

Independent Evaluation of the Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations

PRESENTATION OF FINAL FINDINGS

16 October 2024

EVALUATION PROCESS



Inception phase

Kick-off meeting

Inception report and workshop

Workplan and division of tasks

Data collection

Document analysis

Interviews (MSC)

Data analysis

Triangulation and validation

Contextualize and analyse results

Connect to OECD criteria

Report drafting and feedback

Draft report

Discussion on recommendations and next steps

Delivery

Incorporate feedback

Review and finalize report

Edit and layout final report

METHODOLOGY

Research methods

Document review

33 Semi-structured interviews:

- Interviewees: 46
- Written feedback: 2
- No answer/not available 6

Validation

- two-hour online v session in July 2024 with members of the EIF Secretariat,
- two-hour online workshop in August 2024



Background- EIF Results



20 projects funded



Across 21 Security Sector Institutions



With 14 countries engaged

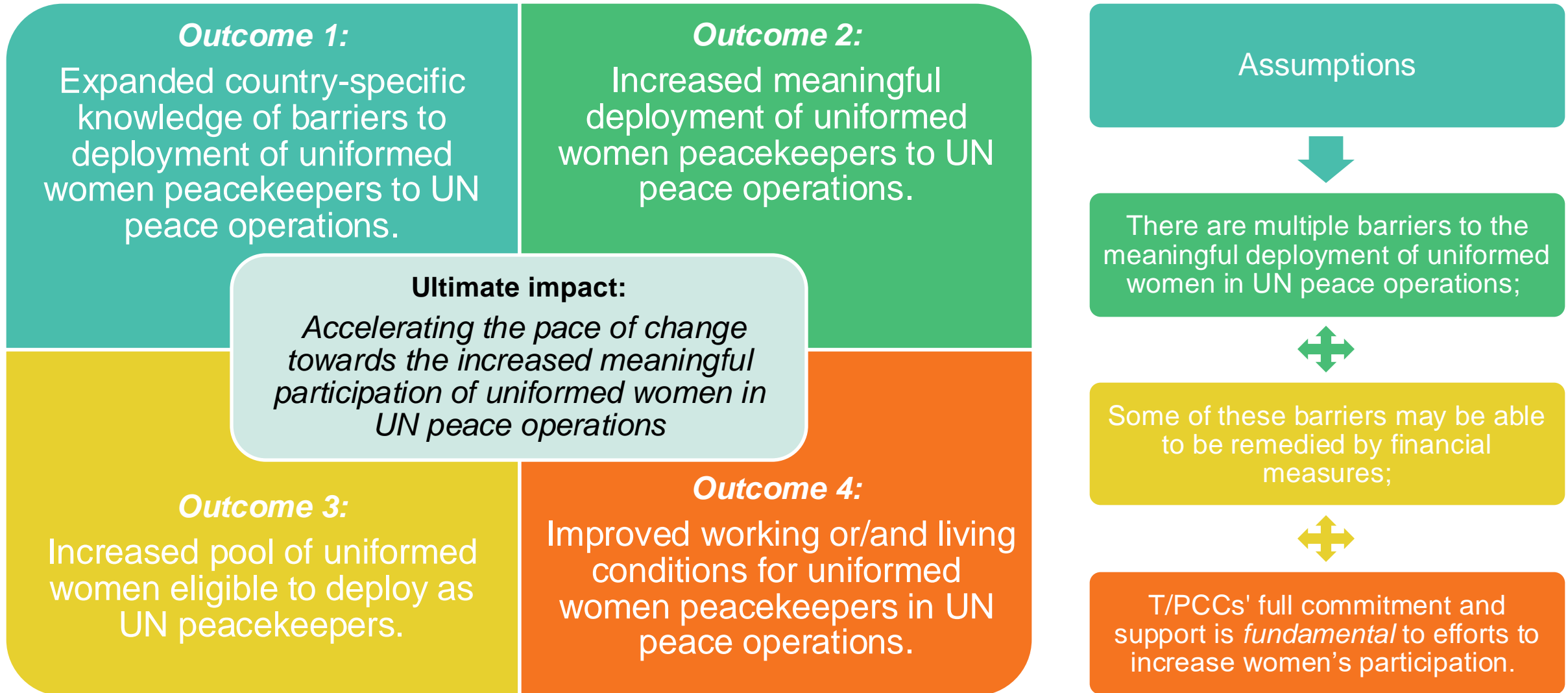


2 UN Peacekeeping Operations



4 projects completed in 2022 and 4 in 2023

EIF Theory of Change



KEY FINDINGS



OVERALL FINDINGS

Key Highlights



Stakeholders have a **very positive view** of the EIF and its Secretariat.

The Fund is seen **as innovative**, with strong initial results recognized globally.

The EIF has **built momentum** at the UN, with T/PCCs, donors, and in SSIs to enhance uniformed women's participation in peace operations.

Key Lessons Learned

Comprehensive BAs like the MOWIP are essential for building an **evidence base**.

Collaboration among EIF, DPO, and other stakeholders **advances UGPS and EIF objectives**.

MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Strong Results	Notable success achieved to date.
Innovative Platform	EIF established as a pioneering multilateral platform.
Global Awareness	Increased focus on women in peacekeeping operations.
Evidence-Based Approach	Implementation guided by MOWIP data.
Systemic Change	Promoted women's meaningful participation in PKOs.
Mobilization	Advanced the UN Gender Parity Strategy.

Total Mentions in 2023: 16
(In various UN Open Debates, events, reports, and statements)



Significant Mentions

CSW 2023	UN SG's Reports on WPS: 2021, 2022, 2023	UN PK Ministerial Accra, December 2023
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STRATEGIC LEVEL FINDINGS



Balancing Innovation and Policy Integration



Strategic Alignment and Adaptability



Trends in Engagement with T/PCCs



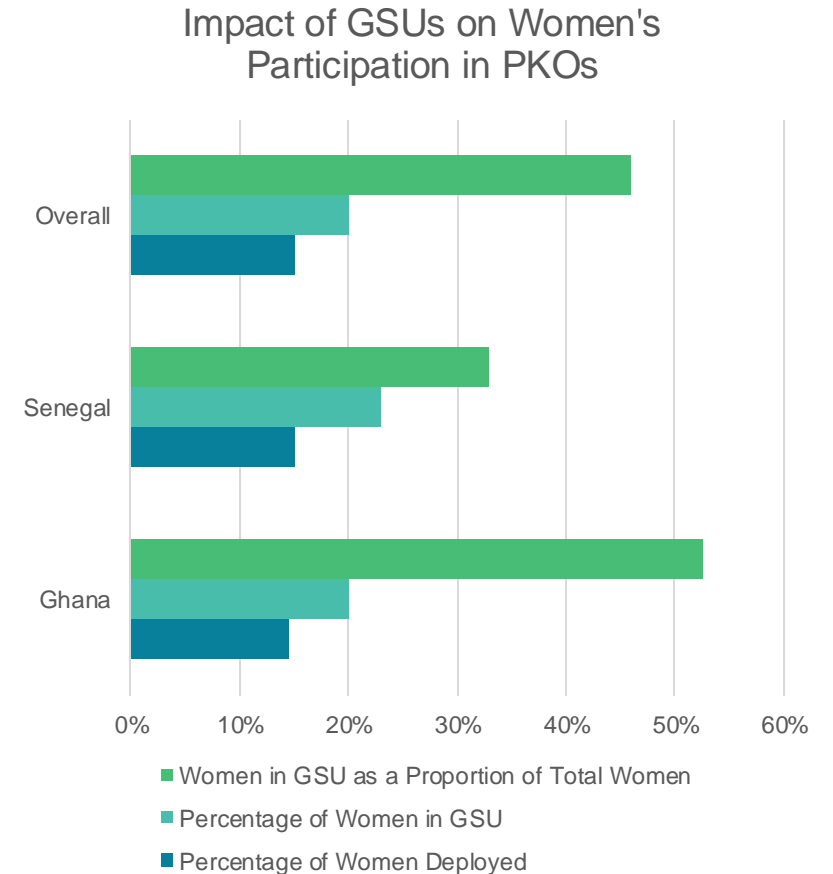
Importance of Strategic Partnerships



Effectiveness of GSU Premiums as Incentives

Key highlights

External challenges	Peace operations face many challenges. Opposition to gender equality is growing.
Innovation	The EIF has created new spaces and innovations to enhance women's participation in PKOs/PSOs.
Engagement trends	While the EIF was supporting 20 SSIs from 10 T/PCCs by end of 2023, talks with larger T/PCCs have not led to formal applications.
GSU Premiums	GSU premiums show potential, but long-term impacts are still unclear.



Key lessons learned

The changing PK environment requires persistent collaboration between EIF and UN PKO stakeholders to address challenges and seize opportunities.

Ongoing coordination between EIF, DPO, DPPA, and T/PCCs is crucial for balancing innovation and policy alignment.

Understanding larger T/PCCs' reluctance to engage with the Fund is necessary.

Investment in data collection and sharing methods are vital for EIF's role as a knowledge hub.

Effectiveness of GSU premiums and the impact on T/PCCs and women's participation in PKOs will require ongoing M&E.

OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Key Highlights

Established in 2019, the EIF Secretariat developed its procedures and operations from scratch, successfully adapting and improving them despite early challenges.

Establishing processes and procedures has taken longer than expected for both the UN and T/PCCs, partly due to external challenges.

The shift to quarterly financial reporting will enhance project tracking and enable faster responses to emerging issues.

Key Lessons Learned

Frequent no-cost extensions highlight the need for longer project durations.

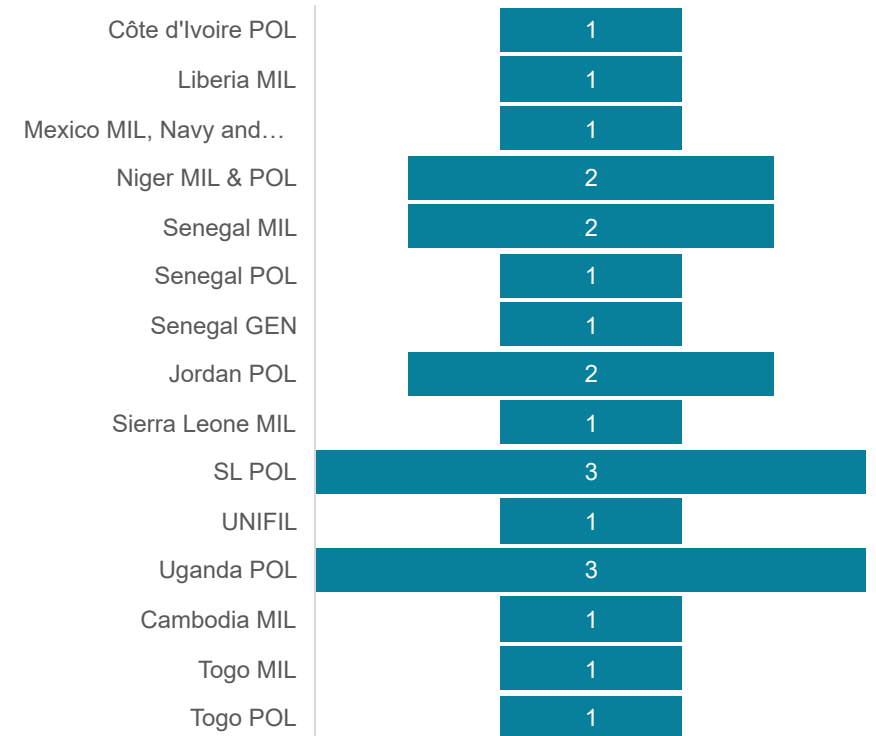
The EIF Secretariat has sufficient human resources, but its structure will need to expand as the Fund grows.

Working through local PUNO offices has sometimes reduced delays but distances the Fund from SSIs.

Choosing the right PUNO depends on the country context, requiring a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities.

Technical assistance from the EIF Secretariat to PUNOs and SSIs is essential but also very time-intensive.

Number of NCEs requested per project as of 4-Jan-24



MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Key Highlights

Lessons and knowledge are effectively collected and shared amongst the EIF Secretariat and Fund recipients, informing the development of templates, explainers and iterative SOPs and increasing T/PCCs' sense of ownership.

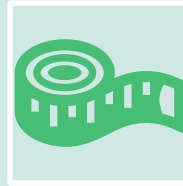
The EIF MEF largely aligns with the broader Elsie Initiative framework despite the latter's changes in structure and wording.

Key Lessons Learned



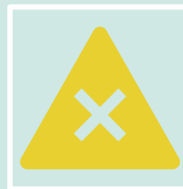
Short Duration

The Fund and its projects are still in their early stages.



Undefined Indicators

Lack of clear indicators to measure impacts compared to outputs and outcomes.



Attributing Contribution

Difficulty in determining the extent of the EIF's contribution to specific impacts.

SUSTAINABILITY

Key Highlights

Most EIF-funded projects are ongoing, yet several promising short-term outcomes suggest potential for sustainable impact.

Measures to retain institutional memory and reduce disruptions from Secretariat staff turnover are in place, although risks to continuity and sustainability remain.

EIF strategic communication tools have become increasingly effective over time.

Key challenges



Narrow
Funding Base



Varied
Sustainability
Concepts



Political
Instability &
Leadership
Changes



Secretariat
Turnover &
Sustainability

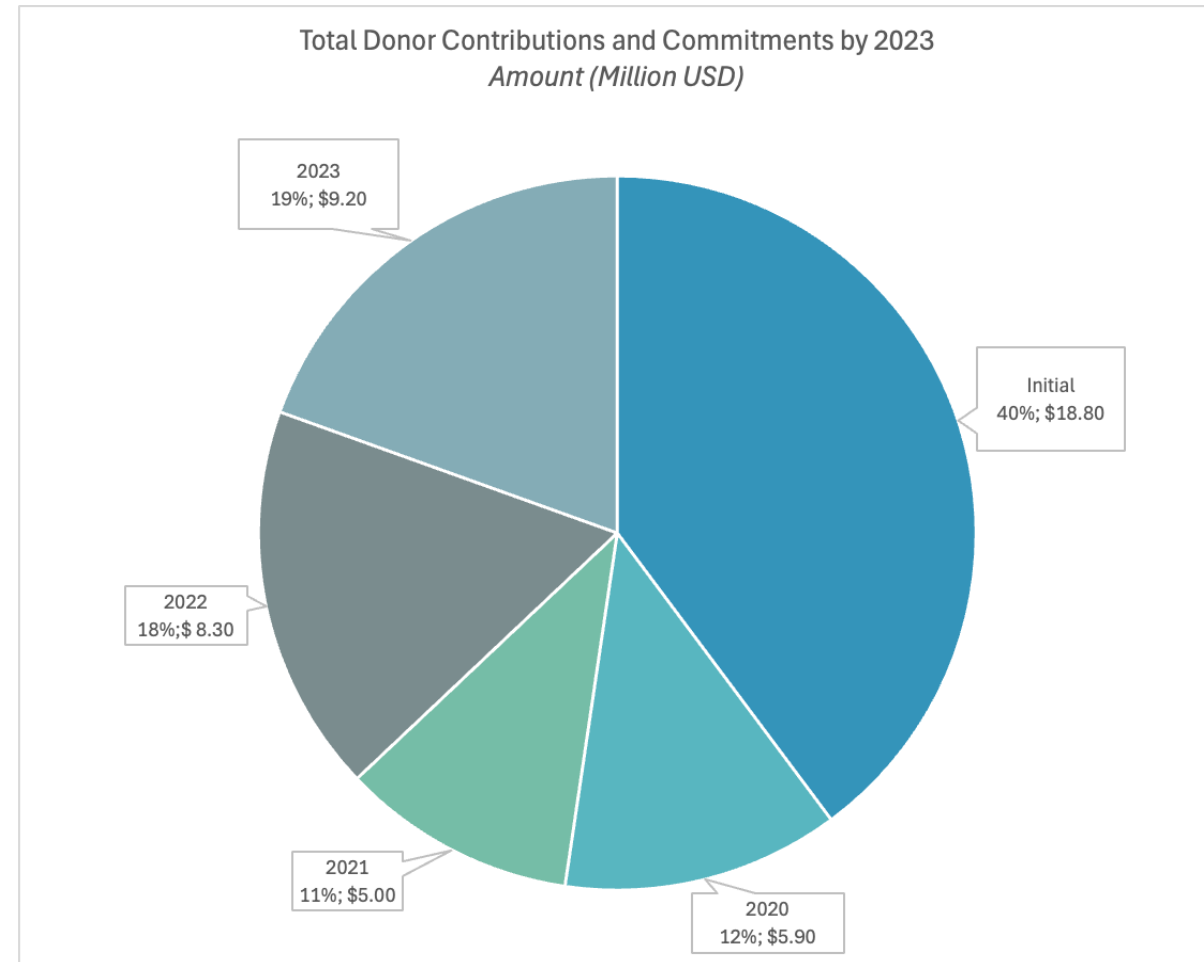


Communication
Strategy

Key lessons learned

The narrow funding base poses sustainability challenges. National regulations and ODA ineligibility are possible barriers.

Additional outreach materials and channels can better convey the rationale, scope, and impact of the Fund's work to donors and T/PCCs.



MOWIP

Key Highlights:

- MOWIP BAs are fundamental to EIF-funded projects and regarded as the “gold standard.”
- Complexity, sensitive data access, and resource demands have caused delays in the assessment process.
- Partnership Model C has enhanced local ownership but encountered several challenges.

Key Lessons Learned:

- MOWIP BAs are vital for building the evidence base for EIF projects and broader gender equality efforts with SSIs.
- Partnership Model Cs require robust support from national research institutions and criteria-based selection of partners.
- The EIF Secretariat and DCAF are working to enhance oversight and monitoring.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Short term

Strategic level

Adapt and Respond:

- Continue UN Secretariat discussions on adapting to evolving PK trends to enhance women's participation. Maintain close communication with DPO.

Evaluate Engagement:

- Assess current donor engagement strategies amidst global budget cuts and resistance to gender equality.

Donor Outreach:

- Create a one-page document highlighting EIF's key achievements and impact for stakeholders in donor countries.

Collaborate and Share:

- Work with T/PCCs and PUNOs to collect and share data from MOWIP and MEL processes, reinforcing EIF's information repository role.

Identify Successes:

- Develop MEL case studies to identify effective strategies and areas for improvement in increasing women's participation.

Short term

Operations and MEL (1)

Specialized Training:

- Identify skills gaps and fund training programmes for T/PCCs with DPO, equipping women with specialised skills for PKOs/PSOs.

Inclusive Proposal Design:

- Advise applicants to include consultations in their FPF proposal design process, ensuring women peacekeepers' input on addressing barriers.

Realistic Timelines:

- Implement and enforce realistic project timelines to reduce the need for NCEs, focusing on minimizing extensions unrelated to external factors.

Short term

Operations and MEL (2)

Local Fund Channeling:

- Channel funds through locally based UN entities when appropriate, selecting partners based on transparent criteria and defining clear roles and responsibilities.

Project Focal Point ToR:

- Draft a suggested ToR for project Focal Points to clarify required skills for T/PCCs and PUNOs, supporting effective project management and reporting.

GSU MEL

- Commission an external evaluation to assess the impact of GSU premiums on gender equality in peacekeeping and identify areas for improvement.
- Establish a tracking system to monitor GSUs in military and police forces.

Medium term

Strategic level (1)

Engage Regional Organisations:

- Address the growing role of regional bodies in peacekeeping by engaging with those involved, such as ASEAN, leveraging past work with T/PCCs.

Share Lessons:

- Disseminate lessons learned and emerging practices using data from assessments and MEL insights to enhance engagement with regional organisations.

Engage Larger T/PCCs:

- Develop strategies with EIF SC, donors, and DPO to engage larger T/PCCs, investigate their concerns, and explore entry points like WPS NAPs alignment.

Highlight Successes:

- Continuously promote EIF's achievements and rationale with targeted communication materials for donors.

Medium term

Strategic level (2)

SC Membership Activities:

- Draft ToR or responsibilities for SC members in the EIF Operations Manual to encourage active promotion of the Fund and foster partnerships.

Expand Donor Outreach:

- Implement campaigns to attract new donors by showcasing EIF's gender-focused initiatives and their broader impacts on national policies.

Invest in Studies:

- Allocate resources for thematic studies to consolidate data across projects, focusing on women's participation in PKOs and PSOs.

Medium term *Operations*

Flexible Funding Stream:

- Launch a funding stream for small pilot projects that build partnerships between UN entities and regional organisations (e.g., AU) in PKOs/PSOs, allowing for quicker responses and increased risk tolerance.

Support for T/PCCs:

- Help T/PCCs create rosters of qualified women personnel based on DPO advice to meet growing demand for essential skills in PKOs/PSOs.

Project Manual Development:

- Develop a project manual for Focal Points to address turnover among T/PCCs and PUNO recipients, easing handovers and reducing training time.

Resource Allocation:

- Reduce the number of projects per cycle or expand the EIF Secretariat's staff to meet rising demands for technical assistance and oversight.

Streamline Proposal Review:

- Collaborate with DPO and TC members to streamline the proposal review process for a fair resource distribution while ensuring due diligence.

Medium term

MEL and Sustainability

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

Collaborate with T/PCCs and PUNO partners to measure long-term impact and explore innovative tools to monitor and evaluate gender initiatives.

Sustainability

Establish clear definitions of impact and sustainability for T/PCCs and PUNOs to improve project integration.

Create sustainability plans for each project to ensure lasting impact.

Develop a framework for defining success, addressing attribution challenges, and setting accountability limits.

Longer term

Develop an Accessible Knowledge Platform:

Build an online platform as a comprehensive knowledge hub for MS and stakeholders to access evidence and best practices for advocacy at the UN and capital levels. Implement tiered access (public and restricted) for managing sensitive information.

Ensure a long-term sustainability and resourcing plan for ongoing accessibility and updates post-EIF.

Enhance Lifecycle Monitoring:

Enhance project monitoring, including on-site evaluations for projects not implemented through a UN partner.

Address challenges, measure progress, make necessary adjustments, and build project management and MEL capacity.

Consider post-project evaluations (2028 and beyond) with T/PCCs engaged with the EIF to assess long-term impact.

THANK YOU

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