

Cambodia receives funding from the Elsie Initiative Fund to identify barriers to the deployment of uniformed women to United Nations peace operations.

New York, 28 April 2022 – The [Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations](#) (EIF) announced today that Cambodia will receive funding to undertake a study to identify barriers to the deployment of women in the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) to United Nations peace operations. Cambodia, the 25th highest troop contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping, currently deploys 766 military personnel, among which 14 per cent are women.

Committed to advancing gender equality, Cambodia plans to increase its deployment of military women to United Nations peacekeeping to 20 per cent by 2024. This project marks a crucial step in translating this commitment into concrete actions. Through a comprehensive assessment, the project will identify specific barriers to, and opportunities for the meaningful participation of women in the RCAF. Results and recommendations from the project will also inform policy formulation and guide institutional reforms to address the barriers identified and promote women's full and meaningful participation.

"From once a host nation of UNTAC, Cambodia has transformed into an active troop contributing country in United Nations Peacekeeping missions in Africa, Middle East, and Europe. Since 2006, Cambodia has deployed 8302 peacekeepers including 580 women to UN missions in 9 countries. Amongst the priority sectors, the Royal Cambodian Government promotes women's roles in leadership, peace and security," said His Excellency Sokhonn Prak, Cambodia's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. *"Cambodia is committed to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, which is a major part in our effort in global peace and security and promotion of women's participation in political, economical and social lives in post-conflict society,"* he said.

Adopting a whole-of-institution approach, the RCAF will establish a cross-department working group to ensure successful implementation and national ownership of project outcomes. The working group will comprise members from the National Center for Peacekeeping Forces (NPMEC), the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and other key government partners. Upon completion of the project, the working group will ensure that the recommendations are then incorporated into the policies, national action plans, and programs of the key government departments.

In close partnership with the NPMEC and RCAF, the project will be managed by UN Women Cambodia – a long-standing partner supporting the Cambodian government in empowering women and advancing gender equality. UN Women Cambodia will oversee the project implementation, including the selection of an independent research institution to conduct the assessment, utilizing the [Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations \(MOWIP\)](#) methodology developed by DCAF - the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance.

Sarah Knibbs, Officer-in-Charge of the UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, said the project is a major landmark in supporting Cambodia's effort to increase women's meaningful participation in United Nations peace operations, a concrete example of multilateralism in action. *"It demonstrates Cambodia's leadership to translate its commitment into the first concrete step to realizing this goal. This also coincides with Cambodia's role and priority as the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations*

(ASEAN) this year, focusing on advancing the women, peace and security agenda in ASEAN. I believe it will also have a positive spill-over impact in the ASEAN region and hopefully inspire the other ASEAN Member States,” she added.

Leading by example, Cambodia is the 2nd highest contributor of women peacekeepers among the ASEAN Member States. With this project, Cambodia aims to go beyond the gender targets set in the United Nation’s [Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy 2018-2028](#) of 11 per cent by 2024.

About the Elsie Initiative Fund (EIF)

Established by the United Nations and Canada in 2019, the EIF is an innovative, multilateral fund that aims to accelerate progress towards the United Nation’s gender targets in line with Security Council resolutions and the United Nations [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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