

## **Bangladesh Armed Forces receives funding from the Elsie Initiative Fund to enable inclusive environment to support women’s participation in UN peacekeeping**

**New York, 29 March 2022** – The [Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations](#) (EIF) announced today that the Bangladesh Armed Forces will receive funding to construct a dedicated accommodation facility for female soldiers. Bangladesh, the largest troop and police contributor to United Nations peace operations, currently deploys 6,344 uniformed personnel including 5,968 troops (3.7% of whom are women). On completion of this project, the Bangladesh Armed Forces capacity to train and deploy women peacekeepers will have increased almost four-fold.

The US \$1 million EIF grant will allow the Bangladesh Armed Forces Institute of Peace Support Operation Training ([BIPSOT](#)) to construct a three-storied accommodation building for women. This new facility will enable the accommodation of 240 female soldiers to be trained to deploy to United Nations peace operations annually. The lack of dedicated accommodation for women at the BIPSOT had been identified as a main barrier to women’s participation in the Bangladesh Armed Forces, as it limited women’s access to the same training opportunities as men.

“Constructing a separate accommodation facility for women had become a pressing need in order to promote gender equity and facilitate women's participation in peacekeeping operations,” said Bangladesh’s Principal Staff Officer, Lieutenant General Waker-Uz-Zaman, SGP, psc.

Bangladesh recruited the first women into its Armed Forces in 2006 and has been training women soldiers for deployment to UN peacekeeping since 2018. Over the years, various measures have been put in place to motivate women and promote their meaningful participation in its armed forces, including the creation of four military high-schools and academies for girls, and a formal mechanism to report sexual exploitation and abuse within the military. The Bangladesh Armed Forces has also established Gender Advisor positions and a Gender Focal Point network to ensure gender perspectives are integrated into its operations.

As a long-standing champion of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, Bangladesh’s [National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security \(2019-2022\)](#) seeks to expand women’s participation in peace and security within and beyond its borders. By creating an inclusive and enabling environment to support women’s participation in peacekeeping, the EIF grant contributes to the implementation of the Action Plan and supports the country with achieving the United Nations’ Uniformed Gender Parity targets.

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### **About the Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF)**

*Established by the UN and Canada in 2019, the EIF is an innovative, multilateral fund that aims to accelerate progress towards the UN's gender targets in line with Security Council resolutions and the UN [Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#). Funded by contributions from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom, the EIF supports the*

*sustainable deployment and meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers by providing financial assistance and incentives. For more information on the EIF, please visit <https://elsiefund.org/> and follow [@ElsieFund](#) on Twitter.*

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