



## **A United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund**

### **Terms of Reference (V3)**

**14 March 2019 – 31 December 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**

**Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF) Terms of Reference (TOR) Version 3, updated: 1 November 2024**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

A4P/A4P+	Action for Peacekeeping/Action for Peacekeeping +
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCAF	The Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
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, with 11 missions in 2023, down from 14 in 2019, many of which are characterized by robust mandates, including the protection of civilians. United Nations peacekeeping has evolved considerably over past decades and must continue to adapt to the evolving peacekeeping landscape, as outlined in the recent *2024 Pact for the Future*<sup>1</sup> which emphasises multilateralism, gender equality, and sustainable peace, noting that the number and proportion of deployed women<sup>2</sup> peacekeepers continue to remain too low. The recent *UN Security Council Resolution 2719 (2023)*<sup>3</sup> emphasises the importance of strengthening collaboration between the UN and regional organisations, such as the African Union in promoting peace and security. To receive support from the Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF), however, any new peace operation would be required to ensure the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women and to prioritise the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda.

Gender equality in peacekeeping and peace support 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.<sup>4, 5, 6</sup> and <sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>9</sup>

Subsequent 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).<sup>10</sup> United Nations Security Council resolution 2436 (2018) reaffirmed this goal; emphasized the importance of the strategy in 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.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact\\_for\\_the\\_future\\_adopted.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this document, “women” refers to all those who identify as women.

<sup>3</sup> <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n23/420/06/pdf/n2342006.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> [Bigio, Jamille, and Vogelstein, Rachel \(2019\). Increasing Female Participation in Peacekeeping Operations. Council on Foreign Relations.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Nagel, Robert; Fin, Kate and Maenza, Julia \(2021\). Peacekeeping Operations and Gender: Policies for Improvement. Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Bridges, Donna, and Horsfall, Debbie (2009) Increasing Operational Effectiveness in UN Peacekeeping, *Armed Forces & Society* Volume 36 Number 1.

<sup>7</sup> [Huddleston, Evening \(2023\). Advancing United Nations Gender Mainstreaming: Female Peacekeepers in Haiti and Liberia, Fordham University Research Commons.](#)

<sup>8</sup> <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/promoting-women-peace-and-security>, accessed on 1 Nov 18.

<sup>9</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1325> accessed on 1 Nov 18.

<sup>10</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2242> accessed 1 Nov 18.

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.<sup>11</sup>

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 and continues to be 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 to 7% in 2023. 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<sup>12</sup> and 16% in 2023.<sup>13</sup>

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,<sup>14</sup> the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative announced in 2018<sup>15</sup> and the A4P implementation strategy A4P+ - priorities for 2021 – 2023, released in 2021.<sup>16</sup> The Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy calls on the former Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support (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.<sup>17</sup> A4P recommit Member States to increase the number of civilian and uniformed women in peacekeeping at all levels and in key positions, with the WPS agenda subsequently integrated as a cross-cutting theme across the A4P+ seven priority areas.

While these initiatives acknowledge that substantially increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers requires the efforts of Member States, and in particular, T/PCCs, this participation must go beyond numerical representation to ensure that women have full access to leadership roles at all levels, thereby strengthening their influence in decision-making processes and mission outcomes. 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"). Originally a 5-year, multilateral pilot project scheduled to last five years (2017-2022), and subsequently extended to March 2027, the Elsie Initiative 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.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/1538> accessed 23 Mar 23.

<sup>12</sup> <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/gender> accessed on 1 Nov 18.

<sup>13</sup> S/2024/671 United Nations Report of the Secretary-General on Women and peace and security, 24 September 2024.

<sup>14</sup> [United Nations Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#).

<sup>15</sup> <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/action-for-peacekeeping-a4p>.

<sup>16</sup> [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p\\_background\\_paper.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/a4p_background_paper.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> [United Nations Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#).

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.<sup>18</sup> 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 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),<sup>19</sup> as sub-contractees, and/or United Nations organizations<sup>20</sup> (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.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ghittoni, M., Lehouk, L., Watson, C., [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations Baseline Study](#), DCAF, Geneva July 2018, P8.

<sup>19</sup> 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.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations organizations are defined as United Nations Agencies, Funds and/or Programmes.

<sup>21</sup> Marta Ghittoni, Léa Lehouk and Callum Watson: [Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations: Baseline Study](#) (Geneva: DCAF 2018).

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 was initially to 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. On 30 January 2023, the EIF Steering Committee agreed to extend the TOR to 31 December 2025 (EIF TOR – V2), with a commitment to further extend the TOR to 31 March 2028. It continues to acknowledge that funding is an important factor enabling Member States to participate in United Nations peace operations and echoes recent efforts to incentivise 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.

### Existing United Nations peacekeeping financial mechanisms

Approved United Nations peacekeeping expenditures exceeded \$7.3 billion<sup>22</sup> in the 2017-2018 budget year,<sup>23</sup> and exceeded \$6.05 billion in the 2022-2023 budget year<sup>24</sup> which is modest in relative terms,<sup>25</sup> 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 \$1,448,<sup>26</sup> generating a yearly cost of \$89 million for today's roughly 62,000, down from \$1.5 billion in 2019 for 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,<sup>27</sup> 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.<sup>28</sup> In 2017, the General Assembly approved partially reimbursing T/PCCs for major equipment

<sup>22</sup> All figures are expressed in USD.

<sup>23</sup> A/C.5/72/21. For 2018-2019, approved expenditures declined to \$6.7 billion, but this includes only 6 months funding for UNAMID.  
<https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n18/006/51/pdf/n1800651.pdf>.

<sup>24</sup> A/C.5/77/32: Approved resources for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024:  
[https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4014658/files/A\\_C.5\\_77\\_32-EN.pdf?ln=en](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4014658/files/A_C.5_77_32-EN.pdf?ln=en).

<sup>25</sup> [Global military expenditure exceeded \\$2.44 trillion in 2023, an increase of 6.8% in real terms from 2022, and the steepest year-on-year increase since 2009.](#)

<sup>26</sup> The current single rate of reimbursement per person is \$1,448 from 1 July 2022, as detailed in [A/RES/76/276](#).

<sup>27</sup> The current single rate of reimbursement per person is \$1,448 from 1 July 2022, as detailed in [A/RES/76/276](#).

<sup>28</sup> A/RES/67/261.

maintenance costs associated with units pledged for rapid deployment, as long as the units deploy when called upon.<sup>29</sup>

The implementation of these measures has varied. Missing equipment deductions totalled \$333 million from 2014–2017,<sup>30</sup> and \$335 million from 2018–2022<sup>31</sup>. 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 terms<sup>32</sup> 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.<sup>33</sup>

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.<sup>34</sup>
3. It incentivizes T/PCCs to increase their meaningful deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers by offering a “Gender-Strong Unit (GSU) premium.<sup>35</sup>” It focuses on the deployment of GSUs, 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.

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<sup>29</sup> A/RES/71/296. T/PCCs are reimbursed 25% of the established maintenance rate for pledged major equipment. Units are also eligible for the key enabling capabilities premium.

<sup>30</sup> A/72/770, 28 Feb 18 (Annex V, Table 2 - <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n18/056/82/pdf/n1805682.pdf>).

<sup>31</sup> A/78/726, 22 Jan 24 (Annex V, Tables 4 and 5 - [https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4045712/files/A\\_78\\_726-EN.pdf?n=en](https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4045712/files/A_78_726-EN.pdf?n=en)).

<sup>32</sup> 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.

<sup>33</sup> A/6/813.

<sup>34</sup> 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\*.

<sup>35</sup> For a full explanation of the GSU premium, please see section 3.5 Financing Modalities.



## 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 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 United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Gender Equality Marker (GEM)

The UNCT GEM<sup>36</sup> is designed to track how UNCTs allocate resources towards gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). The UNCT-GEM uses a four-point coding scale, from 0 to 3, to indicate the planned contribution of the sub-output to gender equality. 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.

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<sup>36</sup> UNCT GEM Guidance Note, 2024. Accessed 24 Sep 2024. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/unct-gender-equality-marker-guidance-note-2024>.

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 catalyse 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 organizations<sup>37</sup> 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

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<sup>37</sup> Recipient organizations include Participating United Nations Organizations and recipient troop- and police-contributing countries (recipient national governments).

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.

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 address 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 GSUs 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 assessments<sup>38</sup> 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 GSU.

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

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<sup>38</sup> 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>.

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 such as inadvertently reinforcing gender stereotypes or failing to provide women with adequate training or preparation, and potentially affecting their confidence and safety.

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

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

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 is 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, funds can only be used as *incentives* for one specific proposal type: the deployment of GSUs. 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, GSUs 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 materiel. GSUs 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 the 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.

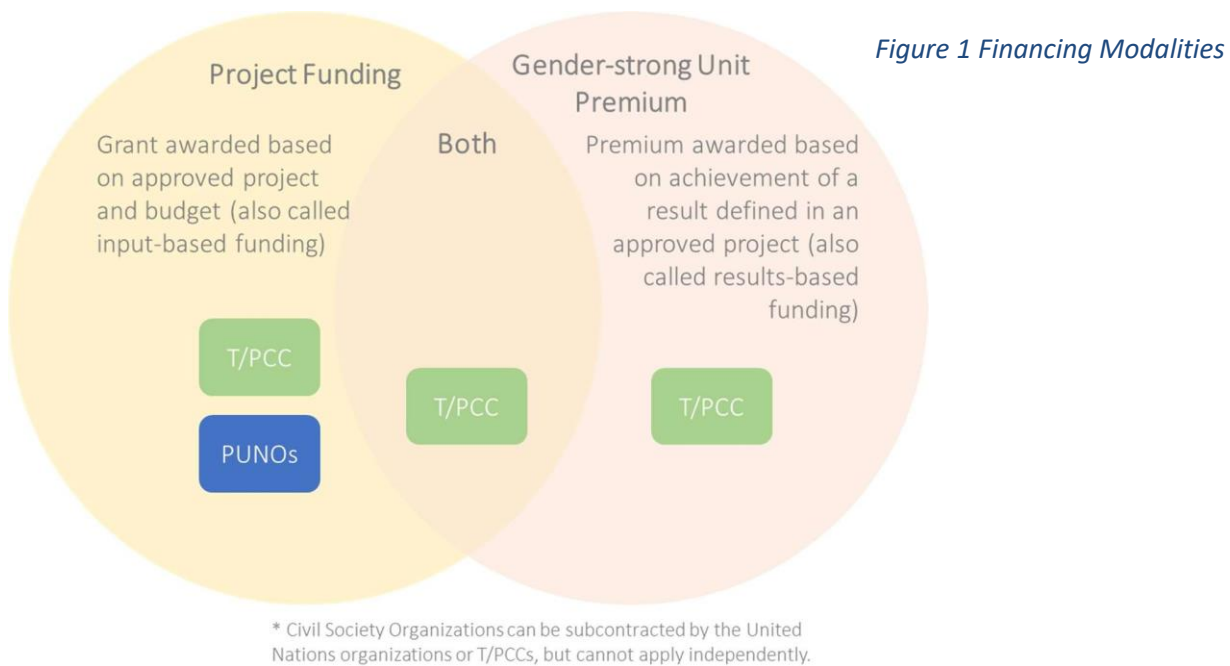
The expected outcome of this cross-cutting commitment is improved availability of policy-relevant knowledge related to the increased meaningful participation of women in United Nations peace operations.

### 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.



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 including financial reporting. United Nations organizations are eligible to receive funds for 100 per cent 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, a GSU 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 GSU. The T/PCC self-finances all activities in support of the deployment of a GSU. The results indicators related to the GSU 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 be paid directly to the T/PCC upon submission of a plan demonstrating its reinvestment into activities supporting the Fund's goals. 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 GSU 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 GSU 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 GSU(s).

### **Project Funding**

Eligible projects are:

- A barrier assessment (see Appendix 1: Barrier Assessment Criteria) as a mandatory first step to access additional flexible project funding.
- 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 2 and/or 3);
  - 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 3);
  - 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 2), and

- having identified through the barrier assessment a training and education shortfall that impacts women reaching senior ranks within the military, designs and implements a mentorship program targeted at middle-ranking women with previous UN service.
- 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 3), 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 4)
- 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 GSU, and consequently applies to the Fund for support to modify an existing barracks to ensure there is appropriate facilities available as the GSU is formed and conducts its pre-deployment training (Outcome 2), 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 2).
  - 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 2).

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].<sup>39</sup> 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 available on request to the United Nations.

### **Gender-Strong Unit (GSU) Premium**

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

A GSU 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.

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<sup>39</sup> 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>.

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 a full 5 percentage points.<sup>40</sup>
- 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).

GSUs 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, in leadership, command and technical roles and in non-gender stereo-typical roles, such as vehicle mechanics, engineers, radio technicians, and patrol and section commanders.
- 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 GSU. In addition, they can be used to pay a GSU premium. In the first year of deployment, the premium should be approximately a sum equivalent to 20 per cent of the United Nations ~~top~~/police cost 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 consecutive 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.

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<sup>40</sup> Therefore, if the target stated is 10%, the unit must be at least 15%, and not rounded up.



### 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 development and implementation cycle.
- **Sustainability and Extension** – Preference will be given to projects that are likely to contribute to the sustained increase 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 GSU premiums, preference will be given to submissions that specify a T/PCC's intentions to reinvest the GSU 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 detailed 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 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.

<b>Risk Mitigation Matrix</b>	
Risk	Mitigation Strategies
<b>Contextual Risks</b>	
Lack of ongoing commitment from donors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Broaden the donor base as much as possible.</li> <li>- Close engagement with donors to maintain commitment.</li> <li>- Adequate and regular reporting.</li> <li>- Advocacy by EOSG, DPO, UN Women.</li> <li>- Clear communications of the fund’s achievements (public advocacy).</li> <li>- Clear linkage of the fund’s objectives to the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy.</li> </ul>
Lack of ongoing commitment from recipient organizations of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As per eligibility criteria found in section 4.2.5 Recipient Organizations, require evidence of high-level commitment prior to project approval.</li> <li>- Require clarity in proposals regarding structural and normative changes in military or police services.</li> <li>- Ongoing engagement (especially from DPO) to ensure targets for women’s participation are met.</li> </ul>
Social norms in project countries/missions resist change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As per eligibility criteria found in section 4.2.5 Recipient Organizations, require evidence of high-level commitment prior to project approval.</li> <li>- Require clarity in proposals regarding structural and normative changes in military or police services.</li> </ul>
Social norms in mission environments resist change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commitment from senior United Nations leadership. Linkage to the DPO 2018-2028 Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy (UGPS).</li> </ul>
<b>Programmatic Risks</b>	
Women are deployed who are not adequately prepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Require evidence that all women deployed have received adequate training, are fully qualified for their role, and have the requisite experience.</li> </ul>
Women are deployed into mission environments that are not equipped to support or benefit from their deployment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Linkage to the UGPS and the enabling environment it seeks to create.</li> </ul>
Backlash against women who are perceived to benefit from changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that the applications describe how this will be mitigated at the national level and in project documentation.</li> </ul>

National partners have limited capacity to apply for funds and to implement projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encouragement of recipient organizations (mentoring / assistance from donor states or CSO) as part of project proposal.</li> <li>- Application of barrier assessment and clear, detailed strategies as part of project proposals.</li> <li>- Management of scope of individual national projects.</li> </ul>
Lack of time for initiatives to impact on the number of women in peace operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stages or phases to projects.</li> <li>- Clearly established and time-limited goals for projects.</li> <li>- Management of the portfolio of projects to ensure both short-term achievement and longer-term structural change.</li> </ul>
Initiatives collapse after project end due to lack of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Political and organizational leadership commitment to ongoing change.</li> <li>- Linkage to the UGPS. Bias in projects towards those that produce structural or normative change.</li> </ul>
Capacity and knowledge are not translated into transformative action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application of barrier assessment to produce evidence-based, reasonable, and achievable projects.</li> <li>- Mentoring and assistance for recipient organizations.</li> </ul>
Failure to adequately consider HRDDP and HACT requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application of HRDDP and HACT risk mitigation strategies required for project approval.</li> <li>- Ongoing environmental monitoring of project countries for HR breaches by the Fund's Secretariat.</li> </ul>
Inappropriate size of the GSU premium.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Fund's Steering Committee will periodically review the size of the premium.</li> </ul>
Insufficient time to achieve measurable gains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Acknowledge that some projects will not realize all results within the life of the Fund.</li> <li>- Prioritize allocations towards projects that will have a tangible outcome within the life of the Fund.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional Risks</b>	
National stakeholders lack of political will to proceed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evidence of commitment is required for project approval.</li> <li>- Project M&amp;E framework to monitor ongoing commitment to change / project objectives.</li> </ul>
Project actions are misplaced or inadequate to achieve project goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application of barrier assessment to produce evidence-based, reasonable, and achievable projects.</li> <li>- Mentoring and assistance by recipient organizations.</li> </ul>
Lack of data to adequately analyse project performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Projects based around SMART goals.</li> <li>- Barrier assessment to provide baseline for M&amp;E. Fund recipient organization commitment to track and share relevant data (as possible).</li> </ul>

**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 purposes 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.

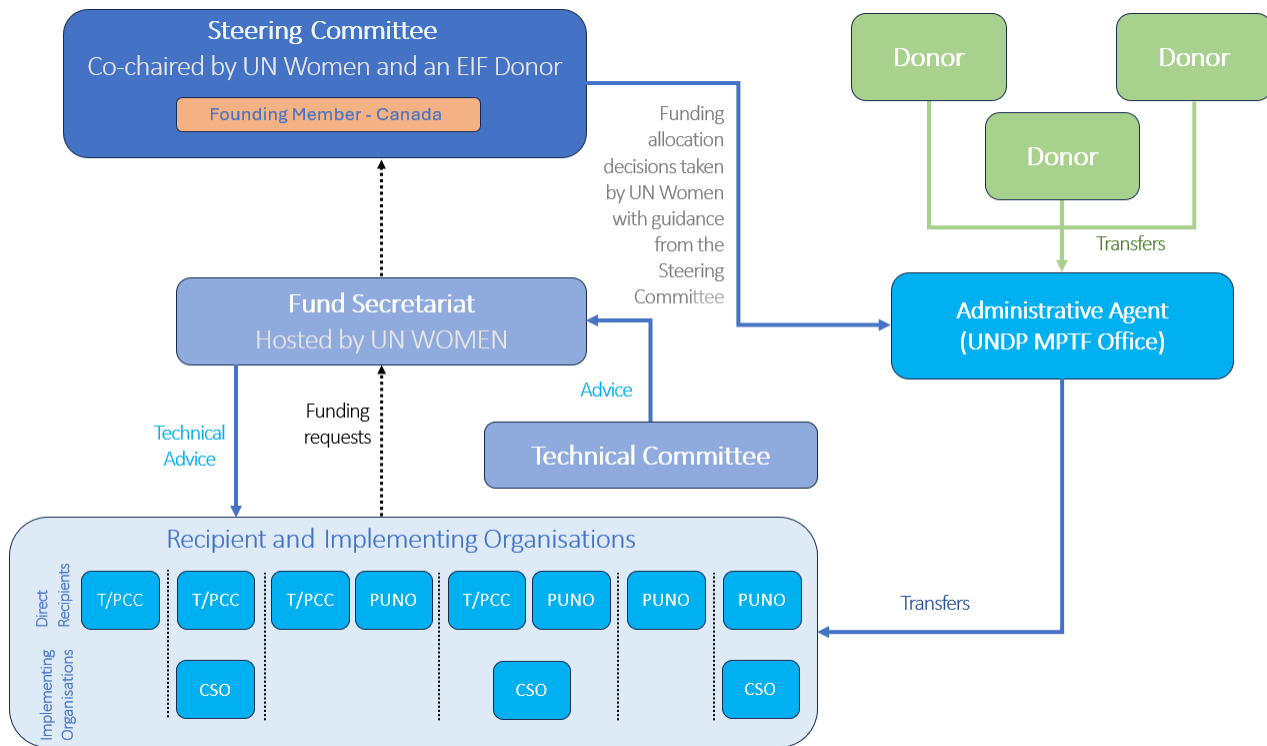


Figure 2 Governance Arrangements

## 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.
- A co-chair: in accordance with the following criteria:
  - A country that has contributed to the fund within the past 5 years is eligible to apply for the co-chair role;
  - The co-chair role should be a 1-3-year term, with the option to renew;

- Interested countries to submit an expression of interest to the EIF Secretariat, which includes the proposed timing of their term and any specific arrangements e.g., subsequent co-chair roles in partnership with other eligible countries.

Following consultation with the Steering Committee, UN Women would appoint the co-chair.

- Founding Member: Canada, as Founding Member, is a member for the renewed period of the terms of reference until 31 December 2028, and with the option to renew membership thereafter.
- Three countries:
  - a top contributor to the Fund (that does not already occupy a seat on the Steering Committee),
  - 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 led 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, address the extensive demand for technical advice, oversee overlapping programming rounds, and support the collection, analysis and dissemination of knowledge gained through the Fund to inform national and international policy debates, for the 4<sup>th</sup> and future programming rounds, the Secretariat, based in New York, will need to count on at least:

- A Fund Manager with relevant technical expertise and capacity (P4/5 level);
- Four Project Coordination Specialists (P3 level);
- Two Program Coordination Analysts (P1-2 level);
- One Communications Analyst, and
- One Programme Associate (GS6 -P1 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, 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's 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 bodies (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
- Analyse and manage 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' meeting<sup>41</sup>;
- 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 between 6-10 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 letters 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.

The TOR for the Technical Committee, which describes its roles and responsibilities, working modalities and requirements, is at Appendix II.

### ***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;

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<sup>41</sup> 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.

- 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.<sup>42</sup>

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 per cent (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 was the initial contributor to the Fund, and jointly with the United Nations, played a key role in the governance arrangements, notably, co-chairing the Steering Committee. From 1 January 2025, the co-chair role will be rotated amongst EIF Donors, with Canada remaining on the EIF Steering Committee as the Founding Member until 31 December 2028, and with the option to renew membership thereafter.

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 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.

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<sup>42</sup> 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/>.

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

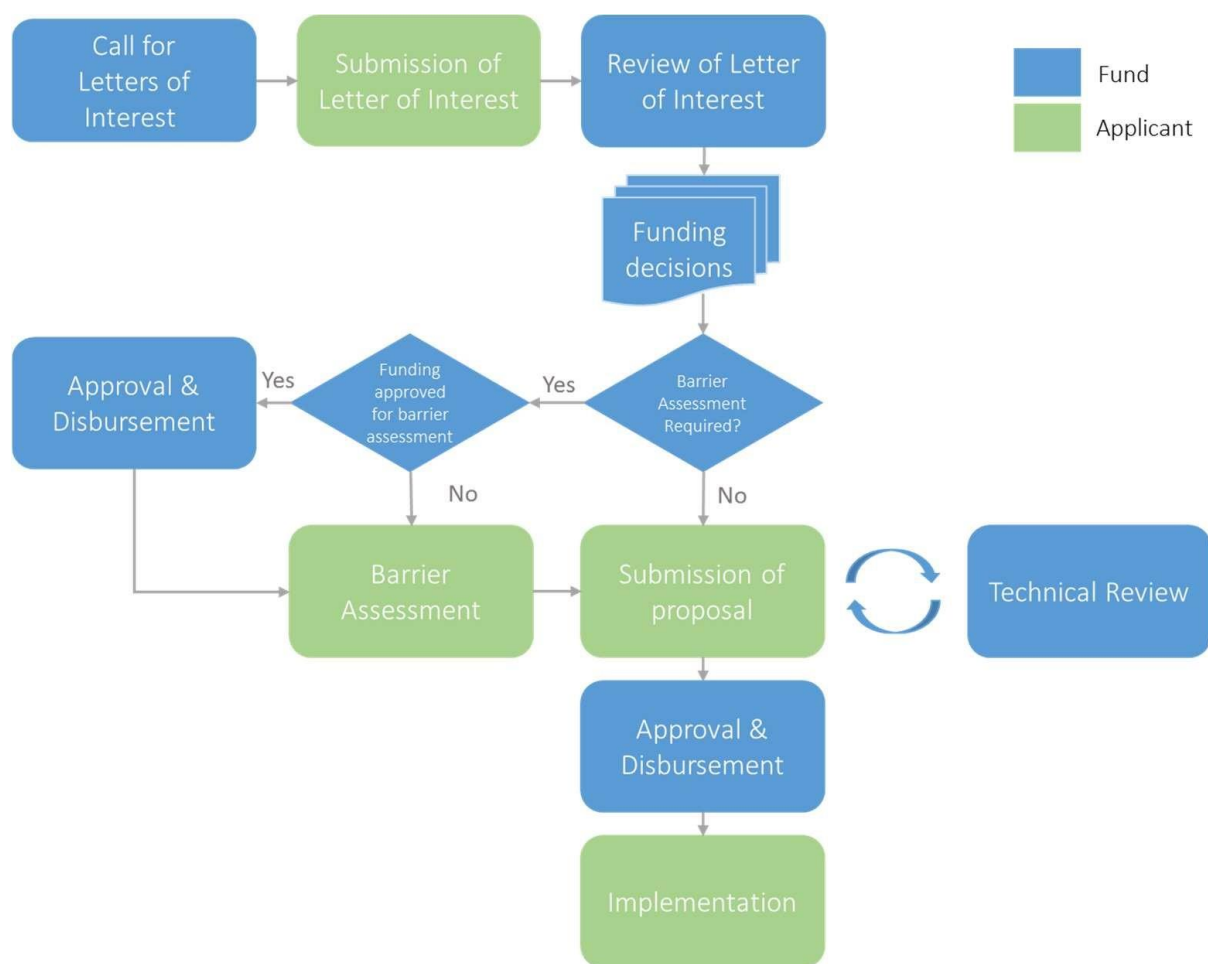


Figure 3: Programming cycle

#### 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 Manual<sup>43</sup>.

### **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 3.

### **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:

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<sup>43</sup> The EIF Operations Manual is accessible on the EIF webpage: <https://elsiefund.org/resources/elsie-initiative-fund-documents/>.

- 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 GSUs 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 GSU 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 activities per institution should be submitted. This will improve the coherence and coordination of projects.

A proposal will consist of a set of activities from the T/PCC and, when applicable, United Nations organizations. The proposal should include a coherent set of activities for which work plans are aligned to achieve common results, and are accompanied by a detailed budget, monitoring and reporting framework, risk assessment and communications and advocacy plan.

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 the 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.

Monitoring of barrier assessments outside of EIF quarterly project check-in meetings will not be mandatory.

##### **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 activity<sup>44</sup>. Noting the Fund was extended to 2025, with a commitment to extend to 2028, the Fund will make publicly available a mid-term evaluation of the Fund in 2024, and a subsequent / final evaluation of the Fund in early 2028.

### **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.

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<sup>44</sup> 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 analyse 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 analysed 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: EIF Technical Committee - Terms of Reference

This document describes the role, remit, and authority of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women (EIF) Technical Committee (TC). The TC mandate is derived from the EIF Terms of Reference-V3 (TOR) 14 March 2019 – 31 December 2028.

### 1. Governance Architecture

The EIF's governance arrangements and decision-making processes, including the EIF TC, are described in the EIF's TOR, and are depicted in Figure 1 - EIF Governance Arrangements, with the EIF, managed through a Steering Committee (SC), the EIF Secretariat, a TC and the Administrative Agent (AA). Details of the role of each are found in the EIF's TOR.

### 2. Roles and Responsibilities

TC members assist the EIF Secretariat in providing additional expertise on women in peace operations, security sector reform, project design and management structures, and/or the technical aspects required for specific project activities such as construction-related projects. The TC is responsible for the provision of:

- Technical advice to the EIF Secretariat on the review and prioritization of letters of interest (LOI) and detailed project documentation (PRODOC) proposals throughout the EIF's programming rounds (PR) in the following areas:
  - women in peace operations
  - United Nations force generation processes, policies, and criteria
  - security sector reform
  - project design and management structures
  - and/or the technical aspects required for specific project activities such as construction-related projects
- Recommendations to finalize submitted projects, and
- Review of barrier assessments and interim and final reports submitted by Troop and Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) and United Nations peacekeeping missions.

### 3. Technical Committee: Selection, Size and Composition

TC members are appointed by the SC, on recommendation from the EIF Secretariat, and can come from the founding United Nations organizations, civil society, or academic institutions. The EIF Secretariat will be responsible for screening recommendations before seeking SC endorsement.

The size of the TC will be approximately 6-8 members with other technical expert advisors invited to attend as and when appropriate. The EIF will periodically consult with EIF stakeholders to identify and invite TC members as required.

Applications by interested individuals are also welcome and must be accompanied by a Motivation Letter and CV, outlining the individual's motivation, as well as their knowledge and expertise in areas relevant to the EIF, and how they will contribute to the TC.

The EIF Secretariat will review the EIF TC's composition every two to three years; and where a member has left, will consult with EIF stakeholders to identify and invite a new TC member as required.

TC composition will include representatives from the following organizations:

- United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO)
- Office for Coordination and Shared Services
- Office of Military Affairs (OMA)
- Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions (OROLSI)

- Police Division (PD)
- Security Sector Reform Unit (SSRU)
- Representatives from other United Nations Entities as required.
- Civil Society representatives from both the Global South and the Global North who have expertise in gender and security sector, and project management, including project design, monitoring and evaluation.
- Think Tank representation with Gender and Security Sector expertise.

DPO, notably OMA and PD, has the authority to select and deploy T/PCC personnel to United Nations peace operations, and it is therefore critical, that the EIF and DPO maintain a close relationship and consult with the subject matter experts on the review of LOIs and detailed project proposals as required. While the following offices do not necessarily need to be represented on the TC, their input and advice will be sought by the DPO representatives on the TC, including in the areas of Strategic Force Generation (SFG), recruitment and selection of uniformed personnel (DPO-Force Generation Service; PD-Selection and Recruitment Section), training (Integrated Training support) and United Nations peacekeeping mission management and support.

#### 4. Criteria

Criteria for membership to the TC include, but are not limited to:

- Experience in recruiting and retaining women in the military and/or the police at national, regional, and/or international levels.
- Competence in understanding and addressing barriers that women military and/or police face in the security sector, throughout recruitment and retention processes and practices of militaries and/or police organisations at the national and/or international levels, and particularly for deployment to United Nations peace operations, as well as enabling environment challenges.
- Active interest in the work of the United Nations Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy, the Elsie Initiative, and the EIF, and the capacity to support the EIF TC and advocate for the work of the EIF.
- Understanding of the United Nations system including UN peacekeeping or Peace Support operations.

**Note:** not all criteria will be required to be met by all TC members, for example where an engineering expert opinion is required for a construction project.

#### 5. Identification of TC members<sup>45</sup>

The EIF Secretariat will use a variety of resources to identify and invite suitable nominees for membership:

- Personal knowledge of experts making significant contributions related to women’s recruitment in the military and the police, and contributions related to strengthening enabling environments
- Review of journals and publications related to women’s meaningful participation in the military and the police at the national level and in international deployments, particularly for peace operations
- Professional military and police associations at the national, regional, and international levels, in particular women’s associations
- Attendance at relevant professional meetings and conference
- Recommendations of experts from current or former TC members and leaders in the field, and
- Self-nomination from individuals including those with international deployment and leadership experience.

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<sup>45</sup> Former heads of UN MIL / POL Contingent, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the International Association of Women Police (IAWP).

## 6. Compensation

The EIF TOR states that “*Non-United Nations technical specialists* can be compensated through the EIF or supported through an in-kind contribution, at a reasonable rate”<sup>46</sup>. The EIF SC has agreed that an Honorarium amount of USD 50 per hour would be appropriate and meet the intent of the EIF TOR. Employees of Government Ministries, Departments, Security Institutions, Military or Police personnel, or other Government salaried personnel are not eligible to receive an honorarium payment.

## 7. Working Modalities

**Language.** The EIF Secretariat’s working language is English for both written and oral communication. Where submissions are received in another language, the EIF Secretariat will translate them using DeepL.

**Participation and attendance.** Not all TC members will be required to contribute advice on all occasions – the EIF Secretariat will draw on specific expertise to support a particular review, decision, or stage in the EIF’s PR and operations.

**TC member requirements.** The EIF requires TC members to provide advice and written comments on Letters of Interest (LOI) and detailed project documentation (PRODOC) submissions from Military, Police, and United Nations peacekeeping missions.

### • LOIs

- The EIF Secretariat receives on average, 30-40 LOIs per PR.
- The EIF Secretariat analyses all LOIs against the EIF’s TOR requirements and provides a written summary of all LOIs to the TC **two weeks before** the TC-LOI review meetings.
- There are usually 2-3 TC meetings per PR, for military, police, and UN peacekeeping mission proposals.
- The EIF Secretariat also provides a short synopsis of each LOI at each of the TC-LOI review meetings, including highlighting any potential issues of concern.
- Before the TC meeting, TC members are requested to:
  - review each of the LOIs in detail.
    - **Note:** the average time to review each LOI and provide written comments is 1-2 hours
  - provide written comments (1/2 – one page) to the EIF Secretariat either ahead of or following the TC meeting,
  - attend EIF TC meeting(s) to provide advice on LOIs.
    - **Note:** the meeting time is approx. 2 hours for each of the three TC-LOI review meetings.
- Following the meeting, review EIF TC Minutes for correctness.

### • Project Document (PRODOC)

- The EIF Secretariat receives ~ 12-18 PRODOC per PR
  - ~10 MOWIPs
  - ~5-6 FPF
- The EIF Secretariat analyses each PRODOC against the EIF’s TOR requirements and the MOWIP report (T/PCCs only), and provides a written summary of each PRODOC to the TC **two weeks before** the PRODOC review meeting (normally one PRODOC per meeting)
- The EIF Secretariat also provides a short synopsis of each PRODOC at the TC-PRODOC review meeting, including highlighting any potential issues of concern.
- Before the TC meeting, TC members are requested to:
  - review the PRODOC in detail.

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<sup>46</sup> In accordance with the EIF Terms of Reference, page 25, para 2.4.3.

- **Note:** the average time to review one PRODOC would be approximately 2 hours for a MOWIP and 4 hours for an FPF.
  - Provide written comments on each PRODOC (2-3 pages) to the EIF Secretariat, including on the budget, work plan, proposed activities, and linkages to the EIF’s monitoring and evaluation framework, either ahead of or following the TC meeting
  - attend EIF TC meeting(s) to provide advice on each PRODOC.
    - **Note:** the meeting time is approx. 1 hour for each PRODOC review meeting.
- Following the meeting, review EIF TC Minutes for correctness.

A TC member may also be requested to provide guidance specific to a particular project, outside of the above routine requests.

**Timelines.**

- The EIF will advise EIF TC members of the launch date for each PR. TC LOI review tasks are anticipated approximately 6-8 months following a PR launch, with PRODOC review tasks anticipated ~ 12-18 months post-launch.
- For all TC requests, the EIF will provide **10 working days** advance notice of meetings and review tasks and will make the best effort to accommodate different time zones.
- The EIF expects to receive written feedback from TC members at least 2 working days before each TC meeting.

**Compensation.** EIF TC members as defined under “6. Compensation” will be requested to submit a signed invoice and timesheet monthly (EIF templates to be provided), which details the support provided to review the documents and the number of hours taken.

**8. Confidentiality**

By accepting a position on the EIF TC, members agree that all EIF external and internal information is to be handled in confidence, not disclosed to a third party, not made public, and not to be used for any purpose other than providing advice to the EIF, without written consent from the EIF Secretariat.

**9. Conflict of Interest**

If a TC member has or identifies a conflict or potential conflict of interest that may involve a particular implementing partner, a national government security institution, for either an LOI or project proposal review request, the TC member is required to advise the EIF Secretariat Manager of the conflict of interest and recuse themselves from that particular review task.

## Appendix 3: 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).