United Nations Security Council resolution 2242 outlined, increasing the meaningful participation of women in United Nations peace operations needs to happen within existing United Nations resources. In order to help accelerate the pace of change, in 2017, the Canadian Government launched the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations (“the Elsie Initiative”). This a 5-year, multilateral pilot project which includes, among other components: the design of a global fund to support the deployment of women peacekeepers; and robust research, monitoring and evaluation, including a comprehensive assessment of the barriers to uniformed women’s deployment.

As the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations Baseline Study shows, the reasons for women’s poor representation in United Nations peace operations are many, are often context specific, and vary significantly between countries.¹¹ Given that fact, beyond actions which can be taken by the United Nations to facilitate and enable the deployment of uniformed women in peace operations, it is necessary for T/PCCs to address the barriers within their specific national contexts that prevent women from deploying and/or limit their participation.

2. RATIONALE

2.1 Functions of the Fund

The Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations (hereinafter referred to as the “Fund”) aims to support and incentivize efforts to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. It seeks to accelerate progress towards achieving the United Nations Security Council’s declared target of doubling the rate of women’s participation within police and military contingents by 2020 compared to 2015, as well as supporting targets to increase the proportion of women serving as military observers, staff officers and individual police officers. While women are underrepresented in many

⁷ [United Nations Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#).

⁸ <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>.

⁹ https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p_background_paper.pdf.

¹⁰ [United Nations Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#).

¹¹ Ghittoni, M., Lehouk, L., Watson, C., [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations Baseline Study](#), DCAF, Geneva July 2018, P8.

national militaries and police services, there are enough women serving in uniform in United Nations Member States to meet these targets. This Fund primarily offers assistance and incentives for T/PCCs to identify and overcome barriers to the deployment of trained and qualified uniformed women peacekeepers – including members of military contingents, formed police units, military observers, individual police officers and staff officers. T/PCCs may wish to apply to the fund in coordination with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs),¹² as sub-contractees, and/or United Nations organizations¹³ (also referred to as Participating United Nations Organizations or PUNOs). The Fund can also support projects submitted by United Nations organizations which are designed to implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations; it is understood that these projects would not otherwise be financed from available budgetary and extra-budgetary resources, and further scaling of these projects would be undertaken within existing United Nations resources. As a guideline, the allocation of funds to UN-led projects should not normally exceed 20% of total available funds. The Fund will not directly compensate individuals.

Six categories of barriers have been identified as inhibiting the increased meaningful deployment of women in United Nations peace operations:

1. Women are not given the equal opportunity to deploy in peace operations;
2. Criteria for deployment exclude disproportionate numbers of women;
3. Women are not provided with the necessary working and living environment, facilities and equipment to deploy to and fully participate in peace operations;
4. Family constraints disproportionately prevent women from deploying;
5. Women are not treated equally on deployment and they do not have equal opportunities and incentives for redeployment; and
6. Women do not have equal opportunities for career advancement through deployment, either on-mission or at home.¹⁴

Not all of these barriers can be addressed through increased financial resources. However, additional financing can help T/PCCs identify which barriers are most significant in their specific national context. It can also fund efforts to mitigate some barriers, and it may provide additional incentives for T/PCCs to do so. The Fund will operate for a limited period of five years (renewable), in parallel with existing United Nations financing for peace operations through assessed Member State contributions, to achieve these aims. It acknowledges that funding is an important factor enabling Member States to participate in United Nations peace operations and echoes recent efforts to incentivize quality as well as volume of Member States' peacekeeping contributions. It complements existing financial mechanisms and incentives by focusing specifically on enhancing meaningful participation of women as uniformed United Nations peacekeepers.

¹² Civil Society Organizations broadly captures, though is not limited to, the following organizations: non-governmental organizations, including think tanks and community-based organizations; academics, etc.

¹³ United Nations organizations are defined as United Nations agencies, funds and/or programmes.

¹⁴ Marta Ghittoni, Léa Lehouck and Callum Watson: [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations: Baseline Study](#) (Geneva: DCAF 2018).

Existing United Nations peacekeeping financial mechanisms

Approved United Nations peacekeeping expenditures exceeded \$7.3 billion¹⁵ in the 2017-2018 budget year,¹⁶ which is modest in relative terms,¹⁷ but critical to the United Nations' ability to elicit personnel and equipment contributions from T/PCCs, to manage and sustain deployed peacekeeping personnel, and to implement peacekeeping mandates. From assessed contributions, the United Nations reimburses T/PCCs for their personnel deployment costs at a uniform monthly per capita rate, currently set at \$1,428, generating a yearly cost of \$1.5 billion for today's roughly 92,000 uniformed peacekeepers. The United Nations also reimburses states for deploying contingent-owned equipment, based on a set of rates negotiated triennially; assumes some direct costs associated with deployed uniformed personnel (e.g., rotation, rations, raw water); and funds mission operational requirements (including facilities and infrastructure and medical support) and civilian peacekeeper costs. Aside from Mission Subsistence Allowances for individually deployed staff officers, military observers, and police officers, the United Nations makes negligible direct financial transfers to uniformed peacekeepers.

Financing is an important consideration shaping Member States' decisions on whether and how to contribute uniformed United Nations peacekeepers. T/PCCs may not reap a financial reward from peacekeeping, as deployment costs often equal or exceed United Nations reimbursement rates,¹⁸ but reimbursements make participation more affordable and offer opportunities to pay deployment bonuses to personnel. In recent years, the United Nations has moved incrementally towards a financing system that reflects the quality as well as volume of T/PCCs' contributions. In 2013, the General Assembly approved a premium to T/PCCs for "key enabling capabilities" (which in 2014 gained a rapid deployment dimension), a premium to peacekeepers in units unencumbered by caveats that performed well despite exceptional levels of risk, and a personnel reimbursement deduction for units hampered by missing contingent-owned equipment.¹⁹ In 2017, the General Assembly approved partially reimbursing T/PCCs for major equipment maintenance costs associated with units pledged for rapid deployment, as long as the units deploy when called upon.²⁰

The implementation of these measures has varied. Missing equipment deductions totalled \$333 million from 2014-2017,²¹ risk premium disbursements totalled \$6 million by January 2018, and the key enabling capabilities premium had been paid only once, in the amount of \$252,662. These disbursements were substantially below the originally envisioned ceilings, which were formulated in proportional terms²² but calculated in 2014 to correspond to \$13.3 million per year for the risk premium and \$40 million per year for the key enabling capabilities premium.²³

¹⁵ All figures are expressed in USD.

¹⁶ A/C.5/72/21. For 2018-2019, approved expenditures declined to \$6.7 billion, but this includes only 6 months funding for UNAMID.

¹⁷ [Global military expenditure exceeded \\$2.0 trillion in 2021](#), recent Olympic Games have cost \$8 billion - \$50 billion.

¹⁸ The current personnel reimbursement rate of \$1,428 reflects the weighted average cost found in a 2018 UN survey of a representative sample of ten T/PCCs, five of whom reported higher costs than \$1,428 (A/72/728*).

¹⁹ A/RES/67/261

²⁰ A/RES/71/296. T/PCCs are reimbursed 25% of established maintenance rate for pledged major equipment. Units are also eligible for the key enabling capabilities premium.

²¹ A/72/770

²² The risk premium was not to exceed the equivalent of a 10% premium paid to 10% of deployed personnel, the key enabling capacities ceiling was set at the equivalent of a 15% premium for 20% of contingent personnel.

²³ A/6/813.

This Fund recognises that the United Nations already has in place an evolving financing system that is critical to the organization’s ability to conduct peace operations. It also notes that none of the existing measures and incentives focus specifically on the deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers. It therefore innovates and complements existing United Nations peacekeeping financing by specifically supporting and incentivizing the meaningful participation of uniformed women as United Nations peacekeepers.

1. It supports (current and prospective) T/PCCs in undertaking a barrier assessment to ascertain the nature and extent of obstacles impeding their deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers.
2. It allows T/PCCs to be reimbursed for some additional financial costs related to the deployment of women that are not covered by existing United Nations reimbursement policies.²⁴
3. It incentivizes T/PCCs to increase their meaningful deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers by offering a “gender-strong unit premium.”²⁵ It focuses on the deployment of gender-strong units, rather than individual women, in order to ensure that women are deployed in a working and living environment that allows for their meaningful participation in peace operations.
4. It supports, in a limited manner, targeted pilot projects within United Nations missions aimed at enhancing deployment conditions for women peacekeepers.
5. It commits to sustained assessment exercises to establish the impact of the above measures, and to sharing, as possible, relevant insights.

Given its time and resource limitations, the Fund cannot aspire to fully remedy barriers to uniformed women’s participation in United Nations peace operations. However, it aims to accelerate the pace of change towards increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations, and it serves as a pilot initiative whose implications Member States may wish to consider over the longer term as they work towards their stated goal of enhancing the representation of women in United Nations peace operations.

2.2 Links to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This Fund has multiple links to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by United Nations Member States in 2015.

In seeking to help eliminate barriers preventing women from meaningful participation as uniformed peacekeepers in United Nations peace operations, it directly supports SDG 5 on Gender Equality. SDG 5 is also supported to the extent that the increased meaningful participation by women peacekeepers empowers women in host countries. The empowerment of local women, in turn, has positive implications for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16) and reducing inequalities (SDG 10).

Moreover, increased meaningful participation by uniformed women peacekeepers may enhance United Nations peace operations in ways not directly related to gender, such as expanding the pool of trained and qualified peacekeepers and increasing the range of skills available within a peace operation. Consequently, there are potential positive consequences for all the SDGs that peace operations themselves may contribute

²⁴ For example, a 2018 United Nations survey noted a weighted average of \$1.27 per person in additional pre-deployment medical expenses for women peacekeepers as compared to men: A/72/728*.

²⁵ For a full explanation of the gender-strong unit premium, please see section 3.5 Financing Modalities.

to, including decreasing poverty (SDG 1) and hunger (SDG 2) by enhancing security and helping to support peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16).

2.3 Gender Equality Marker

A Gender Marker (GEM) is a tool designed to track planned or actual financial investments in gender equality within Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTF), and programmes or projects within MPTFs. The standard, system-wide Gender Marker has a scale with four levels: GEM 0 - no contribution to gender equality / women's empowerment (GEWE), GEM 1 - limited contribution, GEM 2/2a - significant contribution, and GEM 3/2b – where GEWE is the principal objective, with activities particularly aimed at narrowing gender inequalities, transforming prejudicial gender norms, or the empowerment of women and girls.

For all EIF funded projects, 100% of resources programmed should contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment and would therefore be classified as GEM 3.

3. THEORY OF CHANGE

3.1 Impact

The Fund seeks to:

Accelerate the pace of change towards the increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations.

The Fund aims to contribute to this impact, but it cannot be achieved by or through the Fund alone.

Participation in a peace operation is meaningful when the person being deployed is in a position commensurate with her or his professional training and expertise, and is able to make an active contribution to the mission. Increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations is achieved when more women are actively deployed at all levels of United Nations missions in roles corresponding to their qualifications.

The Fund's primary indicators of impact are:

- The percentage of deployed uniformed women peacekeepers in UN missions;
- The annual rate of change in the percentage of deployed uniformed women in UN peace operations;
- The ratio of women to men senior military and police officers (rank equivalent to Major or above) in UN peace operations;
- The percentage of military and police units in United Nations missions that are gender-strong (see section 3.5 Financing Modalities).

Secondarily, the Fund aims to expand the stock of publicly available information about barriers to the meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations and about possible remedies to these barriers. This knowledge is intended to catalyze and inform debates within the United Nations about possible institutional reforms to enable and incentivize the increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations.

The Fund's secondary indicator of impact is:

- The number of UN policy consultations and debates (in Security Council, General Assembly Committees, COE Working Group etc.) that reference knowledge generated through the Fund.

3.2 Theory of Change: Capturing the Assumptions and Approach

Three sets of foundational assumptions generate the basic approach of this Fund's Theory of Change. These theory of change assumptions will need to be captured through reporting against the selected outcomes/outputs.

First, there are multiple potential barriers to the meaningful deployment of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations, including barriers to the recruitment, promotion, and training of women in national militaries and police services; barriers restricting uniformed women's access to United Nations peace operations deployments; barriers affecting uniformed women's willingness to deploy in United Nations peace operations; and barriers within United Nations missions that hinder the full participation of uniformed women peacekeepers. These barriers are not mutually exclusive, can interact, and may be cumulative: each successive barrier further diminishes the scope for increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. The salience of particular barriers and their relative importance varies amongst T/PCCs and from mission to mission. Relevant state and international actors are not always fully aware of the full range and relative severity of barriers in the situations they are facing.

Second, while some barriers to the meaningful deployment of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations may not be amenable to a financial solution, others can be at least partly remedied by financial measures. Within the latter group, some barriers have systemic roots and may take a significant time to remedy, while others can be addressed in a shorter timeframe. Both types fall within the scope of the Fund. Financial remedies fall into two broad categories: they either *finance* activities by recipient organizations²⁶ that seek to address a barrier to the deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers, or they *incentivize* recipient organizations to engage in such activities.

Third, T/PCCs are critical actors whose support and commitment are necessary to any successful effort to increase the meaningful deployment of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations, though they are not the only actors affecting this outcome. To have a substantial and sustainable positive impact, the Fund provides flexibility for T/PCCs to propose innovative solutions adapted to their specific circumstances and to assert ownership over projects aimed at increasing their meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers. T/PCCs may choose to partner with United Nations organizations or to subcontract to CSOs in their projects. The flexibility offered within the Fund to promote innovative solutions must be bounded by the need for accountability in the spending of funds and the imperative of guarding against unintended consequences that might entail harm to uniformed women deployed to United Nations peace operations or the missions in which they serve.

²⁶ Recipient organizations include Participating United Nations Organizations and recipient troop- and police- contributing countries (recipient national governments).

Consequently, the Fund envisages offering a flexible but clearly structured menu of options for potential projects to be financed, with funding allocated through a process that provides for a dialogue between the Fund and the principal recipient organization about the specific pathway towards the intended impact.

3.3 A Framework to support Innovative Pathways to Change

In order to enable T/PCCs to develop innovative projects tailored to addressing the specific barriers to increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers that are most relevant to their national context, this Fund does not prescribe a unique pathway to change. However, it envisions sustainable progress as depending on two key elements: a credible assessment of the main barriers present in a particular national (or international) context and one or more projects seeking to remedy specific identified obstacles. Consequently, the Fund identifies support for barrier assessments and support for specific projects as two principal opportunities for engagement with recipient organizations. It also provides a premium for gender-strong units to T/PCCs to responsibly incentivize the increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women (see section 3.5 Financing Modalities for further details). The Fund maintains a cross-cutting commitment to knowledge generation as a means of promoting sustainable progress.

The first opportunity for engagement is for current or prospective T/PCCs interested in accessing Fund resources to conduct credible national barrier assessments²⁷ in order to identify the main factors impeding their deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions. This opportunity acknowledges that the type and relative salience of barriers can vary amongst T/PCCs. It creates an empirically grounded foundation for the elaboration of T/PCC-specific projects aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. It also generates a baseline assessment of existing barriers to the meaningful deployment of women peacekeepers against which progress can be assessed. Fund resources may be used to help finance the completion of barrier assessments. For details on the suggested criteria for a barrier assessment please see Appendix 1: Barrier Assessment Criteria.

The expected outcome of this step is expanded country-specific knowledge of barriers to the meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions (Outcome 1).

The second opportunity involves the Fund financing projects aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations missions. Projects within a current or potential T/PCC will typically focus on remedying some or all of the obstacles identified within the T/PCC's barrier assessment. Fund resources can be used to offset project costs, and they may be used to provide an incentive for one particular project type: deploying a gender-strong unit.

The Fund does not prescribe the exact nature of the projects it is willing to fund, though it does provide non-binding examples of such projects (see 3.5 Financing Modalities), in order to encourage applicant T/PCCs to propose innovative solutions to the specific barriers they have identified. In this sense, projects specify their own pathway to change. However, projects must be situated within the following framework, which encapsulates an overarching Theory of Change, provides structure to activities, promotes accountability in the use of resources, and prevents negative unforeseen consequences.

²⁷ DCAF - the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance have developed a barrier assessment methodology within the Elsie Initiative that T/PCCs can consider using: Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations (MOWIP): <https://www.dcaf.ch/mowip>

The Fund identifies three key outcomes that individual projects can target:

- Increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions (Outcome 2)
- Increased pool of uniformed women eligible to deploy as United Nations peacekeepers (Outcome 3)
- Improved working conditions for uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations missions (Outcome 4)

In 2022, the EIF published its Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) which includes the EIF results framework and theory of change. The MEF can be accessed on the EIF webpage:

<https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

Each outcome supports the Fund's ultimate target impact of accelerating the pace of change towards increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. Outcome 2 encapsulates this impact directly. Outcome 3 promotes the impact indirectly by enlarging the 'pipeline' of uniformed women who can deploy to United Nations peace operations, thus helping to ensure sustainability. Outcome 4 recognizes that inadequate deployment conditions may hamper efforts to increase meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations in three ways: by preventing already deployed women peacekeepers from fully participating in mission tasks; by deterring already deployed women peacekeepers from redeploying in a United Nations peace operation; and, if communicated to women in national armed forces and police services, by dissuading uniformed women from seeking or accepting deployment opportunities. The Fund's Results Framework elaborates several specific indicators for each outcome (see 3.4 Results Framework). These outcomes may also have positive, indirect effects for non-uniformed women serving in peacekeeping missions.

All projects must contribute to at least one outcome but need not target all of them. The project will also specify which indicator associated with the identified outcome it targets.

While Fund resources can be used to *finance* T/PCCs and United Nations organizations for a wide range of projects meeting the above criteria, they can only be used as *incentives* for one specific proposal type: the deployment of gender-strong units. Incentivizing the deployment of individual uniformed women peacekeepers can create unintended negative consequences, notably undue pressures on uniformed women to deploy as peacekeepers, a temptation to deploy women who do not have the required training and expertise, and a risk that uniformed women will be deployed into inadequate or hostile working conditions. By contrast, gender-strong units aim not only to increase the number of uniformed women deployed but also specify the need for women to be represented in authority positions within the unit and stipulate measures to ensure an adequate working environment, including relevant training for all unit members and appropriate unit material. Gender-strong units thus address two key outcomes identified above.

A cross-cutting commitment throughout the Fund's operation is to support the collection and appropriate dissemination of knowledge gained through Fund and Fund-financed activities. The purpose is to inform national and international policy debates regarding ways to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. This Fund is designed to be exploratory and time-limited. Sustained progress towards increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations is only possible if the lessons learned from the Fund's activities are distilled and made available (at least in overview form) to Member States and to United Nations organizations, who may use this

knowledge to craft appropriate national and United Nations policies to consolidate the progress realized through this Fund.

The expected outcome of this cross-cutting commitment is improved availability of policy-relevant knowledge related to the increased meaningful participation of women in United Nations peace operations.

3.4 Results Framework

To achieve the impact identified above, the Fund targets the following indicators and seeks to produce the following outputs. As noted, individual projects accessing Fund resources must contribute to at least one of these outcomes and target at least one of the associated indicators, but need not contribute to all outcomes or target all indicators of a particular outcome. Priority will be given to projects that include Outcome 2 among their targeted outcomes. Targeted outcomes and relevant indicators for each individual project will be specified in the approval process. The MEF can be accessed on the EIF webpage: <https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

3.5 Financing Modalities

Recipient organizations can receive funds through three modalities, which are outlined below in further detail.

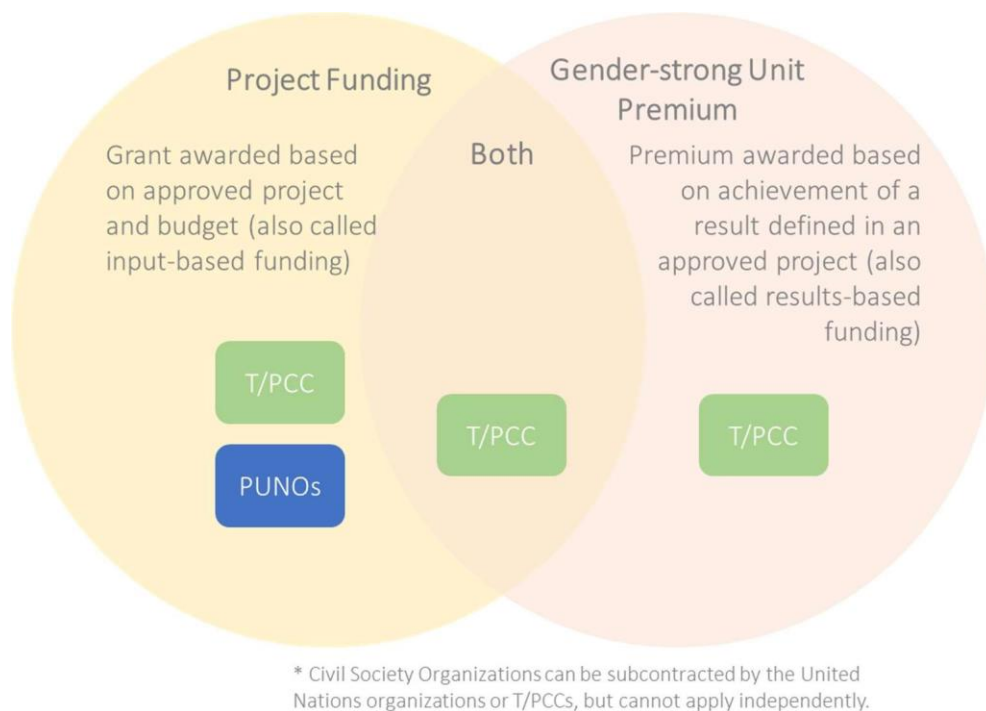


Figure 1 Financing Modalities

In the first modality, Project Funding, the Fund can award grants based on approved activities and associated budget as articulated through a proposal. T/PCCs and Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs) are eligible to apply for this financing modality. T/PCCs can request a first tranche of

funds in line with their budget for the first phase of implementation. Requests for subsequent tranches of funding will be conditioned on levels of expenditure and on the submission of all necessary reporting. United Nations organizations are eligible to receive funds for 100 percent of the amount of their respective budget in their project document (see 5. PROGRAMMATIC ARRANGEMENTS). Further elaboration and examples of the Project Funding modality are provided below.

In the second modality, Gender-Strong Unit Premium, the Fund can provide a premium to a T/PCC when a result has been achieved at the end of the specified period of deployment, in this case, the deployment of a gender-strong unit. The T/PCC self-finances all activities in support of the deployment of a gender-strong unit. The results indicators related to the gender-strong unit need to be independently measured and verified, before the premium can be granted. Only T/PCCs are eligible to apply for this financing modality. The premium will consist of a direct payment to the T/PCC. Priority will be given to T/PCCs that envisage reinvesting the premium in ways that further promote the goals of the Fund. Further elaboration of the Gender-strong Unit Premium modality is provided below.

In the third modality, the Fund can provide funding for a hybrid of both of these modalities, combined into a single submission. The Fund can award funds based on approved activities and associated budgets, but can also award funds as part of a requested Gender-strong Unit Premium to be received upon achievement of the target. The Project Funding portion of the proposal may include activities that will help facilitate the deployment of the gender-strong unit(s).

Project Funding

Eligible projects are

- A barrier assessment (see Appendix 1: Barrier Assessment Criteria)
- One or more coordinated initiatives undertaken under the direction of the applicant that aim(s) to address at least one relevant barrier to the meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers.

By the time of their completion, projects must contribute to the achievement of at least one of the Fund's four outcomes (see 3.4 Results Framework). Applicants can engage subcontractors, including CSOs, to support project implementation.

Potentially suitable projects could include:

- A T/PCC conducts a barrier assessment. (Outcome 1)
- A T/PCC subcontracts a civil society organization to conduct a barrier assessment. (Outcome 1)
- A TCC:
 - offers a course to instruct women potential UN Military Observers to drive manual transmission vehicles cross-country and uses funds to design and promote the course, as well as offset expenses such as petrol and participant and instructor travel (Outcome 2a and/or 3b);
 - creates a national-level recruitment campaign to attract more women into military service and uses funds to design, test, and disseminate effective messages; convene events and travel-related expenses; offer childcare during information and awareness sessions; and meet the additional expenses of medical testing for women candidates (Outcome 3a); and
 - having identified through the barrier assessment that the attitudes of men middle ranking officers in their National Defence Headquarters is resulting in women candidates for UNMO

or staff officer positions being discouraged, or their applications ‘lost’, funds a project to further survey underlying attitudinal and cultural issues and potentially develop unconscious bias or other training for staff in their National Defence Headquarters (Outcome 2a).

- A PCC:
 - creates a campaign aimed at women officers in national and regional police services designed to create awareness about opportunities for deployment to UN peace operations and uses funds to create and circulate written materials; convene events; and pay for travel and mentoring-related expenses for former uniformed women peacekeepers (Outcome 3c), or
 - implements training and mentorship programs targeted at commanders and senior personnel serving in UN missions (most of whom are men), with the objective of ensuring leaders understand the importance of the contributions of uniformed women to peacekeeping. Funds are used for costs related to documentation and research; training; mentorship; and evaluation. (Outcome 4c)

- A TCC:
 - applies to the Fund for a premium to deploy a gender-strong infantry battalion, which is approved, but as a result of a concurrent barrier assessment learns that none of their current barracks can accommodate the mix of men and women soldiers that is required for a gender-strong unit, and consequently applies to the Fund for support to modify an existing barracks to ensure there is appropriate facilities available as the gender-strong unit is formed and conducts its pre-deployment training (Outcome 2a), and
 - wishes to expand the capacity of its Peacekeeping Training Centre to prepare female soldiers and mixed units for deployment and seeks funds to assist in the costs of building more accommodation and ablutions facilities specifically for women soldiers (Outcome 2a).

- As it analyses the requirements for a gender-strong FPU, a PCC realizes it does not have enough personal equipment that allows for the full participation of uniformed women in assigned mission tasks (as compared to men) and applies for funds to purchase the equipment (Outcome 2a).

Where funding is requested for construction projects within a UN mission, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) ‘Elsie Initiative for Field Missions Facilities and Infrastructure’ design specifications and guidance is required to be incorporated into the project and infrastructure design [iseek.un.org/DOS/OSCM/Elsie].²⁸ The DOS gender sensitive infrastructure recommendations and guidelines can also be made available for T/PCC construction projects such as women’s accommodation and barracks, training and creche facilities, and can be made available on request to the United Nations.

²⁸ For United Nations Mission Engineering staff, the design recommendations are available internal to the United Nations, through the Engineering Support Section Community of Practice (ESS-COP) <https://unitednations.sharepoint.com/sites/DOS-COP-OSCM-SSS-ESS/SitePages/ElsieInitiativeFrontPage.aspx>.

Gender-Strong Unit Premium

The fund is selectively offering a gender-strong unit premium as an incentive for T/PCCs to increase their meaningful deployment of trained and qualified uniformed women in United Nations peace operations.

A gender-strong unit is defined as a unit that includes substantial representation of women overall and in positions of authority, has provided gender-equity training to all unit members, and has adequate materiel to ensure parity of deployment conditions for women and men peacekeepers.

The Fund will consider proposals by T/PCCs for units qualifying for this premium. In keeping with the Elsie Initiative's intention to promote innovation, and to encourage transformational change regarding women's meaningful participation in peace operations, the criteria for a proposal for incentive payments are not prescriptive; rather it is for applicants to the Fund to identify the nature, scope and value of their proposal, considering the following guidelines:

- The proposal must demonstrably and substantially increase the number of uniformed women in, and their percentage of, a formed unit that will deploy on a peacekeeping operation (military unit or formed police unit). At a minimum, the percentages must exceed the targets set out in the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028 by 5 percentage points.²⁹
- The proposal must demonstrate that the women deployed are fully integrated into the unit and contribute to its mandate and all the tasks the unit will be asked to perform (including patrolling, security tasks, engagement, and response to incidents). This includes that all women are fully trained for the role(s) they perform in the unit and have participated in all pre-deployment training and preparation.
- All members of the unit must meet, and ideally exceed, existing DPO requirements for pre-deployment training on gender in the military/police, sexual and gender-based violence, conflict related sexual violence, sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The proposal must demonstrate that there are adequate procedures to deal with instances of sexual harassment and assault, and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The proposal must demonstrate that appropriate contingent-owned equipment for both men and women peacekeepers will be provided.
- The proposal should be for the duration of the deployment of that unit (usually 12 months) and can be extended two additional deployment periods (usually 12 months each).

Gender-strong units should also strive to meet the following guidelines:

- The proposal demonstrates commitment to employing women across all ranks and across all sub-units. Optimally, women would be proportionally represented at all ranks in the unit.
- The proposal demonstrates how the increased representation of women in peacekeeping will be sustained over time, including after the end of the project.

Fund resources can be used to fund a T/PCC for measures undertaken to allow it to deploy a gender-strong unit. In addition, they can be used to pay a gender-strong unit premium. In the first year of deployment, the premium should be approximately a sum equivalent to 20 percent of the United Nations' troop/police cost

²⁹ Therefore, if the target stated is 10%, the unit must be at least 15%.

reimbursement rate for 20 per cent of the unit's personnel. It is payable subject to completion of the specified deployment period. The fund will not normally pay the premium for a fraction of a unit (a company or platoon in an infantry battalion). A proposal could cover up to three years. The premium in the second year would represent a 25% increase on the original formulation. The premium in the third year would represent a 50% increase on the original formulation.

3.6 Criteria for Prioritization

Applications (Letters of Interest and proposals) will be assessed against established criteria which include:

- **Compliance with Requirements** – Applicants must meet eligibility criteria and submit all components required for a complete application.
- **Impact and Strategic Relevance** – Preference will be given to projects that contribute to multiple outcomes; include baseline data and realistic targets; and are likely to result in the deployment of a significant volume of uniformed women, including in strategic and leadership roles. Preference will be given to projects that are proposed by T/PCCs, in particular those that are ODA eligible.
- **Engagement** – Applicants must demonstrate how women, particularly uniformed personnel, play integral roles throughout the project cycle.
- **Sustainability and Extension** – Preference will be given to projects that are likely to contribute to the sustained increased of the deployment of uniformed women by a T/PCC, and this includes projects that: demonstrate clear national ownership; and are likely to yield insights and lessons that can be shared with other T/PCCs. For proposals for gender-strong unit premiums, preference will be given to submissions that specify a T/PCC's intentions to reinvest the gender-strong unit premium in activities that further contribute to the goals of the fund.
- **Innovation** – The Fund seeks to support innovative solutions and new approaches to overcoming barriers.
- **Cost effectiveness** – Applications must include reasonable costs and demonstrate an economical use of resources; financial and in-kind contributions from other parties should be noted.
- **Management and Monitoring** – Evaluators will assess the proposed approach to project management, including reporting, as well as the extent to which applicants have included a thoughtful risk analysis and strategies for mitigation.

3.7 Risks and Mitigation Strategies

The Fund is exposed to a variety of external and internal influencing factors that create uncertainty regarding the achievement of the Fund's goals; these manifest as risks to the objectives of the Fund. Risk management in the Fund aims to assist in establishing a common understanding of risks, in order to provide more efficient risk mitigation and adaptation measures. Risk management is a key element of the due diligence and operationalization of the Fund, and it is understood that residual financial and other risks are shared among all stakeholders Fund Level Risk. Fund level risks are considered below. The Secretariat (see section 4.2.2 Secretariat) will update and manage the Fund's risk strategy and periodically update the Steering Committee on the implementation progress of risk management strategies that have been taken.

Risk Mitigation Matrix	
Risk	Mitigation Strategies
Contextual Risks	
Lack of ongoing commitment from donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broaden the donor base as much as possible. - Close engagement with donors to maintain commitment. - Adequate and regular reporting. - Advocacy by EOSG, DPO, UN Women. - Clear communications of funds achievements (public advocacy). - Clear linkage of funds objectives to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy.
Lack of ongoing commitment from recipient organizations of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As per eligibility criteria found in section 4.2.5 Recipient Organizations, require evidence of high- level commitment prior to project approval. - Require clarity in proposals regarding structural and normative changes in military or police services. - Ongoing engagement (especially from DPO) to ensure targets for women’s participation are met.
Social norms in project countries / missions resist change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As per eligibility criteria found in section 4.2.5 Recipient Organizations, require evidence of high- level commitment prior to project approval. - Require clarity in proposals regarding structural and normative changes in military or police services.
Social norms in mission environments resist change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment from senior United Nations leadership. Linkage to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy.
Programmatic Risks	
Women are deployed who are not adequately prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Require evidence that all women deployed have received adequate training, are fully qualified for their role, and have the requisite experience.
Women are deployed into mission environments that are not equipped to support or benefit from their deployment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linkage to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy and the enabling environment it seeks to create.

Backlash against women who are perceived to benefit from changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include a requirement in the application process to describe how this will be mitigated at the national level.
National partners have limited capacity to apply for funds and to implement projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouragement of recipient organizations (mentoring / assistance from donor states or CSO) as part of project proposal. - Application of barrier assessment and clear, detailed strategies as part of project proposals. - Management of scope of individual national projects.
Lack of time for initiatives to impact on the number of women in peace operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stages or phases to projects. - Clearly established and time limited goals for projects. - Management of the portfolio of projects to ensure both short term achievement and longer-term structural change.
Initiatives collapse after project end due to lack of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political and organizational leadership commitment to ongoing change. - Linkage to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy. Bias in projects towards those that produce structural or normative change.
Capacity and knowledge are not translated into transformative action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of barrier assessment to produce evidence-based, reasonable and achievable projects. - Mentoring and assistance for recipient organizations.
Failure to adequately consider HRDDP and HACT requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of HRDDP and HACT risk mitigation strategies required for project approval. - Ongoing environmental monitoring of project countries for HR breaches by the Fund's Secretariat.
Inappropriate size of the gender-strong unit premium.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Fund's Steering Committee will periodically review the size of the premium.
Insufficient time to achieve measurable gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acknowledge that some projects will not realize all results within the life of the Fund. - Prioritize allocations towards projects that will have a tangible outcome within the life of the Fund.
Institutional Risks	
National stakeholders lack political will to proceed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evidence of commitment required for project approval. - Project M&E framework to monitor ongoing commitment to change / project objectives.

Project actions are misplaced or inadequate to achieve project goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of barrier assessment to produce evidence-based, reasonable and achievable projects. - Mentoring and assistance by recipient organizations.
Lack of data to adequately analyse project performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Projects based around SMART goals. - Barrier assessment to provide baseline for M&E. Fund recipient organization commitment to track and share relevant data (as possible).

Project Specific Risk Management. Specific risk mitigation strategies will be developed by applicants for each project that is funded, as part of the submission of the proposal. Risks will be considered and provisions for the identification, monitoring, tolerances, and risk responses will be elaborated. While risks will be outlined specific to each project, as a criterion for consideration, each proposal is to explicitly address the safety and security of all women military or police personnel who are to be assisted through the proposal. After the application of mitigating measures or strategies, those personnel should not be subject to any more residual risk, to their physical safety, psychosocial well-being, and reputation, than their equivalent counterparts who are men.

In addition to that risk management strategy, proposals that the fund intends to approve are to be reviewed against the United Nations Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) Framework. The proposal must remain eligible for United Nations support after the consideration of a risk assessment and the application of any necessary mitigating measures, prior to any disbursement of funds taking place.

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Governance Architecture

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Funds (MPTF) are a type of pooled funding modality under the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) governance mechanism. They are financial vehicles designed to support international development initiatives and partnership platforms with clearly defined programmatic purpose and a results framework based on a shared theory of change.

MPTFs can be designed in many ways, but always involve lead actors and multiple implementing partners. They can receive contributions from a diverse set of donors and enable a collective response from all stakeholders through shared financing and joint support towards agreed goals. Resources in an MPTF are co-mingled in a single trust fund account and not earmarked to a specific recipient organization. The governance arrangements provide for an efficient and effective decision-making and oversight framework, ensuring streamlined allocation processes and clear lines of accountability. The governance arrangements are built on and informed by four principles, namely: inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, and country participation.

Adequate due diligence of all proposals is fundamental to managing the programmatic risks of the fund. Balancing the goals of the fund, the need for financial and other forms of risk management, the need for

effective and efficient decision making, and noting that, when T/PCC's are the recipient organization that they assume full financial and programmatic accountability for the funds provided to them, the Secretariat will be responsible for conducting due diligence of proposals. This will include review of the details of the letter of interest, the (subsequent) project proposal (including the proposal risk management strategy), consideration of the HACT micro assessment, the HRDDP, and the application of the fund level risk management strategy to that proposal. The result of this consideration will be included in the Secretariat's recommendations to the Steering Committee at Steps 3 and 6 of the Programming cycle. These activities notwithstanding, all fund stakeholders, including donors, acknowledge that there will be residual financial and other risks that are inherent to the operation of the fund, that the due diligence and risk management processes cannot completely mitigate against.

The overall governance arrangements, decision-making processes and financial flows for this fund are depicted below in Figure 2.

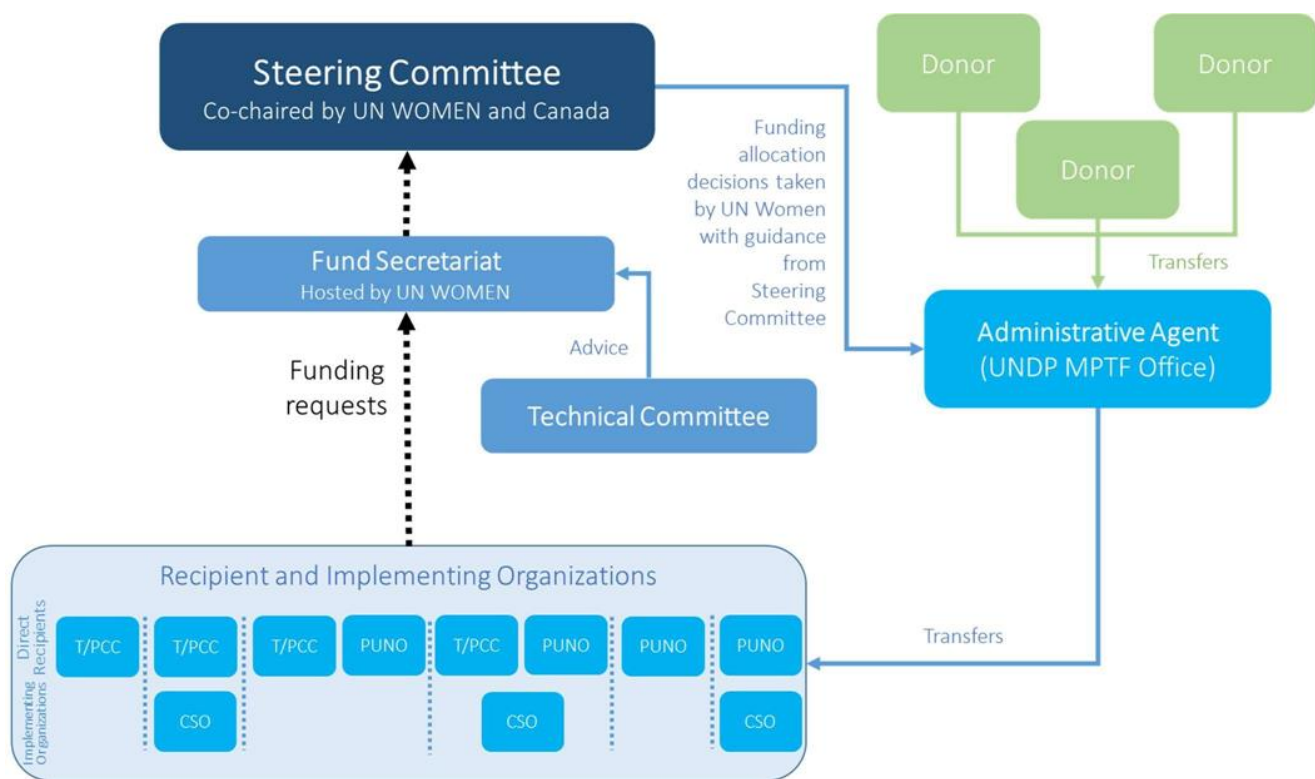


Figure 2 Governance Arrangements

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The management of the Fund comprises three levels:

1. Fund Governance (Steering Committee)
2. Fund Management (Secretariat, Technical Committee, Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO))
3. Fund Implementation (T/PCCs, United Nations organizations, CSOs)

4.2.1 *Steering Committee*

A Steering Committee governs the Fund, subject to UN regulations, rules, policies and procedures, and provides strategic guidance for achieving its programmatic objectives.

Composition

The Steering Committee comprises the following:

- Three permanent United Nations members: The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG), both part of the United Nations Secretariat, and UN Women. UN Women as host of the Fund Secretariat will be co-chair of the Steering Committee.
- Canada as founding member is a member and co-chair of the Steering Committee for a period of 5 years (2019-2024), with the option to renew membership and co-chair position thereafter.
- Three countries: a contributor to the Fund, a T/PCC that is Official Development Assistance (ODA) eligible, and an additional member of the Elsie Initiative Contact Group. These countries should rotate every two years in a staggered manner.
- The MPTFO as the Fund administrator and ex officio member without the right to vote.

It is important that representatives that sit on the Steering Committee are endowed with decision-making capacity within their respective organizations.

The representation of additional contributors in the governance arrangements will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Steering Committee.

Steering Committee meetings are convened and lead by the United Nations co-chair. The United Nations co-chair signs off on funding allocations and requests for programmatic or financial modification requests.

Role

The Steering Committee meets on an ad-hoc basis, but at minimum twice a year. The United Nations co-chair can convene extraordinary meetings if deemed necessary. The Steering Committee is responsible for the following tasks:

Strategy

- Review the Fund's strategic orientations and the results framework;
- Review the funding strategy, including against the set criteria (see section 3.6 Criteria for Prioritization);
- Review and approve the criteria for the allocation of available resources (decisions on fund allocations are taken by the United Nations co-chair);
- Review and report periodically on the balance of funds allocated across the Fund's primary recipient organizations, TCCs and PCCs, and the Fund's secondary recipient organizations, UN organizations;
- Review the Fund's risk management strategy and the conduct of due diligence and approve residual project level risks (as determined by the Secretariat); and
- Review resource mobilization and develop strategies.

Review results

- Supervise the progress of the Fund's results framework based on report updating (programme-related and financial), prepared by the Secretariat and the MPTFO;
- Approve requests for programmatic changes to projects (delegated to the United Nations co-chair); and
- Review regular reports consolidated by the Secretariat and the MPTFO based on progress reports submitted by recipient organizations.

Fund management

- Update the Fund's Terms of Reference, as required;
- Review the Fund's operational performance;
- Review the risk monitoring matrix regularly updated by the Secretariat;
- Approve Fund's direct costs, specifically those related to the Secretariat support operations, evaluations and audits (delegated to the United Nations co-chair); and
- Approve extensions of the Fund's duration, as required.

The United Nations co-chair is to make sure that the decisions taken by the Steering Committee are in accordance with the relevant UN regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

Decision-making

Consultation can take place in meetings or by email, including by non-objection. Consultation aims to take place when two thirds of the members are present, so 5 out of 7 members. The Steering Committee endeavours, but is not required, to reach agreement by consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, a two thirds majority of the members present or consulted is needed to put forward a position to the United Nations co-chair.

Taking into account the position put forward by the Steering Committee, the United Nations co-chair takes the final decision and instructs the Secretariat and Administrative Agent accordingly. The Department of Peace Operations acts as back-up for the United Nations co-chair and will take the final decisions in those cases when there could be a potential conflict of interest for UN WOMEN.

Parties subject to a potential conflict of interest in a discussion are required to declare the conflict of interest and leave the discussion.

4.2.2 Secretariat

Composition

The Secretariat is the entity responsible for the operational functioning of the Fund. The Secretariat provides technical and administrative support to the Steering Committee and follows up on all aspects of the allocation and project cycles within the Fund.

To manage the Fund's processes, the Secretariat must count on at least:

- A Fund manager with relevant technical expertise and capacity (P4/5 level);
- A Programme Associate (GS6 level); and
- An Analyst (P3 level).

The Secretariat will be resourced to conduct due diligence of proposals and monitoring and evaluation procedures. This resourcing will either be the creation of additional positions in the Secretariat or funding to outsource those functions, or a combination of both.

The Secretariat will be hosted by UN Women. The costs of the Secretariat will be charged to the Fund as direct costs. The Secretariat's budget will be annually agreed and approved by the Steering Committee. UN Women will conduct contracting procedures related to the Secretariat staff. Efforts will be made to ensure that Secretariat staff is diverse and broadly representative, and have a range of language capabilities.

The Secretariat structure can be reviewed and adjusted by the Steering Committee as per needs and budget availability. Additional staff could be added if provided in-kind by a United Nations Member State.

Role

The Secretariat main functions are:

Policy and Technical Advice

- Advise the Steering Committee on strategic priorities, program-related and financial allocations;
- Compile and synthesize advice from the Technical Committee on programmatic priorities as per section 4.2.3 Technical Committee;
- Advise T/PCCs and relevant coordination body (if applicable) during the inception phase of projects and during the project life cycle;
- Develop the fund level risk management strategy;
- Manage the due diligence and review of projects before final approval by the Steering Committee to ensure coherence, risk level and quality management and to supervise the application of cross-cutting approaches of the Fund; and
- Analyze and manage of the Fund's knowledge including knowledge systematization, establishment of good practices and lessons learned and proposals of recommendations.

Programme Cycle Management

- Organize calls for letters of interest and appraisal processes;
- Request the Administrative Agent to transfer funds based on advice provided by the Steering Committee and as authorized by the United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee;
- Organize monitoring and control of operational risks, compile and synthesize monitoring results and outcomes for the Steering Committee's consideration;
- Conduct due diligence of proposals (including application of the risk management strategy, ensuring compliance with the HACT micro assessment requirements and the HRDDP), and ensure follow-up when needed;
- Manage project revision requests (e.g. follow-up and support on budget revision, reprogramming, no-cost extensions, etc.);

- Consolidate the narrative annual and final reports submitted by implementing entities and present the consolidated report to the Steering Committee for approval;
- Liaise with the Administrative Agent on fund administration issues, including issues related to project/fund extensions and project/fund closure; and
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation procedures.

Administration and Coordination

- Facilitate collaboration and communication between the Steering Committee and recipient organizations to promote effective project implementation;
- Organize an annual stakeholders' meeting³⁰;
- Engage with donors on questions related to the Fund;
- Develop a Fund's communication strategy and/or facilitate sharing of public information with all stakeholders; and
- Advise the Steering Committee United Nations co-chair on the organization of Steering Committee meetings, draft and circulate the calendar and agenda of the Steering Committee meetings; and hold records of Steering Committee decisions through minutes of the meetings.

4.2.3 Technical Committee

The Technical Committee will consist of 3 or 4 technical specialists to assist the Secretariat on an ad-hoc basis, providing additional expertise on women in peace operations. They are appointed by the Steering Committee and can come from the founding United Nations organizations, civil society or academic institutions. Non-United Nations technical specialists can be compensated through the fund or supported through an in-kind contribution, at a reasonable rate.

Role

The Technical Committee may provide:

- Technical advice to the Secretariat on the review and prioritization of letter of interests;
- Technical advice to the Secretariat on the review and prioritization of projects;
- Recommendations to finalize submitted projects; and
- Analysis on barrier assessments and interim and final reports submitted by countries.

³⁰ Relevant stakeholders will be decided upon by the Steering Committee and could include, for example, donors, other members of the Contact Group and civil society organizations.

4.2.4 *Administrative Agent*

The Fund is administered by the MPTFO under the pass-through management modality. The Fund's administration services, whose costs are 1% of received contributions, include:

1. The Fund's set up: support to the Fund's design (Terms of Reference), and development of legal instruments; and
2. The Fund's administration: receipt, administration and release of funds to recipient organizations in accordance with advice from the Steering Committee and authorized decisions from the United Nations co-chair, and financial report consolidation.

The MPTFO is responsible for the following functions:

- Provide support to the design of the Fund;
- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with United Nations Participating Organizations;
- Sign Standard Administrative Agreements with donors that wish to contribute financially to the Fund;
- Sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with recipient T/PCCs, including provisions related to the Government Coordinating Entity's overall accountability on behalf of the T/PCC government for funds approved for implementation by the national entities;
- Receive and manage funds including those of the Fund's closure;
- Invest and reinvest Fund's resources according to investment policies, practices and procedures. Any profits will be added to the Fund's resources and will not be credited to the contributions of a particular donor;
- Provide updated information to the Steering Committee regarding the regular resource availability;
- Subject to the availability of resources, transfer funds to recipient organizations in accordance with the Steering Committee's advice and authorized decisions by the United Nations co-chair;
- Ensure the preparation of consolidated narrative annual and final reports submitted by implementing entities and present the consolidated report to the Steering Committee; and to each of the Fund's contributors;
- Provide a Fund's final financial report which included a notice of the Fund's closure;
- Release funds as direct costs for the running of the Secretariat, based on Steering Committee decisions. The Administrative Agent will annually notify the Steering Committee about the amounts used to that end;
- Release funds for additional expenses that the Steering Committee decide to allocate; and
- Provide tools for fund management to ensure transparency and accountability.

In addition, the MPTFO through its online portal (<https://mptf.undp.org/fund/eif00>), provides real-time financial data generated directly from its accounting system, giving relevant stakeholders and the general public the ability to track contributions, transfers, and expenditures.

4.2.5 *Recipient Organizations*

The Fund will act as a pass-through mechanism, transferring resources directly to T/PCCs and Participating United Nations Organizations (PUNOs), and thereby avoiding any duplication of operating procedures, and minimizing transaction costs.

National governments can receive funding directly based on the following eligibility criteria.

Eligibility Criteria for National Governments:

- a. Is a United Nations troop- or police-contributing country, or has serious intentions to become one that can be adequately demonstrated through the proposal process;
- b. Demonstrates high-level commitment through the submission of a publicly accessible letter of intent signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent;
- c. Agrees to complete, or has recently completed, a credible barrier assessment, such as using the suggested criteria in Appendix I of this Terms of Reference or the methodology created by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces;
- d. Commits to allow the Fund Secretariat to use data from that assessment to compile an anonymized overview report; and
- e. Meets the requirements of the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy and the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) assessment, and remains eligible for United Nations support after the consideration of a risk assessment and the application of any necessary mitigating measures.

National governments are required to report in accordance with the UNSDG categories.³¹

PUNOs have established mechanisms to implement activities including through national authorities and through CSOs. Those implementing partners may receive funds through one or more of the PUNOs.

PUNOs assume full financial and programmatic accountability, using their respective standard arrangements and procedures for transferring funds to implementing partners.

Indirect costs/remuneration of the PUNOs recovered through programme support costs will be seven percent (7%). This is standard practice in UNSDG funds. This includes costs that are not directly related to the project.

A minimum threshold of 100 000 USD per individual transfer to a United Nations organization or a T/PCC will be instituted.

CSOs are not prohibited from receiving funding dispersed through the Fund. However, they cannot apply independently. Their activities must be undertaken in partnership with, and under a proposal from, a T/PCC or PUNO.

4.2.6 Contributors

At the time of Fund set-up, the Government of Canada will be the initial contributor to the Fund. Canada and the United Nations will play a key-role in the governance arrangements, notably, co-chairing the Steering Committee.

The Fund's resources will include: donor contributions; any interests, payments, repayments or net profit for investments less any authorized release and incurred expenses in accordance with these Terms of

³¹ Guidance on reporting in accordance with the UNSDG categories is provided in the Operations Manual on the EIF webpage: <https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

Reference and advice provided by the Fund's Steering Committee and authorized decisions made by the United Nations co-chair.

The Fund's resources will be used to finance or co-finance projects, programs and operations approved by the United Nations Steering Committee Co-Chair. The Fund can receive contributions from a range of sources, including governments, NGOs and foundations. The contributions will not be tied and will depend on the decisions as per section 4.2.1 Steering Committee.

The Fund receives contributions in fully convertible currency or any other currency that can be readily used. Such contributions will be deposited to the bank account designated by the MPTFO. The value of the contributions, if made in a currency other than US dollars will be determined by applying the United Nations operational exchange type in effect of the date of payment. Profit or loss due to currency exchange rate is registered in the Fund's account set by the Administrative Agent and will be taken on by the Fund.

4.3 Summary of the Legal Structure

The Fund will be established through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for pass-through arrangements establishing the MPTF and appointing the MPTFO as its Administrative Agent. The MOU for the Participating United Nations Organizations will be signed by UN Women, DPO and by each of the other PUNOs implementing programmes.

An MOA will govern the pass-through arrangement directly to the T/PCC. The T/PCC assumes full financial and programmatic accountability for the funds disbursed by the Administrative Agent. The Government Coordinating entity, on behalf of the T/PCC, will be the recipient organization of funds. The MOA will refer to projects by the T/PCCs as “national programmes.”

A Standard Administrative Agreement sets out the terms and conditions governing the receipt and administration of the contribution by the Administrative Agreement, the transfer to the PUNOs and T/PCCs, the related reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and auditing requirements, as well as provisions concerning fraud, corruption and terrorism financing, and communications and transparency.

5. PROGRAMMATIC ARRANGEMENTS

The Fund aims to have a focused approach that can demonstrate a clear impact of its allocations. With initial funding, the focus will be on initiatives led by T/PCCs. However, the Fund can also support projects submitted by United Nations organizations designed to implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations. It is understood that these projects would not ordinarily be financed from available budgetary and extra-budgetary resources, and further scaling of these projects would be undertaken within existing United Nations resources.

As indicated in section 3.2 Theory of Change: Assumptions and Approach, strong engagement and ownership of and by the T/PCC is considered key to the success of the Fund. This is a guiding principle in the below programming cycle and risk management of the Fund. The Fund seeks to achieve transformative change and therefore encourages proposals at a commensurate scale.

5.1 Programming Cycle

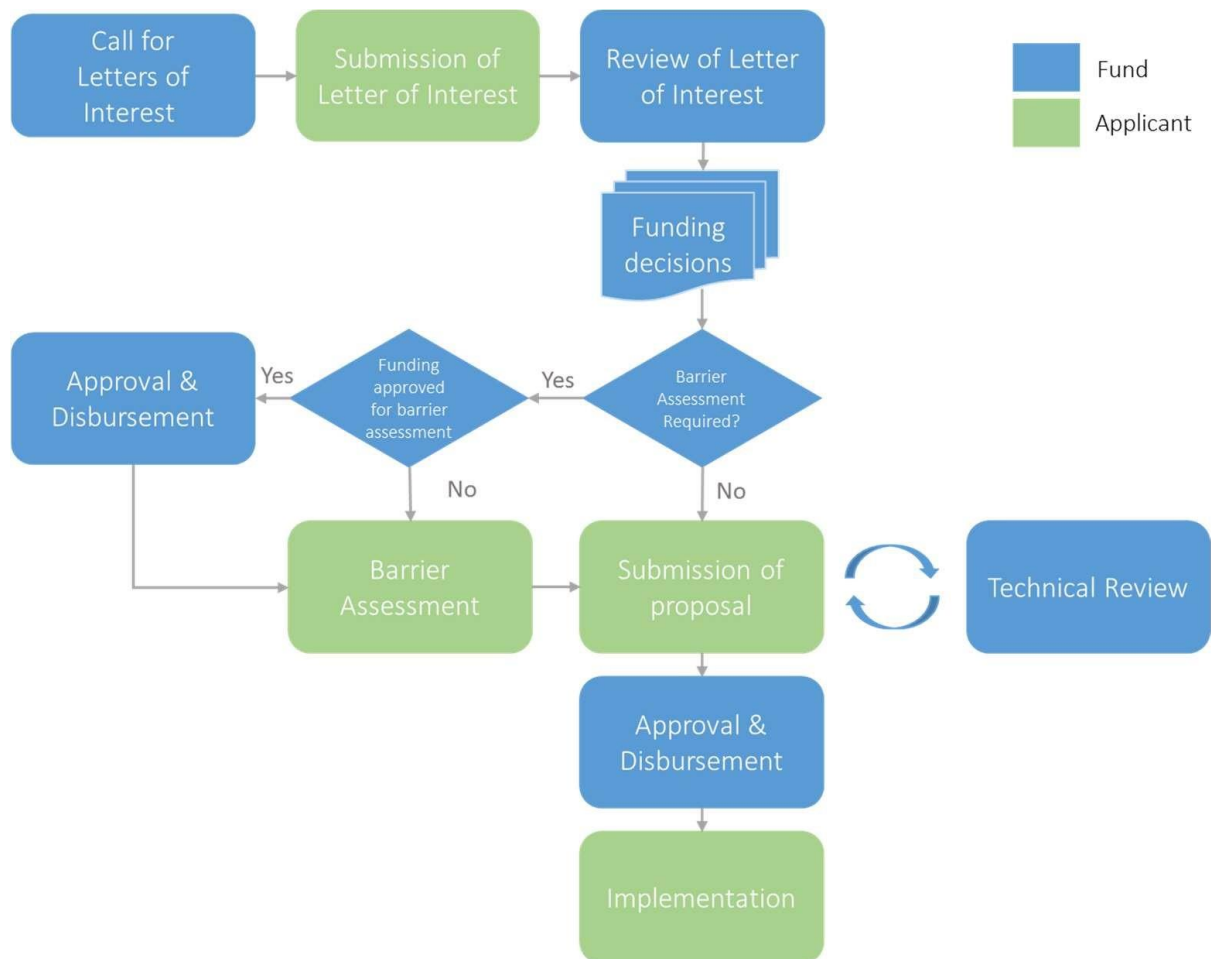


Figure 3: Programming cycle

Step 1: Launch of a call for Letters of Interest

Following endorsement by United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee and after consultation of the Steering Committee, the Secretariat sends out a call for *Letters of Interest* to all eligible T/PCCs. The document should highlight the main objectives, an overview of the available resources and all criteria concerning the specific allocation round. The document will also include specific administrative instructions on how to structure a project or projects, how to submit a proposal and specify that submissions will be accepted in English and French. A timeline with submission deadlines and review processes should conclude the document. The duration of project implementation will not normally exceed 2 years. For standard processes and templates, the call refers to the Operational Manual³².

³² The EIF Operations Manual is accessible on the EIF webpage: <https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

Step 2: Submission of Letters of Interest

Each identified and eligible T/PCC (see section 4.2.5 Recipient Organizations for eligibility criteria) submits a brief *Letter of Interest* (which would not normally exceed 4 pages) to the Fund Secretariat before set deadlines. Relevant to the Letter of Interest, the Fund will accept no more than one military proposal and one police proposal per country per programming cycle. Each proposal can include one or more projects relevant to the respective institution. A T/PCC is encouraged to consult with United Nations organizations at the country level (where relevant), the DPO focal point for the concerned United Nations peacekeeping missions and the Fund Secretariat before submitting the *Letter of Interest*. The T/PCC can, and is encouraged to, reach out to the Secretariat for guidance.

The minimum requirements for the *Letter of Interest* are usually:

- Description of the current engagement with regards to increasing meaningful participation of women in peacekeeping;
- Deployment planning for the next 2 years for both military and/or police, if known;
- Key expected results and indicators with clear targets aligned with the strategic objectives of the Fund expressed in the call;
- Outline of perceived barriers or detailed barrier assessment if available;
- Indicative budgets and proposed high-level activities;
- Identification of proposed implementing partners;
- Publicly-accessible; and
- Signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent.

T/PCCs are also required to understand DPO guidance in relation to deployment planning for United Nations peace operations, which is included in Appendix 2.

Step 3: Review of Letters of Interest

Letters of Interest are first reviewed by the Fund's Secretariat. The Secretariat conducts initial due diligence on the proposals, compiles comments, synthesizes and presents them to the Technical Committee for advice. Following the Technical Committee review, the Fund's Secretariat presents the *Letters of Interest* to the Steering Committee.

Letters will then be reviewed by the Fund's Steering Committee and selected by its United Nations co-chair based on an assessment of the letter against the criteria for prioritization (see 3.6 Criteria for Prioritization) and the advice of the Steering Committee, the Secretariat and the Technical Committee.

In addition to the criteria specified in section 3.6 Criteria for Prioritization, the call for Letters of Interest will specify that these will be reviewed based on:

- Clear identification of barriers;
- Targets (number and percentage) for increase of women peacekeepers and the roles they would deploy into (if applicable);
- Volume of deployment planned within the project timeframe;
- Current percentage of women in national armed forces and/or police service and at what levels; and
- Whether gender-strong units can be deployed within the project timeframe (if applicable).

As an outcome of the process, the United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee will announce which letters will receive funding within the allocation round, conditioned on a receipt of a satisfactory proposal, and the maximum amount available for each proposed initiative. In addition, it will maintain a list of approved initiatives that are eligible for funding. Should additional funding become available, within a specified period to be determined by the Steering Committee, these letters will be given preference for consideration. Letters will be listed in order of priority.

Step 4: Barrier Assessment

T/PCCs selected for funding within the current allocation round will conduct a barrier assessment, unless they already have one available, in which case they can immediately move to step 5. If a T/PCC is seeking to access a gender-strong unit premium only, they are not required to perform a barrier assessment, and can immediately move to step 5. The barrier assessment should be a credible systematic assessment of all barriers to increasing the meaningful participation of women in United Nations peace operations. See Appendix 1: Barrier Assessment Criteria for guidance on suitable barrier assessment methodologies.

The United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee may also approve funding for barrier assessments for countries within the list of projects eligible for subsequent funding.

T/PCCs agree to allow elements of the results of the barrier assessment to be used to compile an anonymized overview report.

Step 5: Development and Submission of Proposals

The projects are designed at the T/PCC level. As per the Letter of Interest, the T/PCC is required to consult with the relevant stakeholders. Per T/PCC, one proposal encompassing a project or set of projects per institution should be submitted. This will improve coherence and coordination of the projects.

A proposal will consist of a set of projects from the T/PCC and, when applicable, United Nations organizations. The proposal should include a coherent set of activities for which workplans are aligned to achieve common results.

The proposal is to be submitted by the relevant government body and, when applicable, United Nations organizations, copying the United Nations Resident Coordinator (when applicable), within a maximum of two months to the Secretariat.

Step 6: Technical Review of Projects

The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Technical Committee, conducts a systematic, comprehensive technical assessment of the proposals, including consideration of the HRDDP, HACT micro assessment and risk management, and reverts with an appraisal report and specific recommendations to the Steering Committee. The proposals are then finalized at country level taking the recommendations into consideration.

Proposals are required to meet the requirements specified under section 3.6 Criteria for Prioritization.

Step 7: Approval and Disbursement

The proposals cleared by the Secretariat are shared (executive summary and project document) with the Steering Committee.

Upon receipt of the Fund Transfer Request, the MPTFO initiates the fund transfer to the recipient organization.

Step 8: Implementation

Recipient organizations start project implementation.

5.2 Programming Cycle upon receipt of additional funding

Upon receipt of additional funding, the United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee can, following consultation of the Steering Committee, agree to request the development and submission of proposals (step 5) from countries in the order in which they appear on the list of approved *Letters of Interest*. The United Nations co-chair of the Steering Committee can also decide to launch a new call for *Letters of Interest*.

5.3 Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

Within 6 months of forming, the Fund Secretariat will develop monitoring, reporting and evaluation procedures based on the following, minimum guidelines.

Project-level Monitoring (including project funding and premium funding)

All recipient organizations and implementing partners must have robust internal monitoring and reporting procedures in place and those can be requested in the project document.

Each project will include a mid-term monitoring mission to determine if current implementation is effective, and a final monitoring or evaluation mission to assess whether contributions have had their intended effect, to determine whether results are being or have been achieved and whether contributions have been used for their intended purposes. The recipient organizations will be consulted on the scope and conduct of such monitoring missions and will be invited to join. All recipient organizations, including UN organizations and T/PCCs, are subject to monitoring and evaluation by the Fund. The Fund Secretariat has the discretion to determine if monitoring will be performed externally or internally; final monitoring for the premium disbursement will ordinarily be external.

It is understood by the recipient organizations that such monitoring missions will not constitute a financial, compliance or other audit of the Fund including any projects or activities funded under the MOU or MOA with the recipient organizations.

It will not be mandatory to monitor barrier assessments.

Reporting

Project-Level (including project funding and premium funding)

Recipient organizations will provide an annual narrative report and one final narrative report as agreed upon in the legal agreements signed with the Administrative Agent.

The annual and final reports are results-oriented and evidence-based. The reports give a summary of results and achievements compared to the expected result in the project document. In addition, quarterly reporting on indicators will be required.

The outcome indicators monitor the long-term results and are found in 3.4 Results Framework. For each project(s) approved for funding, recipient organizations provide the Secretariat and the Administrative Agent with annual financial statements prepared in accordance with their accounting and reporting procedures, as agreed upon in the legal agreements signed with the Administrative Agent.

Fund-Level

The Fund receives and reviews project-level reports and on the basis of these, publishes an annual overview report providing information on broad patterns and anonymized insights apparent in Fund-financed national barrier assessment studies. It also reports on the results of Fund-financed pilot innovations in-mission, anonymized to protect individual and national confidentiality.

Evaluation

The Fund's mandate to provide innovative solutions requires a comprehensive evaluation of its efforts. To this end, the Fund will make publicly available an evaluation, including self-assessment, and make publicly available a lessons-learned report after 2.5 years of activity³³. In addition, the Fund will make publicly available an evaluation of Fund activity 6 months before the end of its initial 5-year mandate.

Changes to Terms of Reference

The Steering Committee can decide whether there is a need to review the Terms of Reference of the Fund. Changes to this Terms of Reference can be made by the Steering Committee members through the decision-making process outlined in section 4.2.1 Steering Committee.

³³ The EIF is contracting an external organisation to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the EIF Trust Fund in accordance with the EIF MEF, commencing Q2 2023. The MEF can be accessed on the EIF webpage: <https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

Appendix 1: Barrier Assessment Criteria

The requirement of a barrier assessment acknowledges that the type and relative impact of barriers can vary amongst T/PCCs. It creates an empirically grounded foundation for the elaboration of T/PCC-specific interventions aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women in United Nations peace operations. It also generates a baseline assessment of existing barriers to the deployment of women peacekeepers against which progress can be evaluated.

This assessment should seek to identify and validate the reasons for which uniformed women are not participating in United Nations peace operations in greater numbers. Further, this assessment should facilitate the identification of potential interventions that could be supported by the Fund with consideration to the probable effectiveness of those interventions, and an understanding of associated risks and risk mitigation.

An assessment of barriers to women's participation in peace operations should include observational indicators that focus, *inter alia*, on relevant legislation, the distribution of women and men in national military and police institutions, these institutions' policies and practices regarding peacekeeping, as well as perceptual indicators that analyze the attitudes and experiences of both women and men to better understand the barriers. Consultations will involve women and men both with and without direct experience of serving in peace operations.

An appropriate barrier assessment should:

- Include a risk mitigation strategy to ensure the safety and appropriate privacy of all participants in the assessment, as well as the sustainability of interventions supported by this Fund. Information should be collected, stored and analyzed via practices that allow it to be done accurately and anonymously.
- Include basic baseline data collection (targeted questionnaires, surveys and target group interviews) with a statistically significant number of men and women with direct and indirect experience of peacekeeping as well as in leadership and decision-making positions related to personnel management and peacekeeping, training and deployment.
- Address the following areas as they relate to uniformed women's meaningful participation in United Nations peace operations:
 - Institutional initiatives to increase the participation of uniformed women in peace operations (to date), and their effect, if any
 - The impact of the social context in the T/PCC on institutional policies and decision-making with regard to the deployment of uniformed women
 - The institutional and governmental motivation to increase women's meaningful participation in United Nations peace operations
 - The institutional capacity and political will for change

Outputs

- The barrier assessment will serve as the principal tool in identifying a project-specific pathway to measurable change that the Fund can support.
- A barrier assessment report, including: a country profile, methodological section, identification of universal vs. contextual factors, key findings and statistics, barrier identification and analysis and impact of barriers to uniformed women's deployment, and recommendations for action.
- A set of policy and programmatic recommendations based on a thorough review and analysis of the collected data as concerns the deployment of uniformed women to United Nations peace operations.

Conduct

- The assessment may be conducted by the T/PCC using internal resources, but the Fund encourages consideration of using independent analysts (NGO, think tank, academics), or partnering with another Member State.

Appendix 2: DPO Guidance - Deployment Planning for United Nations Peace Operations

Applicants to the EIF are to **note** that it is the United Nations Department of Peace Operations - Office of Military Affairs and Police Division, who has the authority to select and deploy T/PCC personnel to United Nations peace operations.

The following factors will determine whether an Elsie-funded project can achieve the outcome, as set out in the Terms of Reference of the Elsie Fund, of *“increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions”*:

- A T/PCC’s ability to deploy trained female and male personnel with the required skillsets in the timeframe stipulated in the project proposal and to address challenges related to performance and sustainability when it increases the number of Formed Police Units and/or military contingents it is deploying.
- DPO’s processes, criteria and available infrastructure for deployment of military and police personnel, including but not limited to:
 - actual and future needs for police and military personnel, taking into consideration any United Nations field missions projected to close or downsize;
 - the obligation to ensure geographical representation of Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) and Police Contributing Countries (PCCs) in the military and police components of United Nations field missions;
 - the obligation to respect the pledges made by TCCs and PCCs in the framework of the United Nations Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System (PCRS);
 - the availability in the United Nations field mission(s) of the requisite logistics, welfare and medical facilities for women.

In addition to the above, any provision of training or other assistance by DPO to TCCs and PCCs that is outlined in a project proposal will be contingent upon the availability of relevant DPO personnel and financial resources unless the EIF or other partners can mobilize requisite resources—in a timely manner—to enable the planning for and creation of additional capacities to address the scale and scope of activities envisaged in the project proposal(s).