



## Ghana Armed Forces receives funding from the Elsie Initiative Fund to increase the deployment of women to UN peacekeeping

**New York, 1 September 2022** – The [Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations](#) (EIF) announced today that the Ghana Armed Forces (GAF) will receive funding of USD 3.7 million over three years to substantially increase the number of military women who deploy into peacekeeping missions—including in command positions—and to transform the GAF to be more gender-inclusive. As the 7<sup>th</sup> highest contributor to United Nations peacekeeping, Ghana currently deploys 2,760 uniformed personnel, among which 15.6 per cent are women.

With the EIF grant, Ghana will increase its contribution of military women by deploying a Gender-Strong Unit ([GSU](#))—a military battalion with substantial representation of women overall including in command positions—to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for three years and beyond.

“The inclusion of women at all levels of peace operations, through promotion of gender equality and awareness creation, is a clear and present reality, for the success of complex and multidimensional peace operations.” said the GAF’s Chief of Defence Staff, Vice Admiral Seth Amoama. “The approval of this will further enhance our pre-deployment preparations and deployment of female soldiers. It will also go a long way to improve our gender awareness and equality through targeted training and national awareness.” he added.

Through the EIF-funded project, Ghana will address two of the most challenging barriers to women’s meaningful participation, that were identified in a barrier assessment conducted in partnership with DCAF – the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance ([report](#)) on the GAF, being limited pool of trained and qualified women to deploy as peacekeepers, and inadequate infrastructure for women.

Specifically, the GAF will partner with the Women Peace and Security Institute of the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre to launch a nation-wide campaign to address gender stereotypes and promote the recruitment and integration of women in leadership and combat roles. Through visits to Ghana’s 16 regional areas, the GAF will also conduct outreach activities to encourage young women in secondary and tertiary schools to be enlisted. The GAF will also build two accommodation facilities designed specifically for women recruits (total of 300 beds), which will enable more women to be recruited and trained for deployment to UN peace operations.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Ghana, Mr. Charles Abani commended Ghana’s role as the top contributor of uniformed women in military contingents to UN missions, and the project as an important milestone. “The EIF’s support will enable the GAF to continue transforming their institutional culture through an ongoing commitment to gender equality. We are pleased to know the GAF is committed to ensuring that the project’s impact is long lasting and is dedicated to proper preparation of their forces prior to deployment. The UN in Ghana welcomes Partners’ support, such as the EIF, which will render GAF’s contributions more efficient. The envisaged construction of dedicated women’s accommodation

will enhance the positive strides the GAF is already taking to recruit, train and retain women in its armed forces and in peacekeeping,” he said.

Ghana has a history of including women in the military and was among one of the few countries in the world to enlist women as far back as 1959. The country has since adopted nation-wide policies to promote the meaningful inclusion of women in peace and security such as the National Gender Policy and Ghana’s National Action Plan 2 [2020-2025], on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 ([GHANAP 2](#)). Through its bilateral partnership with Canada under the Elsie Initiative, the GAF will receive technical assistance on developing policy and training to build a gender-sensitive institutional culture within the GAF.

UN Women’s Regional Director Ms. Oulimata Sarr said “We are proud to see that Ghana has made tremendous efforts in advancing gender equality. I commended Ghana’s efforts in incorporating and institutionalizing gender perspectives. We are pleased to see that this important project, funded by the Elsie Initiative Fund, will further contribute to the implementation of GHANAP 2020-2025, by supporting women’s participation at all levels in peacekeeping.”

This year, the EIF also funded a project to enable UNIFIL to build gender-sensitive accommodation for women peacekeepers ([press release](#)). The improved accommodation will support the first Ghanaian military GSU, to be deployed in September 2022.

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

*The EIF, a [UN trust fund](#) hosted by UN Women, supports the sustainable deployment and meaningful participation of uniformed women peacekeepers by providing financial assistance and incentives. Established by the UN, Canada and Member States in 2019, the EIF aims to accelerate progress towards the United Nation’s gender targets in line with Security Council resolutions and the UN [Uniformed Gender Parity Strategy](#) 2018-2028. The EIF is funded by contributions from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea and the United Kingdom. For more information on the EIF, please visit <https://elsiefund.org/> and follow [@ElsieFund](#) on Twitter.*

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