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Background

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 uniformed women has been slow. In March 2019, UN Women, in partnership with the Government of Canada, launched the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations (EIF)

The EIF was designed together with Member States, the United Nations system, and peacekeeping experts to support the increased deployment of uniformed women in military and police roles to United Nations peace operations.

The EIF is one component of Canada's broader Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations launched by the Canadian Government in 2017. The Canadian Elsie Initiative is a 5-year, multilateral pilot project which includes, among other components: conducting robust research, monitoring and evaluation, and the creation of a publicly accessible and comprehensive barrier assessment methodology for military and police organizations worldwide.

Objective

The EIF aims to support the sustainable deployment and meaningful participation² of uniformed women peacekeepers - including members of military contingents, formed police units, military observers, staff officers and individual police officers in United Nations peace operations by offering assistance to Troop or Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) to identify and overcome barriers to deployment. The EIF seeks to accelerate progress towards achieving the United Nations Security Council's target of doubling the rate of women's participation within police and military contingents by 2020 compared to 2015 as outlined in United Nations Security Council resolution 2242, as well as supporting the targets in the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO) Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy (UGPS) 2018 to 2028.

To fulfil its objectives, the EIF:

1. Supports (current and prospective) T/PCCs in undertaking a barrier assessment to identify the nature and extent of obstacles impeding their deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers.

2. 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.

3. Incentivizes T/PCCs to increase their meaningful deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers by offering a “gender-strong unit (GSU) premium.” The focus on the deployment of GSUs, rather than individual women, is to ensure that women are deployed in a working and living environment that allows for their meaningful participation in peace operations.

4. Supports, in a limited manner, targeted pilot projects within United Nations missions aimed at enhancing deployment conditions for women peacekeepers.

5. Commits to sustained assessment exercises to establish the impact of the above measures, and to share, as possible, relevant insights.


² 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.
Application criteria

1. **Activities:** The EIF will consider proposals for three different types of activities.
   
a. **Barrier assessment:** Barrier assessments within T/PCCs to ascertain the nature and extent of obstacles impeding their deployment of trained and qualified women peacekeepers;

b. **Project funding:** Projects aimed at increasing the meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations missions;

c. **GSU premium:** A premium for the deployment of GSUs that include substantial representation of women overall and in positions of authority, have provided gender-equity training to all unit members, and have adequate material to ensure parity of deployment conditions for women and men peacekeepers.

Each Letter of Interest (LOI) can seek funding for one or more activities mentioned above (e.g., a combination of a barrier assessment and GSU premium; if you have already conducted a barrier assessment, you can combine a project funding and GSU premium together with a submission of a barrier assessment report that provides the justification for the proposed project activities).

The barrier assessment is mandatory. The barrier assessment’s outcomes and recommendations are required to form the basis for proposed activities for which funding is being requested.

Therefore, when requesting project funding, a credible assessment of the main barriers present in a particular national (or international) context must be presented along with one or more projects seeking to remedy specific identified obstacles.

2. **Recipients:** The eligible recipients include the following entities for each type of proposal.

   a. **Barrier assessment and project funding:**
      2. Potential T/PCC whose intentions can be adequately demonstrated through the proposal process;

   b. **GSU premium:** T/PCCs

The following entities are not eligible to apply to the EIF.

- Civil society organizations: Civil society organizations cannot apply independently to the EIF but can be subcontracted by T/PCCs or United Nations organizations as implementing partners.
- Individuals: The EIF cannot accept applications from individuals.

3. **Requirements**

   a. **Substantive requirements**
      The substantive requirements below should be demonstrated in the LOI in line with the EIF Theory of Change.

   i. **Project funding**
      1. **Objective:** The objective of the project seeks to remedy identified barriers to the deployment of uniformed women to United Nations peace operations.

      **Barrier assessment:** The barrier assessment is a required activity for project funding. Current or prospective T/PCC applicants are required to conduct credible national barrier assessments in order to identify the main factors impeding their deployment of uniformed women to United Nations peace operations. This contributes to the EIF’s expected outcome on expanded country-specific knowledge of barriers to the meaningful

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deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions (Outcome 1). EIF resources may be used to help finance the completion of barrier assessments.

National Barrier Assessment

A national barrier 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 EIF with consideration to the probable effectiveness of those interventions, and an understanding of associated risks and risk mitigation.

A T/PCC can submit a credible national barrier assessment according to the criteria set out below (extracted from Appendix 1 Barrier Assessment Criteria, in the EIF Terms of Reference) or use the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Barrier Assessment Methodology (MOWIP).

Criteria for a credible national barrier assessment

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 perceptive indicators that analyze the attitudes and experiences of both women and men to better understand the barriers. Consultations will involve women and men both with and without direct experience of serving in peace operations.

An appropriate barrier assessment should:

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

The barrier assessment will serve as the principal tool in identifying a project-specific pathway to measurable change that the EIF can support.

For more information, please go to the EIF Barrier Assessment webpage.

2. Outcome: The project must contribute to at least one of the EIF outcomes below.
   a. Increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations peace operations (Outcome 2);
b. Increased pool of uniformed women eligible to deploy as United Nations peacekeepers (Outcome 3);
c. Improved working conditions for uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations peace operations (Outcome 4).

3. **Indicator:** The project needs to specify which indicator associated with the identified outcome it targets as per the list below.
   a. Increase in the percentage of deployed uniformed women peacekeepers in United Nations peace operations;
   b. Increase in the annual rate of change in the percentage of deployed uniformed women in United Nations peace operations;
   c. Increase in the ratio of women to men senior military and police officers (rank equivalent to Major or above) in United Nations peace operations;
   d. Increase in the percentage of military and police units in United Nations peace operations that are gender-strong.

ii. **GSU premium**

**Guidelines and definitions:**

**GSU**
- A unit that includes substantial representation of women overall and in positions of authority.
- Women are fully integrated into the unit.
- Provided gender-equity training to all unit members.
- Has adequate materiel to ensure parity of deployment conditions (including equipment, facilities, accommodation etc.) for women and men peacekeepers.
- 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.)
- How the increased representation of women in peacekeeping will be sustained over time, including after the end of the project.

**GSU premium**
- The premium will consist of a direct payment to the T/PCC at the completion of the unit’s deployment, and after verifying that the unit met the guidelines for a GSU.
- Only T/PCCs are eligible to apply for this funding.
- Priority will be given to T/PCCs that envisage reinvesting the premium in ways that further promote the goals of the EIF.
- The premium is not payable for the deployment of a fraction of a unit (i.e. a company or platoon in an infantry battalion).

1. **Targets:** 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 DPO Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028 (UGPS) by 5 percentage points6.
   a. Military: 14% (2022), 15% (2023) and 16% (2024) (based on DPO UGPS targets of 9 per cent, 10% and 11% respectively)
   b. Police: 17% (2022), 18% (2023) and 19% (2024) (based on DPO UGPS targets of 12 per cent, 13% and 14% respectively)

2. **Participation:** 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. 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.

3. **Pre-deployment training:** All members of the unit must meet, and ideally exceed, existing United Nations Department of Peace Operations

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Application Guidelines for the Second Programming Round 2021

(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 based on United Nations standardised materials and in coordination with the DPO Integrated Training Service (ITS) and relevant United Nations entities. Please see the United Nations Peacekeeping Resource Hub for information on standardised training materials.

4. Prevention of 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 in line with United Nations policies and procedures. Please see the United Nations Standards of Conduct.

5. Gender-responsive contingent-owned equipment: The proposal must demonstrate that appropriate contingent-owned equipment (COE) for both men and women peacekeepers will be provided in coordination with relevant United Nations entities. Please refer to the COE Manual at https://operationalsupport.un.org/en/2020-contingent-owned-equipment.

6. Premium: For ease of calculation, please see the GSU calculator on the EIF website: https://elsiefund.org/funding-types/.

In the first year of deployment, the premium should be approximately a sum equivalent to 20 percent of the United Nations’ troop/police cost reimbursement rate for 20% of the unit’s personnel. It is payable at the completion of the specified deployment period. The EIF will not normally pay the premium for the deployment of a fraction of a deployed unit (i.e., a company or platoon in an infantry battalion). The premium in the second year would represent a 25% increase on the original amount. The premium in the third year would represent a 50% increase on the original amount.

For example, the current rate the United Nations reimburses a T/PCC for troops or FPU is USD 1,428 per soldier or FPU officer per month. With the GSU premium that is equivalent to 20 percent of the United Nations’ troop/police cost reimbursement rate, the EIF will reimburse a premium of USD 57.12 per soldier or FPU officer per month for the total number of soldiers or police in the unit. For example, a TCC that deploys an infantry battalion of 830 personnel that receives the premium will receive from the EIF USD 47,409.60 per month and a total of USD 568,915.20 for a 12-month deployment. The premium will increase by 25% (to USD 711,144) if the GSU is maintained for a second year, and by 50% (to USD 853,372.80). Note that the EIF payment will be made at the end of the unit’s deployment.

Sample calculation for a GSU:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peacekeeping Capabilities - UN Unit Type. For more information, see Resources tab on the PCRS website: <a href="https://pcrs.un.org">https://pcrs.un.org</a></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2 = +25%</th>
<th>Year 3 = +50%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit Size - Number</td>
<td>= unit size x EIF premium</td>
<td>= monthly premium x 12</td>
<td>= + 25% of year 1 premium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantry Battalion - Generic Example</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>$49,237</td>
<td>$590,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed Police Unit</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>$9,139</td>
<td>$109,670</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further to the above requirements for both project funding and GSU premium, proposals will be required to provide information on the following elements.

iii. **Innovation**: The proposal needs to demonstrate an innovative solution or new approach to overcoming barriers.

iv. **Risk assessment**: The proposal needs to identify the risks associated to the implementation of the project and strategies to mitigate them.

v. **Sustainability**: The proposal needs to demonstrate how the increased deployment and representation of women in peacekeeping will be sustained over time, including after the end of the project.

b. **Procedural requirements**

i. **For T/PCCs**

1. **High-level commitment**: Submission of a publicly-accessible LOI signed by a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner, or equivalent.
2. **Barrier assessment**: Agreement to complete, or has recently completed, a credible barrier assessment, using the criteria suggested in Appendix 1 of the EIF Terms of Reference (TOR), or the barrier assessment methodology developed by DCAF – the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance, and commitment to allow the EIF to use data from the assessment to compile an anonymized overview report. Please see the EIF Barrier Assessment webpage for more information.
3. **Risk assessment**: compliance with the requirements of the (i) Human Rights Due Diligence Policy\(^8\) and \(^9\), and the (ii) Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HA\(^\)C)\(^10\) risk assessments conducted by or through consultancies with direct T/PCC support, on behalf of the EIF Secretariat.

4. **Limitation in the number of proposals**: No more than one military proposal and one police proposal per country per programming cycle.

5. **Budget limitation**: For project funding, the minimum amount is USD 100,000 and the maximum amount is USD 1,500,000. Project funding is separate to a project to conduct a barrier assessment and the GSU premium. The GSU premium is a fixed rate according to the United Nations troop/police cost reimbursement rate (see above).

6. **Duration**: For project funding, projects are expected to be completed within a one- to two-year timeframe including the conduct of a barrier assessment. For the GSU premium only, the duration of the funding can cover up to three years. Funding is provided for the duration of the deployment of the unit (usually 12 months) and can be extended for two additional deployment periods (usually 12 months each).

7. **Monitoring and reporting**: 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. Recipient organizations will provide an annual narrative report and one final narrative report. 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...

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will be required. T/PCCs are also required to report in accordance with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) categories.

ii. **For United Nations organizations:** The EIF can support a limited number of projects submitted by United Nations organizations that should not exceed 20% of the total available funds per programming cycle. The conditions include the following.

1. **Innovation:** The proposed project is designed to implement and test innovations aimed at enhancing the meaningful participation of uniformed women deployed in United Nations peace operations;

2. **Budgetary restrictions:** The United Nations organization needs to provide a justification that the proposed project would not otherwise be financed from available budgetary and extra-budgetary resources within the United Nations; and

3. **Sustainability:** The United Nations organization needs to commit to further scaling of the project within existing resources at the end of the project.

To apply, T/PCCs and United Nations organizations are invited to complete the LOI template and email it to the EIF Secretariat: elsie.mptf@unwomen.org no later than **31 July 2021.**

The EIF will accept no more than one military LOI and one police LOI per country. Each LOI can seek funding for one or more projects.

**Application Process**

The second programming round dates are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Launch of call for LOI</td>
<td>28 April 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Submission of LOI to the EIF</td>
<td>31 July 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>Technical Committee review LOIs and decision by the Steering Committee</td>
<td>September – October 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>Submission of detailed proposals to the EIF</td>
<td>December 2021 - January 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 5</td>
<td>Technical Committee review of proposals and decision by the Steering Committee</td>
<td>Second quarter, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 6</td>
<td>Clearances and disbursement of funds</td>
<td>Third quarter, 2022</td>
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Application Review and Notification

Only fully completed LOI templates and annexes will be accepted for consideration and processing by the EIF Secretariat.

The LOIs will be reviewed against the following elements:

- **Substantive and procedural criteria**: The LOI will be evaluated according to the substantive and procedural criteria detailed in the Guidelines. This includes addressing at least one outcome and one indicator from the EIF Results Framework\(^{11}\) and meeting the T/PCC or United Nations organization eligibility criteria.
- The clear identification of barriers that the proposal will address, expressed through the submission of a barrier assessment.
- Clear and specific targets (number and percentage) for the increase of women peacekeepers and the roles they would deploy into (if applicable) within the project timeframe.
- **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 number 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 official development assistance (ODA) eligible.
- **Engagement** – Applicants must demonstrate how women, particularly uniformed women, will play integral roles throughout the project cycle.
- **Sustainability and extension** – Preference will be given to projects that are likely to contribute to the sustained increased of the deployment of uniformed women by a T/PCC, and this includes projects that: demonstrate clear national ownership; and are likely to yield insights and lessons that can be shared with other T/PCCs. For proposals for 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 EIF’s goals.
- **Innovation** – The EIF 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 are encouraged and should be noted in the LOI.

Checklist

Please check that you have included all of the required information below.

☐ Identification of what barrier the project will address.
☐ Targets (number and percentage) of the increase of women peacekeepers. (For payment of the GSU premium targets must exceed the targets set out in the Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028 by 5 percentage points (at least 11.5% for military troop contingents).
☐ A description of at least one outcome in the EIF’s Results Framework\textsuperscript{12}, as follows:
  1. Expanded country-specific knowledge of barriers to deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions.
  2. Increased meaningful deployment of uniformed women peacekeepers to United Nations missions.
  3. Increased pool of uniformed women eligible to deploy as United Nations peacekeepers.
☐ The outcome's indicator.
☐ Clear targets for the chosen indicator(s).
☐ How the project includes elements of innovation.
☐ How the project demonstrates cost effectiveness.
☐ Demonstration of sustainability including national ownership.
☐ Indicative budgets.
☐ Identification of proposed implementing partners.
☐ Signature from a Minister or Chief of Defense, Minister of Interior or Police Commissioner.

Mandatory annexes
☐ Deployment planning for the next three years for military and/or police.
☐ Barrier Assessment Information.
☐ Personnel Data - percentage and ranks of women in national armed forces and/or police service

For GSUs only, please:
☐ Provide the timeframe for the deployment of the GSU(s).
☐ Outline intention to reinvest the GSU premium in activities that further contribute to the goals of the EIF.
☐ Detail how women will be fully trained for the role(s) they perform in the unit.
☐ Outline how women will participate in all pre-deployment training and preparation.
☐ Describe how all unit members will meet (or 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.
☐ Advise procedures and policies in relation to reporting and actioning sexual harassment and assault, and sexual exploitation and abuse.

For project level funding only, please:
☐ Clearly identify barriers that the proposal will address (outline the analytical process used).
☐ Demonstrate the rational for each activity.
☐ Note that the project funding request must be between $100,000 USD and $1,500,000 USD.

\textsuperscript{12} EIF TOR, page 13, \url{http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/21189}
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 perceptional indicators that analyze the attitudes and experiences of both women and men to better understand the barriers. Consultations will involve women and men both with and without direct experience of serving in peace operations.

An appropriate barrier assessment should:

• Include a risk mitigation strategy to ensure the safety and appropriate privacy of all participants in the assessment, as well as the sustainability of interventions supported by this Fund. Information should be collected, stored and analyzed via practices that allow it to be done accurately and anonymously.

• Include basic baseline data collection (targeted questionnaires, surveys and target group interviews) with a statistically significant number of men and women with direct and indirect experience of peacekeeping as well as in leadership and decision-making positions related to personnel management and peacekeeping, training and deployment.

• Address the following areas as they relate to uniformed women’s meaningful participation in United Nations peace operations:
  - Institutional initiatives to increase the participation of uniformed women in peace operations (to date), and their effect, if any
  - The impact of the social context in the T/PCC on institutional policies and decisionmaking 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.
THE ELSIE INITIATIVE FUND FOR UNIFORMED WOMEN IN PEACE OPERATIONS.

The Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations (hereinafter referred to as ‘Elsie Initiative Fund’ (EIF)) 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.

The Elsie Initiative Fund has been designed as an innovative fund to support and incentivize the increased participation of uniformed women in peace operations. It primarily offers assistance and incentives for Troop and /or Police Contributing Countries (T/PCC) to identify and overcome barriers to the deployment of trained and qualified uniformed women peacekeepers – including members of military contingents and formed police units, and officers who deploy individually, as police officers, or military observers and staff officers.