

ELSIE INITIATIVE FUND (EIF) COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY AND PLAN 2023

PART I: COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY

COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES, TARGET AUDIENCES, STRATEGIC APPROACH

Communications objectives:

- **Raise visibility** of results and impacts of EIF-funded projects
- **Inform and engage** potential EIF applicants about the EIF’s programming and encourage applications to the EIF
- **Ensure donor visibility** in all external communications and mobilize resources
- **Strengthen partnerships** with T/PCCs, UN entities, and Elsie Initiative Contact Group members to increase outreach
- **Strengthen** the EIF branding
- **Support** EIF recipients with strategic communications to raise awareness of their projects and results

Target audiences and strategic approach:

Target audiences	
Primary audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and potential recipients (T/PCCs, UN organisations) and implementing partners • Current and potential donors • Steering and Technical committee members • Department of Peace Operations
Secondary audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN entities at large • Civil society including academia, think tanks, and non-profit organizations • Media reporting on gender equality, peacekeeping and the UN • Interested public

Objectives	Strategic approach
<p>1. Raise visibility of results and impact of EIF-funded projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communications packages for newly approved projects • Present the EIF’s work and impact through communications products and events • Report progress and achievements through the EIF annual report and quarterly newsletters • Develop a Community of Practice
<p>2. Inform and engage with potential applicants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share programmatic updates on the EIF website and social media • Develop human-interest and impact stories • Organize events and information briefings • Showcase the EIF’s work through quarterly newsletters and factsheets
<p>3. Ensure donor visibility and mobilize resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize donor contributions in external comms • Host biennial donor meetings to consult with donors • Increase donor visibility in events hosted by EIF recipients (encourage donor participation, acknowledgment of donor contribution in comms products etc.) • Engage with potential donors to mobilize resources
<p>4. Strengthen partnerships to increase outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and leverage opportunities to advocate for the EIF, including through international and regional conferences and events • Encourage UN partners to advocate for the EIF during their engagement (bilateral consultations, advisory visits) with T/PCCs • Mobilize fund recipients and Elsie Initiative Contact Group members to encourage eligible T/PCCs and UN organisations to apply to the EIF through peer-to-peer exchange and Member States-led fora including Group of Friends on WPS • Coordinate with communications teams in UNW and the wider UN system, to showcase the EIF’s work on partners’ communications platforms (social media and websites) • Engage with actors in the Women Peace Security/Women in Peacekeeping space and explore new partnerships
<p>5. Strengthen the EIF branding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the EIF’s branding identity as a UN Trust Fund, independent from the Elsie Initiative • Increase the EIF’s footprint in media and social media and on partners’ websites
<p>6. Support EIF recipients with strategic communications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise fund recipients on strategic communications to raise awareness of their projects • Develop templates for EIF-funded publications to ensure consistent branding

KEY MESSAGES

Key message 1: Women's full, equal and meaningful participation is crucial for achieving lasting peace.

- Gendered impact on operational effectiveness: A workforce with both women and men peacekeepers represents the communities they serve, improves community engagement, strengthens intelligence gathering, and enhances protection responses.
- Strengths of diverse teams: As United Nations peace operations work in complex environments, having diverse teams is essential for operational effectiveness. More diverse teams bring broadened perspectives and experiences, which leads to better problem-solving and innovation.
- Inclusive decision-making: Greater diversity, including at leadership levels, brings a broadened skillset and new perspectives to the table to better address the needs of women in conflict and post-conflict settings.
- Improve access and build trust: Together, women and men peacekeepers help to build trust and confidence with local communities, and improve access, service provision, and security.
- Role models: Women peacekeepers serve as role models who can inspire women and men and set a powerful example for them to advocate for their rights and pursue non-traditional careers.

Key message 2: Despite positive progress, women are still underrepresented in certain uniformed categories and some roles and functions in UN peacekeeping.

- Women continue to face barriers preventing them from playing meaningful roles in national security institutions and in UN peacekeeping, including due to unequal access to career development opportunities, social-cultural stereotypes, a lack of gender-sensitive infrastructure and facilities, and family-friendly policies.
- Not just about the numbers: It is crucial to create enabling, respectful, and inclusive working and living environments in security institutions and peacekeeping missions, where women and equally participate and thrive as peacekeepers.

Key message 3: The EIF supports the increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in peacekeeping.

- Identify country-specific barriers: Based on empirical data, barrier assessments are an essential first step for T/PCCs to gain a comprehensive and contextual understanding of barriers and opportunities to deploying uniformed women in peacekeeping. Findings from barrier assessments have also proven to be valuable to guide the development of gender-related policies.
- Finance evidence-based, transformative and sustainable projects that create lasting impact: The EIF finances projects that are supported by an evidence-based barrier assessment report and designed to drive transformative and sustainable changes to increase the participation of uniformed women peacekeepers.
- Support gender-strong units: The EIF provides a premium to T/PCCs that deploy uniformed units that include substantial representation of women overall and in leadership positions.
- Leveraging partnerships: Achieving gender parity requires concerted and collective efforts. The EIF collaborates closely with key partners including T/PCCs, Member States, Donors, UN Department of Peace Operations (DPO), UN Women's Regional and Country Offices (RO and CO) and UNDP RO & CO.

Key message 4: Globally, EIF-funded projects are transforming security institutions through the implementation of innovative and sustainable activities that contribute to the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda.

- Statistics: EIF currently supports 20 projects from 21 security institutions and 2 UN peacekeeping missions (as of January 2023¹).
- Creating lasting impact: EIF recipients are developing gender policies and legal frameworks and launching recruitment and sensitization campaigns to create inclusive institutional environments and address socio-cultural biases. These positive changes drive behavioral change and ensure that project outcomes are sustainable beyond the life of the project.
- Bridging the gap between research findings and actions: EIF support serves as a catalyst for T/PCCs to implement activities built on findings and recommendations from rigorous and evidence-based barrier assessments within the particular security institution’s context.
- Piloting innovative practices and leading by example: The EIF supports innovative activities designed to pave the way for other T/PCCs and UN orgs to follow. For example, the EIF is supporting the provision of a family care system to address household constraints for peacekeepers; it is also supporting the creation of inclusive living and working conditions for UN peacekeepers.
- Making gender parity a reality: EIF-funded projects are translating international gender equality commitments into concrete actions including increasing the deployment of uniformed women, developing gender-sensitive policies, and creating receptive mission environments.

TOOLS AND PRODUCTS

EIF Communications Tools and Products	
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media products: press releases, media advisories and alerts • Media engagement: maintain and update a media list, conduct media outreach and interviews
Events and briefings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize a high-level event to launch new programming rounds, briefings to T/PCC • Raise visibility of EIF-funded projects through supporting high-level launch events/inaugural ceremonies • Advocate for the EIF at international/regional conferences, partners’ events and forums
Online channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIF Website • EIF Twitter²
Advocacy products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multimedia products: pictures, videos • Human-interest stories and blog posts³ • Information products: newsletters, flyers, factsheets

¹ To be updated throughout the year

² Noting the recent developments regarding the Twitter platform, the EIF will closely monitor any limitations regarding its usage and adjust accordingly.

³ To be developed

Publications

- Annual report
- EIF-funded MOWIP research reports

BRANDING

- The EIF branding guidelines were developed in 2021 and offer guidance on the use of logos, font and color themes, which continues to ensure consistency and coherence in EIF communications products.

PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic outreach to increase the pool of T/PCCs applying to the EIF and mobilize resources

- **DPO:** Maintain close collaboration and coordinate with various departments of DPO (Strategic Force Generation and Capability Planning Cell, Office of Military Affairs and Police Division) to leverage opportunities to advocate for the EIF during their engagements with T/PCCs
- **UNW network:** Utilize UNW networks, including HQ, RO and CO to relay the call for proposals to their relevant contacts at host country
- **All-of-UN:** Request UNDP and UN RO and CO to share the call for proposals with their relevant contacts in host country
- **Member States:**
 - Participate in international/regional conferences led by Member States to present the EIF's work and engage T/PCCs
 - Encourage EIF recipients to support other T/PCCs and UN orgs to apply for EIF funding
 - Mobilize EIF donors to advocate for and connect the EIF with potential donors to increase and diversify the existing pool of funding
- **Elsie Initiative Contact Group:** Engage members of the Contact Group to advocate for the EIF and share the EIF call for proposals with T/PCCs and UN orgs

Amplify the impact of communications through leveraging partners' platforms and channels

- **DPO:** Collaboration with DPO strategic communications teams to plan, contribute to and amplify joint campaigns, major events, and announcements.
- **UNW network:** Coordinate with comms teams in UNW HQ, CO/RO to amplify EIF announcements
- **All-of-UN:** Liaise with Department of Global Communications, Secretary General's Spokesperson's Office, UN information centers, RO and CO to disseminate communications products and increase the impact of communications
- **Member States:** Support project recipients (Member States and implementing partners) to raise visibility of their projects
- **Elsie Initiative Contact Group:**
 - Share important programmatic updates (i.e., call for proposals, launch of the annual report) with the Contact Group
 - Seek support from the Contact Group to amplify EIF announcements

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

In line with the EIF monitoring and evaluation framework ([MEF](#)), communications data will be collected and analyzed periodically and after each project announcement.

The EIF will present and report on the results of its communications activities to donors and key stakeholders and actively incorporate their feedback to ensure communications processes and products are impactful and effective.

- Monitor the impact of communications activities by tracking media mentions, social media engagement statistics, and website traffic
- Present results of communications efforts to Steering Committee members and donors during the biennial Steering Committee/Donor meeting
- Actively gather and incorporate feedback from donors, steering committee members, fund recipients, and other key stakeholders, to include emerging practices and lessons in future programming rounds
- Report on communications results in the EIF Annual Report
- Review communications lessons learned and best practices on an annual basis and update communications strategy and plans to reflect learnings

RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Reputational risks related to communications will be mitigated with:

- **Due diligence** and background research of EIF recipients and speakers at EIF events
- **Regular monitoring** of media reports relevant to EIF recipients and implementing partners
- **Identify visibility risks** for donors and conduct proactive consultations with donors to mitigate visibility risks
- **Effective information sharing and coordination** with communications partners on media opportunities (media interviews, press conferences, press stakeouts, and briefings)