

**Midterm Review Report
of the
Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund**

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International Consultant WPHF Midterm Review

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This report presents the findings from stakeholder consultations and secondary data sources that includes WPHF reports and other documentation.

ACRONYMS

BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GNWP	Global Network of Women Peace Builders
GPPAC	Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict
ICAN	International Civil Society Action Network
JNFW	Jordanian National Forum for Women
JoNaf	Jordanian National Forum
ME	Management Entity (for Civil Society Organizations)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MTR	Midterm Review
NSC	National Steering Committee
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBF	Peace Building Fund
PBSO	Peace Building Support Office
PUNO	Participating UN Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and gender -based Violence
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
RBM	Results -based Management
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN Women	UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN OCHA	United Nations Organization for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPS	Women Peace and Security

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Midterm Review (MTR) Report of the Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) presents the findings, analysis, conclusions and recommendations of the review and an assessment of the WPHF.

Purpose and objectives

The main purpose of the MTR was to review and assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the WPHF. It sets out good practices, lessons learned, challenges as well as areas of improvements that can be explored to accelerate the Funds results by December 2025. The end date of the WPHF has been extended from December 2020 to December 2025 by the Board in its meeting of March 2019. (). The key objective of the MTR was to review and assess the extent to which the WPHF contributed to the Fund’s ability to effectively support civil society organizations in the Crises settings.

The MTR examined global-level efforts as well as Fund implementation in five focal countries/group of countries which include Burundi, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, the Pacific island countries of Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Palau, Samoa. Burundi was selected as a pilot country for the Field Mission and a Case Study and a separate report has been prepared namely the ‘Burundi Case Study’. The MTR covers the life of the Fund from the period 2016 to November 2019. An International Consultant conducted the MTR work during the period August-December 2019, and the MTR was commissioned and managed by UN Women as the Secretariat of the WPHF.

Overview and Context of the WPHF

Despite recognition of the benefits that investing in women brings to improving conflict prevention, conflict resolution, protection, humanitarian action and peace consolidation efforts, their contribution continues to be undervalued, under-utilized and under-resourced. Only two percent of aid to peace and security interventions in fragile states in 2012-2013 targeted gender equality as a principal objective. In 2015, the OECD reported that only one percent of all funding to fragile states went to local women’s groups or women’s ministries. In October 2015, recognizing the urgent need to prioritize action in the field of women, peace and security and humanitarian action, the Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 recommended the establishment of the WPHF. This recommendation was recognized in the Secretary General’s 2015 Report on Women, Peace and Security, as well as in UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015).

The Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is the only global financing mechanism dedicated exclusively to supporting women’s inclusion in peacebuilding and humanitarian response. It is an innovative global partnership between member states, UN, and civil society that aims to re-energize action and stimulate funding for women’s participation, leadership and empowerment in situations of conflict and humanitarian crises around the world. The Fund was formally launched on 24 February and became fully operational in October 2016.

Generous support for the WPHF comes from the governments of Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Spotlight Initiative, the United Kingdom, Liechtenstein, Lithuania., Netherlands and Norway. and from Starbucks. Support has been provided by corporate sector partners, DELL Inc., Samsung, Trip Advisor, eBay and celebrities, American Actress Kristen Bell and French Recording Artist Louane. At the time of writing, October 2019, data shows that the WPHF has supported over 56 local women’s organizations across the five countries/group of countries reviewed, serving 76,000 women and girls directly, and over 3 million beneficiaries indirectly with grants of over USD 12 million.

The WPHF mandate has the following three main functions: *i) Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance; ii) Addressing structural funding gaps for women’s participation and iii)*

Improving policy coherence and coordination. It is guided by a global Theory of Change (TOC) which is holistic and multidimensional reflected in six critical outcomes that are synergistic in achieving the WPHF goal of *more peaceful and gender equal societies*, empowering women and enabling their agency in crises. Its six outcomes include:

Outcome 1: An enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments

Outcome 2: Women's participation in decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention:

Outcome 3: Gender inclusive humanitarian response

Outcome 4: Protection of women and girls' human rights, safety, physical and mental health and security:

Outcome 5: Promotion of the socio-economic recovery

Outcome 6: Increased women's representation and leadership

Methodology of the Review and Scope of the MTR

The methodology adopted by the MTR included a transparent, participatory, and consultative process that meaningfully engaged a diverse range of stakeholders at global and country level in the review process. It was guided by UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms for Evaluation in the UN System and the UNEG Ethical Code of Conduct. It was inclusive of rights holders and duty bearers, utility focused and independent.

Methods of data collection included a document review, stakeholder interviews at the global and country level and a field mission to Burundi undertaken between September 23 -28, 2019 to gain firsthand data and insights to prepare a Case Study on Burundi and inform the WPHF impact. The analytical framework prepared during the inception phase guided data analysis and the interview protocols also prepared in the inception phase assisted in the semi-structured stakeholder interviews.

A total of forty one stakeholder interviews were conducted globally in different time zones. In the Burundi Mission a total of 197 persons participated of which 177 were women. Four discussion groups were held with women in four provinces and communes and included a few men. Interviews were held with commune administrators in the provinces, government at the national level and other stakeholders. This is detailed in the Burundi Case Study.

MAIN FINDINGS

Key stakeholders, member states, UN, donors and CSOs view the Fund as a successful and innovative initiative with an impressive performance given its short duration.

Relevance: Stakeholders overwhelmingly reported that the WPHF was *highly relevant* to the needs and priorities of women in fragile states and difficult circumstances and to CSOs and women-led organizations in these contexts. It is well aligned with donor policies and priorities and reflects the priorities of UN to drive a global effort to accelerate implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. The WPHF aligns with international commitments, UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions including the UN General Assembly and Security Council Resolution on Sustaining Peace 2282(2016).

WPHF ability to deliver on its Mandate and major three functions: Findings show that the WPHF does have the ability to deliver on its mandate, this has started but more time and efforts are needed to deepen and strengthen these functions. In a promising start, donors have broken silos by the very fact of providing funds to the WPHF through its holistic approach that cuts across the humanitarian, peace, security and development spectrum. A partnership with the Spotlight Initiative has broken silos and heightened synergies between the WPHF and Spotlight initiative on two outcomes 5 and 6 respectively. WPHF supported projects are breaking silos in Burundi, Colombia, Jordan, Iraq and the Pacific island countries

by catalyzing synergies between conflict prevention, peacebuilding and economic recovery streams and in undertaking gender sensitive humanitarian responses related to development initiatives including protection for women.

Theory of Change and Results Framework: A high percentage of stakeholders consulted noted significant strength in the design of the global TOC which is a comprehensive and multidimensional framework in addressing women's leadership and participation across the humanitarian, peace, security and development continuum. The TOC was found to be a relevant and useful guide including by country level stakeholders responsible for the WPHF. However, outcomes need adjustments and the results framework requires improvements in the formulation of results and indicators to reflect a results-based perspective and. Consistency needs to be maintained in stating outcomes in the TOC and the results framework.

Quality of monitoring and reporting and an M&E system: The quality of reporting has been uneven, sometimes difficult given that often outcomes/outputs, activities and indicators are not systematically arranged. Consulted stakeholders emphasized that reporting in some instances is satisfactory but to a large extent has been activity oriented and quantitative. One of the reasons is also the short period of project implementation in some countries. Donors are keen to know the concrete outcomes achieved from implemented activities. Though critical, the M&E system for the WPHF demonstrates weaknesses with significant implications for the effectiveness of monitoring and reporting on the WPHF. This is attributed to limited financial resources. An important need exists to strengthen the M&E system across all countries reviewed.

Progress and impact made in the WPHF supported countries: Forty-one projects implemented by fifty six CSOs supported by the WPHF contributed positively in the five countries/group of countries reviewed. Progress albeit varies in countries at different stages in the implementation of projects. Overall good progress is reported on the outputs and in working towards outcomes. It is too early to accurately assess the full impact of the WPHF projects given their short duration in some countries, but stakeholders reported that the Fund is positively impacting at the country level. This is noted in Burundi in the high visibility and recognition achieved by the nationwide network of women mediators focused on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and economic recovery working in close collaboration with local government, reducing social tensions and promoting social cohesion in targeted communities. In Colombia the WPHF projects have opened opportunities for women to be part of the implementation of an important Peace Agreement in which women's voices are being heard and it is changing their lives.

In Iraq, marginalized women have greater visibility and a voice in the public space and are empowered. Host communities and Syrian refugee women in Jordan have benefited from essential family planning and contraception awareness, psychosocial support and legal empowerment services previously out of their reach. New market-oriented opportunities have been opened to them but social stigmas about women's employment led to limited results. In the Pacific island countries, WPHF projects have contributed to increased numbers of women and girls from the community, local government and national CSOs acquiring the knowledge, confidence and skills and being empowered to participate in emergency preparedness and humanitarian response efforts.

Impact at the global level: Stakeholders reported that the WPHF has gained a high visibility at the global level; an effective and well-functioning global mechanism has been established through which donor funds are being accessed by local CSOs and women-led organizations; *localization* has gained momentum; and a huge impact has been realized by the Fund in its resource mobilization efforts resulting in an impressive expanded resource base since its operations began in 2016.

Influence on policy making: Respondents indicated that it may be too early to assess the catalytic effect and influence that the WPHF is having on policies at the global and country level. It has influenced global

policy on the Grand Bargain and localization through joint advocacy with UN Women and member states (such as Norway) which influenced the localization workstream's agenda and work.

Overall effectiveness of the governance and management structure: The model of the two-tier governance and management structure at the global and country level including management devolved to national steering committees, is found to be appropriate and effective in supporting the WPHF implementation with a good level of collaboration and coordination. A stakeholder view was that the structure could be enhanced by including a regional dimension and the involvement of UN Women Regional offices. The Funding Board has created broad ownership in the Fund and effectively and efficiently contributed to providing strategic direction to the WPHF and maintaining oversight. A few stakeholders found that room exists for improving transparency in Board decision-making in country prioritization for allocations based on solid information about the needs and priorities of women and not only on donor priorities, improving induction processes to be more in depth; and scheduling meetings based on a yearly calendar rather than short two-week notices. This would contribute to enhancing ownership and lessen the sense of a perfunctory role for some members. It was noted from an email communication April 12, 2019 that the Secretariat communicated with Board members on the WPHF next country priority investment.

The WPHF Secretariat including the Head of the Secretariat and a small team has in an excellent and innovative way carried out its role in planning and managing the WPHF, leading dynamic strategies in partnership building, communications and resource mobilization with very positive results. However, it is challenged in being under-resourced and understaffed for its huge tasks and its capacity must be enhanced to deliver on its role. Notwithstanding the high performance demonstrated, findings from a stakeholder indicated that the WPHF Secretariat may need to better balance its priorities by focusing more time and effort in achieving quality outcomes at the ground level and in building the capacities of UN Women management entities and CSOs at the country level including in quality M&E functions. Other stakeholders also emphasized that a priority should be in bringing changes in women's lives. This should be placed in the broader perspective of the need for the Secretariat to ensure the Fund survives with effective resource mobilization efforts, and the limited staff capacity and financial resources of the Secretariat.

The Administrative Agent has demonstrated strong competence and provided very effective and efficient support to the Fund. It has been fast and responsive to contributors' queries and is highly appreciated. Records show that disbursements of funds have been timely once the MPTFO receives the proper documentation from the Secretariat.

The NSCs at country level have added value as an inclusive multi partner platform that manages country allocations but show varying levels of ownership and performance. In countries such as in Colombia and Iraq, NSCs could be further strengthened through improved CSO representation and voice in the decision-making processes of the committees,

While the UN Women Management Entities at the country level have demonstrated strong commitment to the WPHF approach and implementation providing effective and efficient support to the CSO partners, their capacity is stretched and constrained in terms of human and financial resources for their vast tasks and an M&E role they need to play.

Delays in programme start-up and implementation: In Colombia delays were due to a detailed and long approval process of projects because of regulations applied in the UN MPTF Steering Committee. Some progress in resolving this issue meant continuing to coordinate with the UN MPTF procedures, but underlying issues of working through a bureaucratic structure may still lead to delays. In Jordan, because

of government requirements the WPHF projects selected by the NSC had to go through a second approval process under the Jordan Response Platform to the Syria Crisis (JORISS) delaying implementation. The Pacific island countries faced administrative and logistical delays and those caused by cyclic bad weather and poor infrastructure which were resolved with the active and dedicated support of the CSO partners.

Financial resources

The WPHF started with USD 3.5 million which has grown since 2016. Most stakeholders reported that currently there are adequate financial resources to meet the objectives of the Fund. A very promising start has been made and more funds are being mobilized by the WPHF as it expands its operations and reach. The resource mobilization strategy implemented by the Secretariat has been highly effective resulting in an exponential increase in funds from USD: 3,726, 957 in 2016 to USD 33 million reported as of November 2019.

Financial resources for the Secretariat, the Administrative Agent and the Management Entities: While there are adequate resources for country level projects, the findings show that the Secretariat and the UN Women management entities (MEs) at country level are clearly under-funded and understaffed to deliver on their important roles. The 5 percent fee for the Secretariat needs to be raised to 7 percent. Capacity constraints (human and financial) are experienced at the Management Entity (ME) level . The 7 percent fee provided to the MEs was estimated as low for all the tasks undertaken by them including for M&E functions. It also does not suffice to deliver on capacity building for civil society organizations – which is one of the key functions of the WPHF and recommendations have been made to address this issue. The 1 percent fee charged by the UN MPTFO (Administrative Agent) was considered adequate.

Partnerships and stakeholder engagement and communications: Stakeholders confirmed that at the global level the WPHF has successfully led a dynamic partnership building strategy leveraging the partnership of CSOs, member states and the private sector. The private sector partnership strategy has been well conceived, targeting corporations, foundations, high-net worth individuals, women’s philanthropic organizations, and the public via crowdfunding. WPHF’s private sector strategy and operating plan were developed by May 2017 and since led to significant achievements in partnerships with DELL Inc., Starbucks, 180 LA, Samsung, eBay and Omaze. It also includes partnerships with American Actress Kristen Bell and Recording French Artist Louane.

An equally and highly effective communication strategy at the global level has been implemented consisting of key elements such as: brand awareness, media outreach, website development, high level visibility events, social media management, partnerships with social influencers, cultivation of contact lists and establishment of centralized communications guidelines. Communications have actively reached out to the public and created awareness to engage a broader range of partners on issues addressed by the WPHF. A high level of visibility has been generated by the WPHF.

At the country level partnerships with CSOs has been a key element in the implementation of the WPHF projects as also the collaboration in the NSCs with government, donors and the UN in facilitating synergies. The MTR found that outside of the NSCs, WPHF partnership and communication efforts tend to be limited at the national level such as with other international development agencies, national institutions and NGOs, and in promoting greater visibility of the WPHF such as in Burundi. A main issue is the capacity and resource constraints (technical and financial) of the MEs to expand partnerships. It is an area that needs to be strengthened.

Key Challenges: The WPHF works in difficult environments with a high volatility in the security, political and humanitarian situations in the countries of operation which pose challenges and impact project work. Despite important achievements, stakeholders highlighted key challenges and constraints that need to be addressed to ensure improvements, effective implementation and sustainability of interventions..

Capacity challenges emerge for the effective and efficient implementation of the WPHF and are a high priority to be addressed. Capacity constraints exist at the Secretariat level (human and financial) including a low 5 percent fee structure that limits recruiting and monitoring. Challenges to mobilize resources are ever present for the WPHF Secretariat. The Management Entity has limited capacity both financial and staff capacity to effectively support increasing numbers of CSOs and undertake M&E and with no dedicated staff for the WPHF. Capacity of CSOs and women-led organizations is limited in skills and knowledge in project development, management, monitoring and reporting. Women participants particularly in rural areas have low levels of education and skills posing difficulties for implementing partners such as when providing training in financial literacy as indicated in Burundi. Strengthening women participants 'empowerment' and 'agency' is also essential.

Challenges are related to persisting gender barriers in countries of operation, and the turnover every year of projects and CSO partners contributes to inefficiency and limits sustainability as found in Burundi¹.

Lessons learned: A key lesson learned is the critical role that civil society organizations play in the WPHF projects in preventing conflicts, in mediation, resolving conflicts, engaging in gender sensitive humanitarian responses, economic recovery and peace building and working at the community level. CSOs are best situated to drive the momentum towards the WPHF objectives. Notwithstanding the potential of CSOs, their organizational capacities need to be strengthened with concrete technical and financial support in project development, management and monitoring for results along with reinforced knowledge and skills in conflict management, negotiations, and communications.

An important lesson that stands out from Burundi is that the WPHF funding since 2016 enabled women to play a key role in conflict prevention and in bolstering social cohesion and economic recovery. It strengthened the nationwide network of women mediators which played a lead role. A lesson learned was the need to strategically engage men in the WPHF interventions to break gender barriers as noted in Burundi, Iraq, Jordan and the Pacific island countries. Such interventions contribute to transforming social attitudes and cultural norms leading to more systemic changes.

Good practices: These include creating platforms for dialogue and spaces where women have a voice and are empowered; collaboration and partnerships with government including local government and municipalities in all five countries /group of countries; and reaching out to youth (young women and men) and engaging them in preventing conflict, economic recovery and peace building as noted in Burundi.

CONCLUSION

The Midterm Review has determined the conclusions based on the findings in this report, a wealth of perspectives and insights that emerged from the stakeholder interviews at global and country level including the Field Mission to Burundi and Case Study, and the global portfolio document review.

¹ The MTR reviewed and found that the WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019, Annex 2 Template for the Project Document page 58 footnote 33, also pages 37 and 76 stipulate a maximum duration for projects for **3 years**. The experience in Burundi is that projects are **for one year** (Refer to the Burundi Case Study on this subject under Challenges) Furthermore I have again gone through the Annual Reports. This is what I found in the Annual Report January-December 2018 page 31 "**5.1. Main 2018 challenges. Management of the calls for proposals: In Burundi, the WPHF invested 3 successive tranches, which resulted in the obligation for the National Steering Committee to select different partners for each of these tranches. The turnover among the partners (annually) is a challenge to the efficiency and continuity of the project (partnerships should be extended to 2 to 3 years, instead of 1 year)**". What the MTR found was not new. I have not seen the reference to 2 years in the OM.

The WPHF is a complex multidimensional and multi stakeholder undertaking that has performed very well in initiating and gaining momentum and setting in place projects that continue to build women's capacity and that of women's organization in taking a lead role in crisis. It has achieved positive results since it began its operations in 2016 in one country, Burundi. Key stakeholders, member states, UN, donors and CSOs view the Fund as a successful and innovative initiative with an impressive performance given its short duration.

The focus in engaging with civil society enhanced fund accessibility for small CSOs which lack visibility and would otherwise have difficulty submitting project proposals. Fifty six CSOs implemented projects across the countries reviewed. From a donor perspective, the WPHF mechanism presents a much needed and excellent mechanism and avenue for donors to partner, support and link with local women's organizations at the grassroots level.

The relevance of the WPHF to the needs of women in fragile states is undisputed and it is well aligned with donor priorities and those of UN Women. The Fund has effectively engaged with '*rights holders*' and '*duty bearers*' in countries of operation, and this is an important breakthrough. The active engagement and dedicated support of the CSOs has contributed to sustaining peace, preventing conflict, enhancing services and economic opportunities, promoting gender sensitive humanitarian responses and protection. It has given marginalized women a '*voice*' in their communities and in the public sphere. Stakeholders emphasized that the capacities of CSOs need to be enhanced for wider and multiplier impact as also those of women beneficiaries/participants at the community level.

The WPHF global theory of change (TOC) manifests significant strengths in its design as a holistic approach, but both the results framework and TOC needs to be adjusted and harmonized to reflect a result-based management perspective; and the quality of monitoring and reporting needs to be strengthened. The governance and management structure have proved to be effective and efficient, but improvements are needed such as in greater transparency in decision making by the Board on country prioritization of allocations and enhancing greater ownership by Board members. An excellent level of performance demonstrated by the Secretariat at global level needs to be balanced with greater priority focused in achieving solid results on the ground as reported by a stakeholder. This should be placed in a broader perspective of the need for the Secretariat to ensure the Fund survives with effective resource mobilization efforts, and that there is limited staff capacity and financial resources in the Secretariat. In this regard capacities (human and financial resources) of the Secretariat and the management entities at country level need to be enhanced. CSO representation and decision-making role by CSOs as members of the NSCs needs to be strengthened.

Partnerships with member states, the private sector and the public expanded very effectively, and resource mobilization has yielded high dividends with an exponential increase in the volume of funds for the WPHF. Several conditions have been created to support the sustainability of achievements. The MTR strongly supports the continuation and balanced expansion of the WPHF to consolidate the achievements, deepen interventions, address challenges, increasingly strengthen and widen partnerships and bonds of cooperation to achieve greater synergy and policy coherence with partners. This will be realized by further strengthening capacity at the global, country and community level to capitalize on the momentum gained.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations of the MTR are based on the findings and evidence collected and consultations with stakeholders and detailed below. These should be considered by the WPHF.

RECOMMENDATION 1-Design a comprehensive capacity building strategy and empowerment process² matched with financial resources.

This recommendation addresses the crucial capacity constraints highlighted in the findings and for strengthening the effective and efficient implementation of the WPHF. *It sets out capacity building recommendations that should be addressed at several levels and is a priority.*

The Secretariat should design a comprehensive capacity building strategy to respond to the diverse needs of stakeholders engaged in the WPHF:

At the level of the WPHF Secretariat

Strengthen the capacity of the global Secretariat technically and financially for its responsibilities:

Invest resources (human and financial resources) to design a comprehensive well-defined M&E plan and mechanism for the WPHF and implement it

- Engage the services of a technically qualified M&E Specialist to lead in designing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan and mechanism for the WPHF. The aim should be to introduce a results-based management (RBM) approach at the global level and in country offices, develop capacities, improve M&E for quality monitoring and reporting on qualitative and quantitative results. It should show case the WPHF results more clearly to donors and local partners and should be of immense value to CSOs to understand how activities translate to results.
- The M&E Specialist should in the above context revisit the TOC and Results Framework, adjust and refine these tools to complement **Recommendation 2** (as discussed) and ensure harmonization and coherence of these tools. In all this the M&E Specialist should work in close consultation with the Management Entities (see below) at the country level.
- Appropriate training and orientation should be conducted by the M&E Specialist for the country level management entities to ensure an RBM culture is instituted and capacity is strengthened in the WPHF M&E system.

Increase the 5 percent fee currently stipulated for the WPHF and raise it to **7 percent** to better match the volume of work undertaken by the Secretariat and its team and to enable the Secretariat to hire appropriate staff (as above and consultants or interns). This is critical as the Fund expands activities in new countries.

At the level of the UN Women Management Entity for the WPHF at country level

Strengthen the UN Women Management Entity (ME) for WPHF implementation including in results-based management and M&E.

- Based on MTR findings, it is strongly recommended that a full-time dedicated staff be recruited at the Management Entity level to be responsible for all WPHF activities related to the role of the technical Secretariat including its oversight role of CSOs and M&E. The individual should be technically qualified in project development and results-based management and with specific expertise in **M&E** to fulfill this role with independence and minimum supervision. The dedicated staff recruited for the WPHF should work closely with the M&E Specialist at the global Secretariat level.
- Given that the 7 percent fee structure for the MEs does not suffice to cover the important capacity building role the MEs have for CSOs; it is recommended to use innovative approaches such as setting

² It is not just a matter of technical skills, but awareness of rights and confidence building in accomplishing the work to be undertaken.

aside a part of the Country allocation for capacity building purposes, which NSCs have adopted in some contexts such as Colombia and Iraq. This needs to be duplicated.

- The WPHF Secretariat in the above context should produce and include specific guidelines in the Operations Manual guidelines
- In addition, it is recommended that a specific capacity building funding stream should be established at the Global level, with the purpose not only to provide funding support for capacity building needs at the country level, but also to support harmonized approaches and training modules for civil society organizations, through the WPHF Community of Practice.

At the level of CSOs

Strengthen the role of CSOs and women-led organizations engaged in the WPHF projects as facilitators, managers and influencers in support of the WPHF objectives

- Strengthen and develop the overall organizational capacity of CSOs including women-led organizations technically and financially, including in project design and development in the context of the adjusted TOC and results framework; and in applying results-based management and empowerment approaches and M&E. This should include providing guidance and strengthening the capacity of local CSOs in preparing the call for proposals and being cognizant of the grant rules and procedures.
- Strengthen the skills of CSOs in leadership, negotiations networking, facilitation and communications related to conflict prevention and management and economic recovery, to effectively achieve strong results.
- MEs should facilitate and train CSOs to efficiently manage their budgets, and NSCs should review project budget allocations to allow for sufficient financial resources to CSOs to expand their outreach to women and local communities and to generate a multiplier effect.
- Continue to foster and deepen partnerships and cooperation of CSOs with government agencies at both the local and national level on the WPHF interventions

At the level of women beneficiaries

CSOs should empower women participants/actors and strengthen their capacities

- Increased resources should be invested through CSO projects to strengthen capacity-building interventions of '*rights holders*', women and women's groups at the community level especially those coming from rural areas. Given their low levels of literacy and limited access to information and skills, enhance their knowledge, in management, decision-making and entrepreneurial skills with a focus on their '*empowerment*' and '*agency*' at the household and community level to lead to more sustainable and systemic changes.
- CSOs should strengthen project interventions for women rights holders to facilitate access to much needed services, improved access to the justice system, participation in public dialogue and to amplify their voices. Refer to the Burundi experience.

RECOMMENDATION 2 - Revisit the WPHF theory of change (TOC) and results framework, adjust and harmonize including a results-based management perspective

As the findings show several steps should be taken to make improvements in this direction which have been detailed in the report (see section III point 3) and should be referred to. This recommendation is linked to **Recommendation 1**. and should entail:

- Revisit the TOC and results framework, rephrase outcomes appropriately and ensure consistency in language including in call for proposals, while preserving the *multidimensional and holistic approach* of the TOC *and its demand-driven nature* which is the value added of the WPHF.
- Improve and sharpen the indicators in the results framework to be realistically oriented, reflecting both *qualitative and quantitative* dimensions and in obtaining specific measurable results in the given time frame of the projects.
- The above two steps should be initiated by the M&E Specialist recommended for the global Secretariat in close consultation with Management Entities to enhance their buy-in and ownership and subsequently their follow up with CSOs in calls for proposals and then with the M&E activities.
- Maintain existing flexibility for countries and CSOs to adopt two outcomes from the adjusted global results framework) making this the impact for civil society so they can report on their own outcomes and design their own projects. They should apply a results-based management perspective to ensure coherence with the global framework and at the same time to reflect relevant country priorities and contribute to national ownership of the WPHF
- For the WPHF Secretariat reporting by CSOs on outcomes would provide a higher level of results and enable assessment of progress on results in a more systematic and meaningful manner.
- **Most importantly** the WPHF Secretariat and the M&E Specialist recommended, should provide new guidance to the Management Entities (MEs) and they in turn to the CSOs in using the adjusted global results framework. The TOC and results framework should be accompanied with a capacity building component, workshops and training to ensure that MEs at the country level and CSOs applying for the WPHF projects are fully oriented to the adjusted TOC and results Framework and to results based monitoring. **Recommendation 2 is closely related to Recommendation 1.**

RECOMMENDATION 3-Improve governance functions; procedures for shortening the process of project approvals; and address the issue of yearly turnover of projects

Noted in the findings are the need to improve governance functions and processes for project approvals, and the issue of turnover of projects on a yearly basis. It is recommended that the said issues should be addressed:

Funding Board

Transparency in Funding Board decisions should be enhanced in the prioritization of countries for country allocations. These issues should be discussed technically and more deeply, decisions should be based on solid data and analysis from the ground on women's priorities to reinforce the *demand-led* nature of the Fund. Furthermore, the process and documentation that the Secretariat prepares on these matters for Board decision-making should be further emphasized and clarified with the Board.

- Transparency in decision making should be improved by providing information to all Board members on the tally of consensus reached. Board members should continue to be informed on communications that the Secretariat sends out on these issues.
- The induction process for new Board members should be strengthened to be more in depth, including learning in greater detail about the WPHF implementation in specific countries; to generate ownership and lessen the chances of members viewing themselves in a perfunctory role.
- The Chair of the Board should ensure that Board meetings should be scheduled on a yearly calendar basis (rather than a two -week notice in practice) that allows adequate time for members to plan their own schedules and commitments, and factors in time for members to go through the information provided well in advance. On this basis the Secretariat should organize the meetings.

Steering Committees

- The representation and decision-making role of CSOs on the Committees should be improved and ensured, and awareness created in these committees that CSOs are not mere recipients of funds but also decision-makers in the WPHF.
- The situation of the MPTF in Colombia should be revisited and options explored as regards the feasibility of establishing an ad hoc National Committee for the WPHF that would contribute to greater efficiency through shorter project approval processes, limit delays, reduce the reporting burden for the UN Women Management Entity and accelerate implementation.

Procedures for shortening the project approval process

The findings indicate that the project approval process on average takes between 6-9 months before project implementation can begin in the countries reviewed. Given that the WPHF is a 'rapid and flexible financing mechanism' it was recommended that:

- Measures should be identified by the WPHF and the NSCs to reduce this time period.

Turnover of projects annually and duration of projects

- The WPHF should stipulate clearly in the call for proposals that WPHF projects have a duration of 2-3 years to allow greater efficiency in programming by countries and avoid a rapid turnover in partners and projects which does not lead to sustaining actions on the ground (in Burundi it was recommended that the project period should be 3 years and follow a 'programmatically'³ rather than a project approach. In the Pacific, 3 years is recommended to take into consideration the impact of cyclic weather patterns and weak infrastructure that impact implementation).
- Apply flexible approaches as needed.

RECOMMENDATION 4-Seek to leverage and expand partnerships at all levels to a greater extent and improve coordination

WPHF is predicated on leveraging stakeholders to play a part, and as noted in the findings and conclusions, the WPHF realised significant success when partnering with CSOs at global and country level, member states, the Spotlight Initiative and private sector partners such as DELL and other partners.

Partnerships in the Pacific region and elsewhere should be strengthened as collaborative and coordinated approaches and should seek to avoid duplication and overlap in funding efforts. Additionally, partners should recognize that donors have their own safeguards and due diligence issues that need to be addressed.

- The WPHF at global level should continue to widen and deepen partnerships established. It is equally important that the NSCs and MEs join with actors who are realistically capable of leveraging accountability at the local level such as CSOs, local government and local authorities across all sectors. The NSC should use its networking strength to ensure that key actors and partners are communicating, sharing and moving the agenda forward together.

³ The 'programmatically approach' was explained by stakeholders in Burundi as follows: A holistic and integrated approach which builds strong synergies across outcomes and across partners; implemented by the same partners as are included in the design of the programme; a multi-year time frame to enhance planning and monitoring; with funding committed for a three year period to ensure effective results, capacity building and sustainability of interventions; given that it takes time to achieve results when working in a conflict related environment (Stakeholder discussions in Burundi) .

- Greater coordination with partners at global and country level which includes member states, UN, donors and CSOs, should be further strengthened by the Secretariat, NSCs and the MEs for maximizing limited resources and heightening synergies between partners.
- Partnering with donors and government at the country level should be strengthened through joint field site visits by the NSCs and the interest this generates. It should not be a missed opportunity.

RECOMMENDATION 5-Strengthen engagement of men to support women’s empowerment in conflict prevention, humanitarian responses, peacebuilding and economic recovery

Based on the existing experience in countries of engaging men in the WPHF projects focused on women’s participation, leadership and empowerment in conflict prevention, humanitarian responses, peacebuilding and economic recovery, the WPHF projects should seek ways to strengthen this engagement. It is recommended that:

- Tailored approaches be implemented that provide incentive and motivation for men’s participation such as identifying in consultation with men common economic development, security and peace building issues where they can best support women’s efforts. This should provide an important entry point and motivating factor for engaging men in a sustained manner leading to more systemic changes towards equitable societies.
- Interventions to engage men should include e.g. sessions for men in gender awareness training on conflict prevention, sustaining peace and economic recovery. Strengthening men’s participation in various community fora, such as was done in Iraq by engaging the police, religious and community leaders (all of whom were male) in dialogue platforms with women should be pursued as appropriate in the country context.

RECOMMENDATION 6- Consolidate results, deepen existing interventions, expand the WPHF work in a balanced way, and capitalize on the momentum generated and the commitment of partners for sustainability

Good progress has been demonstrated in the WPHF activities. Strong factors exist for continuity, such as the immense and pressing needs of women in conflict and post conflict contexts, the demand from civil society organizations to be engaged more fully in responses to the local situation including their own commitment for change, and the collaboration that has been catalysed with governments.

Empowering women to participate, lead, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding and economic recovery is an important focus in the broader context of efforts to improve women’s lives and promote women’s empowerment and gender equality in fragile states.

- It is recommended that the WPHF should pursue the above objective deliberately, build on the existing factors, deepen interventions and *sustain* the important gains achieved thus far.
- Expansion of the WPHF should be measured and balanced in that it should consolidate results and build on good practices. This includes increasing funding for longer periods in countries; building capacities of local partner CSOs providing strong technical and M&E support; strengthening and expanding the existing partnerships with CSOs and women’s organizations and with government partners. The focus should be on quality impact and sustainability of activities and avoiding spreading the resources thinly. Underscoring these actions should be a best practice of seeking to achieve realistic outcomes within the time and allotted budget.
- The WPHF should capitalize on the momentum generated through results achieved in the countries reviewed by the MTR, the expanded demand from CSOs as noted in the high response to the call for proposals; and increasing enthusiasm of communities and implementing partners to expand CSO project

activities as noted in Burundi, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan and the Pacific island countries to reach out to marginalized groups of women, men and youth. This forward movement should be supported through increased investments in resources and technical support, political commitment of partners, and strong capacity of actors at the global, country and community level.

RECOMMENDATION 7- Gather and disseminate best practices and lessons learned

Given the uniqueness of WPHFs focus on a partnership of the UN, member states, donors and civil society for women's participation and leadership in the conflict, peace, security, humanitarian development space;

- WPHF should host a *lesson learned dialogue* among its field staff and local partners across countries to document what has worked well and the challenges the project has faced. This would provide an opportunity to continue the learning process towards greater sustainability of all such efforts. The WPHF Secretariat is organizing a Forum in Vienna in February 2020 with partners and UN Women focal points to join and share lessons learned, results, challenges amongst CSOs from different countries.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Midterm Review of the Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) seeks to capture the perspectives, opinions and insights of stakeholders on the WPHF implementation, its achievements and challenges and the lessons learned. It provides an opportunity to learn from civil society partners implementing WPHF supported projects in local communities, from women participants as well as those funding the WPHF and managing it; as to how the WPHF works in practice at the global, country and community level.

The purpose of this report is to provide the analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations related to the WPHF aligned with the Terms of Reference (TOR) based on data and information collected and analyzed during the review process. The report is informed by (i) a review of documentation of the WPHF’s global and country portfolio (ii) interviews with a wide range of stakeholders that included member states, donors, UN agencies, civil society organizations at the global and country level and (iii) a field mission and case study in Burundi.

The Midterm review was conducted by an International Consultant between August and December 2019. and managed by the UN Women WPHF Secretariat. This draft Report is a deliverable of the Midterm Review of the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

The Review included an inception phase and applied a mixed methods methodology to ensure the broadest and deepest data set possible. An Inception Report was authored by the International Consultant in August 2019 as a road map for conducting the Review. This draft report is the culmination of a participatory review process that involved forty one stakeholder interviews conducted globally in different time zones. In the Burundi Field Mission over a total of 197 persons participated in four large discussion groups in four provinces with 177 being women and also included a few men. Interviews were held with CSO implementing partners, commune administrators in four provinces and communes, government at the national level and other stakeholders which is detailed in the Burundi Case Study.

This report is presented under six major headings: I Introduction provides an Overview of the Fund and the purpose of the MTR; II elaborates the Methodology of the Midterm Review; III sets out the Main Findings organised according to the Review Questions in the TOR; IV presents Challenges, Lessons Learned and Good Practices; V describes the Conclusions; and VI provides the Recommendations.

1. OVERVIEW OF THE WOMEN’S PEACE & HUMANITARIAN FUND

Background and Context

Globally, humanitarian crises and threats to peace and security are more common than ever before and evident on an ever-increasing scale with many countries in a state of protracted crises. UN Women’s work related to the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund takes place in a wide range of fragile states subject to multiple political, economic, cultural, environmental, institutional and security challenges. Given UN Women’s mandate in advancing the women, peace and security agenda, such contexts pose challenges, while at the same time providing opportunities for advancing the agenda.

“Conflict costs the global economy \$14 trillion a year and the cost of war is staggering. At the end of 2016 an unprecedented 65.6 million people around the world had been forced from their homes”.
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/01/conflict-costs-global-economy-14-trillion-a-year/>

The document review shows that the rights of women to full participation in all areas of peace and security decision-making has been recognized by the UN Security Council since resolution 1325 was passed in 2000. Since the adoption of this landmark Security Council resolution 1325, remarkable normative progress has been made at the global, regional and national levels to further advance and operationalize the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda⁴. The first ever World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 drew further attention to the need to ensure the protection, active participation, empowerment and leadership of women in humanitarian action⁵.

There is also increasing recognition that placing women's agency at the center of the transition from crisis to sustainable development offers enormous potential for leveraging transformative change. The Global Study on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, released in 2015, provides an unquestionable evidence base that the capacity of countries to prevent violence, negotiate peace, boost economic recovery and protect populations hinges on women's participation.

Despite recognition of the benefits that investing in women brings to improving conflict prevention, conflict resolution, protection, humanitarian action and peace consolidation efforts, their contribution continues to be undervalued, under-utilized and under-resourced. In 2012-2013 only 2 per cent of aid to the peace and security sector targeted gender equality as a principal objective. Similarly, in 2014, only 20 per cent of humanitarian projects were coded as making a significant contribution to gender equality, while 65 per cent of funding reported through UN OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) simply did not use the gender marker introduced five years ago.

Furthermore, humanitarian, peace and security and development assistance continue to operate in silos. Each have different aims, follow different principles, operate over different special and temporal scales and are aligned with different budget lines and rules managed by different actors.

In October 2015, recognizing the urgent need to prioritize action in the field of women, peace and security and humanitarian action, the Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 recommended the establishment of the WPHF⁶. This recommendation was recognized in the Secretary-General's 2015 Report on Women, Peace and Security as well as in UN Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015).

Functions of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

The WPHF has the following three main functions:

- **Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance** by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development *continuum*.
- **Addressing structural funding gaps for women's participation** in key phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development *continuum* by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance.
- **Improving policy coherence and coordination** by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies across all actors: multi-lateral and bilateral entities, national governments' women's machineries; and local civil society organizations.

⁴ These include the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015). Other key reference points are the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Recommendation 30, SDGs 5 and 16, and the UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

⁵ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018

⁶ Then the Global Acceleration Instrument on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action

The WPHF is guided by its theory of change (TOC) which is holistic and multidimensional. The six outcomes included are strong drivers for peace, critical and synergistic in achieving the goal of *more peaceful and gender equal societies*, empowering women and enabling their agency in crises settings. WPHF is supporting interventions at the community, national and global level showcasing the important need to forge linkages for intensifying impact.

Goal and Outcomes of the WPHF

The Goal and Outcomes of the WPHF and its interventions are anchored in a clearly articulated theory of change (TOC) displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. WPHF Goal: More peaceful and gender equal societies

- Outcome 1 An enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments:** This will require evidence-based advocacy and technical support to ensure adoption, monitoring and financing of quality, locally relevant accountability frameworks (including National Action Plans on resolution 1325). This will require the empowerment of national women’s machineries, civil society, and the UN system.
- Outcome 2 Women’s participation in decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention:** This can only materialize if three conditions are in place: (i) favorable attitudes towards women’s participation; (ii) local women’s organizations with the capacity to establish networks and early-warning systems; and (iii) women’s conflict prevention mechanisms are connected to national mechanisms and national and international reporting and response systems.
- Outcome 3 Gender inclusive and responsive humanitarian response:** This requires both technical tools and direct support for local women’s organizations to engage effectively in humanitarian planning and programming. It will also require that women’s organizations are given a more meaningful role in service delivery, and exercise leadership in camp coordination and management.
- Outcome 4 Protection of women and girls’ human rights, safety, physical and mental health and security:** This requires measures that prevent acts of violence, facilitate access to services for survivors of violence, and strengthen accountability mechanisms.
- Outcome 5 Promotion of the socio-economic recovery and political participation of women and girls in post-conflict situations,** through women’s participation in peacebuilding and recovery planning, women’s economic empowerment within recovery efforts (including access to land, financing and entrepreneurship), as well as promoting gender-responsive post-conflict institutions.
- Outcome 6 Increased women’s representation and leadership in formal and informal peace negotiations:** Addressing attitudinal and cultural barriers is critical to increasing women’s role in these processes as is increasing the availability of gender expertise and capacity of mediators to secure inclusive processes. Further, women’s organizations require support to strengthen their leadership capacity and negotiation skills.

The outcomes are stated in the WPHF Operations Manual May 2019, and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund Terms of Reference updated May 2019.

Positioning the WPHF in the global peace, security, humanitarian and development conversation

The WPHF is well positioned in the global conversations on peace and security processes, humanitarian response and development efforts. The Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is the only global financing mechanism dedicated exclusively to supporting women’s inclusion in peacebuilding and humanitarian response. It is an innovative global partnership between Member States, UN, and civil society that aims to re-energize action and stimulate funding for women’s participation, leadership and empowerment in situations of conflict and humanitarian crises around the world⁷.

Contributes to the global SDG commitments: The WPHF is a tool to localize the global SDG commitments to national specificities of conflict-affected countries. To make sure the SDGs promises are met, it facilitates civil society, including women’s organizations in inclusive spaces to influence peace agreements as well as peacebuilding and governance structures and hold their governments to account and drive policy and legal reform. The WPHF has committed 100 percent of its funding to CSOs, including women’s organizations at the local/community level to enable them to contribute meaningfully to peace, security and humanitarian processes⁸.

A tool for implementing and supporting the Sustaining Peace Agenda: In 2016, for the first time, the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted substantively identical resolutions on ‘Sustaining Peace.’ In 2018, additional efforts have been undertaken to establish the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund as a concrete tool to implement the sustaining peace resolutions. The sustaining peace approach requires a comprehensive, coordinated and coherent approach. The WPHF is a coordinated platform between different UN entities, including both the UN Secretariat (the Peacebuilding Support Office) and Agencies, Funds and Programmes (UN Women, UNDP and UNFPA).

The WPHF’s theory of change addresses diverse issues such as conflict prevention, peace processes and economic recovery, human rights violations, humanitarian responses, access to justice systems and political participation in the aftermath of the conflict. It places a strong focus on conflict prevention which is at the heart of the sustaining peace approach including through access to economic opportunities⁹.

Established as a sub commitment of the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) in 2016: WPHF responds to the core commitments endorsed at the High-Level Roundtable on Women and Girls at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) held in Istanbul in May 2016. As noted in the Secretary-General’s report on the outcome of the WHS, the Summit confirmed that gender equality, fulfilment of women’s and girls’ human rights and their empowerment in political, humanitarian and development spheres is a universal responsibility. There was agreement among UN Member States, UN entities, the private sector and civil society organizations on the need to support local women and women’s organizations by placing them as leaders in humanitarian work¹⁰. In this context the

WPHF implements the Grand Bargain’s Humanitarian and Financing Reforms in three ways:

- Localization
- Participant Revolution
- Humanitarian and Development Nexus

⁷ WPHF Communication and Public Advocacy Guideline, 2019.

⁸ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2016

⁹ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018

¹⁰ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2016

WPHF is a tool for donors to implement their commitments under at least three of the work streams of the Grand Bargain's financing reforms:

- **Localization:** By investing directly in local women's groups, and by engaging with civil society as partners the WPHF is an effective and efficient way to provide significantly higher levels of direct support to local responders.
- **Participant Revolution:** The WPHF contributes to the Grand Bargain's objective of giving voice to the most vulnerable by empowering women and women's organizations who are marginalized or outside of formal humanitarian coordination mechanisms so they can participate meaningfully and lead humanitarian action.
- **Humanitarian-Development Nexus:** The Grand Bargain aims to enhance engagement between humanitarian and development work in order to close gender gaps in service delivery and contribute to women's empowerment across all settings. The WPHF invests in women's engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the humanitarian and development spectrum and helps bridge the humanitarian-development divide.

From Burundi to Colombia, Jordan, Iraq, and the Pacific island countries, the WPHF aims to amplify the voices of women and support their vital work to prevent conflict, respond to crises, and accelerate peace in their communities¹¹. It has been designed to stimulate a significant shift in women's participation and leadership in conflict and post-conflict zones through the enabling power of financing and capacity building of women actors: this has included women-led organizations and CSOs providing implementation services at the country and community level, women's meditation networks, women's solidarity group for economic activities, women participants in psychosocial support and legal empowerment sessions and in other WPHF activities some of which also include men.

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund mobilizes critical funding for local women's organizations. It is galvanizing support from across the globe to support the efforts of women working on the frontlines of the world's most intractable conflicts. Generous support for the WPHF comes from the governments of Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Spotlight Initiative, the United Kingdom, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Netherlands and Norway and from Starbucks. Support has also been provided by corporate sector partners, DELL Inc. Samsung, Trip Advisor, eBay and celebrities, American Actress Kristen Bell and French Recording Artist Louane.

The WPHF has supported 56 local women's organizations across 5 countries /group of countries reviewed, serving 76, 000 women and girls directly, and over 3 million beneficiaries indirectly with grants of over USD 12 million <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>

2. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MIDTERM REVIEW

Purpose

The main purpose of the WPHF Midterm Review (MTR) according to the Terms of Reference (TOR) attached in **Annex 1** was to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the WPHF and to identify good

¹¹ <http://wphfund.org>

practices as well as areas of improvements that could be explored to accelerate the Funds results by December 2020 (which is the end date of the WPHF). The review as such examined the global-level efforts as well as Fund implementation in five focal countries/groups of countries with Burundi as a pilot country for the field visit and case study.

Objectives

The key objectives of this MTR exercise as stated in the TOR was to review and assess the extent to which the WPHF contributed to the Fund's ability to effectively support civil society organizations in the crisis setting.

3. SCOPE OF THE MIDTERM REVIEW

The MTR was a consultative and participatory multi-stakeholder process with a strong learning component and forward looking in terms of future work that to be carried out by the WPHF. It has contributed towards identifying measures to strengthen the Fund's performance and impact and recommend improvements. The scope of the MTR was defined along the following lines:

Coverage: The MTR covered the full lifetime of the WPHF and its implementation since its establishment in February 2016 until August 2019 when the MTR started.

Geographic scope: Regarding the geographic scope, the MTR focused its analysis in five countries/group of countries. Burundi is a pilot investment and the first country where WPHF investments were initiated in January 2016. Colombia, Jordan, the Pacific (including Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and more recently Iraq¹² are the other focus countries each at different stages of the Fund's implementation.

A Country-level assessment including a case study was conducted by the International MTR Consultant in Burundi which had been selected by the WPHF for the MTR.

Criteria for selecting Burundi

- Burundi is the first country where WPHF investments were made and where a pilot project was launched in January 2016. Fund supported projects and activities are underway in Burundi and relatively more mature than in other locations
- A country with a fragile political environment.
- An active presence and engagement of CSOs, women's organizations and other partner NGOs.

Substantive Scope: The substantive scope of the MTR covered the areas of focus/review questions requiring particular attention as set out in the TOR namely: the ability of the Fund to deliver on its mandate and functions, the WPHF architecture, governance and management structure and roles and responsibilities of the different entities including that of the Funding Board, WPHF Secretariat, Administrative Agent, Steering Committee and Management Entities at the country level and the financial dimensions related to the WPHF. Attention was given to reviewing the validity of the theory of change and results framework, WPHF progress and impact in supported countries, stakeholder engagement and partnerships and the communications aspects of the WPHF. A case study in Burundi was undertaken to inform the WPHF impact.

4. STAKEHOLDERS OF THE MIDTERM REVIEW

According to the TOR, stakeholders of the MTR and those to be interviewed included the Funding Board, WPHF Secretariat, MPTFO, National Steering Committee members at country level, Management Entities for CSOs at country level, representatives from grantees' organizations, beneficiaries and donors.

¹² TOR of the Midterm Review

Primary user: The intended primary user of this Review is the WPHF Funding Board which will use the MTR findings, lessons learned and recommendations to inform decision-making and strategic planning for future Fund interventions.

Secondary users: A secondary group of users have included the WPHF Secretariat donors, National Steering Committee members at country level, the MPTFO, Management Entities for CSOs at country level and representatives from grantees' organizations implementing the grants. These stakeholders will use the MTR findings to share learnings that can improve effectiveness, efficiency and mutual accountability in the WPHF including support for advocacy on the value derived from funding and capacity development of women led CSOs.

A list of stakeholders provided by the WPHF Secretariat is attached in **Annex 3**. Other stakeholders and beneficiaries who were engaged in the MTR included CSOs, women, men and community members at the local level in Burundi and are detailed in the Burundi Case Study Report.

5. ANALYTICAL REVIEW MATRIX

An Inception Report prepared prior to the Field Work includes an Analytical Review Matrix which summarized key aspects of the review exercise. It lists the focus areas/and review questions to be addressed in the TOR and outlined the appropriate review criteria that was used for the analysis. It aligned specific questions and sub questions with both data sources and methods of data collection and illustrative indicators for measuring progress. It guided the development of data collection tools and the data collection process. Each line of inquiry feeds into the Review questions and helped support the overall analysis.

The International Consultant developed an Interview Protocol consisting of semi-structured questions for stakeholder interviews and group discussions to guide data collection, data analysis and report writing which were elaborated in the Analytical Review Matrix and included in the Inception Report.

II. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

1. Review Approach and Methodology

As advised in the TOR, the Midterm Review was guided by the UNEG Norms and Standards¹³, UNEG Guidance Document, Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations¹⁴, the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UN Women Evaluation Handbook¹⁵, Evaluation policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women¹⁶.

Overall Approach

The Midterm Review applied a **mixed-methods** and gender sensitive approach collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data from multiple primary and secondary sources to facilitate data triangulation, validity and reliability.

Guiding Principles

¹³ UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2017).

¹⁴ Guidance Document UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Integrating Human rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations. August 2014 https://www.dmeformpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/082714_IntegratingHumanRights_UNEG.pdf

¹⁵ <https://gest.unu.edu/static/files/unwomen-evaluationhandbook-web-final.pdf>

¹⁶ Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2012.) <https://undocs.org/en/UNW/2012/12>

A participatory, consultative and inclusive approach

The MTR adopted an inclusive, participatory and consultative approach that engaged in a meaningful way with diverse stakeholders at global, national and local level involved in the WPHF initiative. A 'participatory' approach was appropriate to enhance ownership, mutual accountability for results, facilitate 'buy in', and subsequent use of the recommendations that emanate from the review. Stakeholders and partners included all stakeholders that were identified for this MTR.

Integration of Human Rights (HR) and Gender Equality (GE) Principles

The review was premised on a human rights-based and gender-responsive approach based on the principles of *inclusion, participation and fair power relations*¹⁷. Using this model meant inclusion of 'rights holders' (groups who are intended to benefit and participate in the Fund e.g. women's groups) as well as the 'duty bearers' such as public institutions and authorities and policy makers responsible and accountable for meeting their obligations. This principle was followed by the MTR in the fieldwork and data collection process.

Utility Focused

The MTR was utility focused and for the intended users. It seeks to generate an analysis, conclusions and recommendations that can be used by the WPHF in decision making and strategic planning for future work.

Methodological rigor

The MTR emphasized methodological rigor ensuring that the most appropriate sources of evidence were sought for the MTR by using different data sources and various methods throughout the process of the review to check and corroborate findings, triangulate information and ensure that this is consistent. An Analytical Review Matrix was developed during the Inception Phase as a tool for analysis and a guide for the review.

Independence to ensure that the findings of evaluation stand solely on an objective analysis of the evidence without influence by any stakeholder group.

In the above context the MTR approach incorporates best practice evaluation criteria and principles for evaluations as well as norms and standards set out in Guidance Documents of the UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group).

2. Data Sources and Data Collection Methods

The MTR proposes used the following main sources of data: Desk reviews/documentation, stakeholder interviews held through Skype, phone and follow up emails with stakeholders at global level and a field mission to Burundi

Desk review/ Documentation: Documents were reviewed which had been provided by the WPHF prior to preparing the Inception report and throughout the MTR period for checking back, referencing and data triangulation. These included WPHF background documents, Operations Manual of the WPHF, Annual Reports, Country Reports, and other pertinent documents. Additional material was also reviewed which was found useful for this evidence-based review. A list of the documents reviewed is provided in **ANNEX 2**.

Stakeholder Interviews: A detailed list of key stakeholders to be interviewed was provided by the WPHF Secretariat **ANNEX 3**. The International Consultant scheduled the interviews and conducted these with all

¹⁷ Guidance Document UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Integrating Human rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations. August 2014 https://www.dmeforpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/082714_IntegratingHumanRights_UNEG.pdf

stakeholders at the global level except for two who were unavailable. The in-depth discussions aimed at drawing in different insights, opinions and views on the WPHF performance and results. Interviews were semi-structured with some standard questions but permitting flexibility. Questions were tailored to the interviewee to take advantage of their specific roles and perspectives in the WPHF initiatives. It was found to be a strong method for obtaining in-depth, qualitative information and confidentiality was maintained. In contrast all interviews during the field mission to Burundi were face to face and included CSO partners, government at national and local level, UN Women and donors.

Group Discussions. Face-to-face facilitated group discussions were held during the Field Mission to Burundi. Four major group discussions conducted varied in size between 10-90 persons (in one big group made up of 6 women s groups) almost all were women but did include a few men. A total of about 197 persons participated in the Burundi Field Mission, of which 177 were women and discussions also included government officials at national and provincial level, commune administrators and community leaders. Discussions were in Kirundi and translated for the Consultant. The details of the Field mission are in the Burundi Case Study. Confidentiality has been maintained in the testimonies given by participants.

Field Mission, Site Observations and Case Study

The field mission to Burundi was conducted for a period of five working days during September 23-28, 2019 to allow adequate time to obtain in-depth data collection, hold meetings with key stakeholders including visits to the provinces.

3. Validation, Triangulation and Analysis

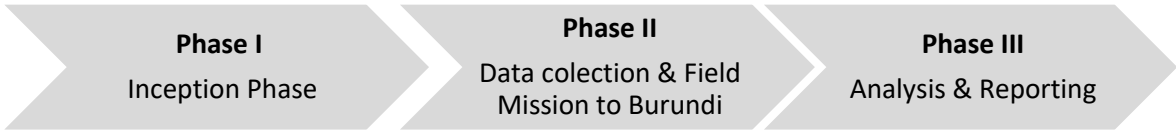
Document reviews, stakeholder interview and group discussions during the Field Mission in Burundi complemented each other and enabled the MTR to triangulate and validate the data and findings around common themes that emerged. This was carried out by asking similar questions on specific themes to different stakeholders, using secondary data and multiples sources to validate the information.

4. Post-visit and feedback

Upon conclusion of the Field Mission tin Burundi, the MTR debriefed the UN Women Country Representative and the national project staff with respect to preliminary findings and recommendations over the course of the visit. The WPHF Head of the Secretariat was also debriefed about the Field Mission.

5. Review Process

The review process consisted of three phases:



Phase I – Inception (August 2019)

The Inception Phase consisted of consultations between the MTR and the WPHF Secretariat which managed the review. The International Consultant prepared and finalized the *Inception Report* and methodology for the review, developed an analytical framework and interview protocols for stakeholders and authored the Inception Report.

Phase II – Data collection and Field Mission to Burundi (September -Mid October 2019)

The data collection phase included in-depth desk research of global and country level project documents, conducting stakeholder interviews by telephone/Skype interviews and follow up by emails, and a Field Mission to Burundi (detailed in the Burundi Case Study).

Phase III – Analysis and Reporting (mid-October -November 2019)

The analysis and reporting phase included analysis of data, interpretation of findings triangulation and corroboration of findings of the Burundi Field Mission, as well as the data gathered from stakeholder interviews at the global level. The Burundi Case Study and the MTR report were drafted on this basis.

6. Limitations in the Methodology

Time constraints remained ever present during the 5-day Field Mission in Burundi given the travel time required to visit provinces and hold comprehensive discussions with the CSO partners in Bujumbura, the added time it took for simultaneous translation from Kirundi and French to English. Language constraints in French existed for the Consultant and applied to reviewing documents in French for the Burundi WPHF projects. This was partially addressed by relying on the WPHF Annual Reports and some translations done by the UN Women staff in Burundi. While most stakeholders and partners were covered, a few key informants were unavailable.

Scheduling stakeholder interviews posed a challenge, took considerable time often with several follow up emails. This was mitigated through schedule adjustments, flexibility and cooperation of stakeholders.

There are generally limitations in obtaining objective and accurate primary data as responses from stakeholders often tend to be subjective, providing answers considered the safest to share; nuances and interpretation may be lost in the translations and note taking. Qualitative data e.g. perceptions, personal experiences are subject to different types of interpretation and may often not be entirely objective. Overall the exchanges were found to be very open and frank and genuinely reflected the opinions of respondents. The MTR mitigated these limitations through triangulation of information and corroboration with different stakeholders and use of secondary documentation.

7. Management of the Midterm Review

As indicated in the TOR, the principal responsibility for managing and coordinating the MTR resides with the WPHF Secretariat which has been responsible for also commissioning the Review. The Head of the Secretariat was responsible for liaising with the MTR Consultant and provided all relevant documents and a list of relevant stakeholders to be interviewed. WPHF's Funding Board was to provide an oversight role of the work undertaken by the MTR Consultant.

III. MAIN FINDINGS

1. RELEVANCE OF THE WPHF

The MTR reviewed the relevance of the WPHF to the needs and priorities of women in fragile contexts, its alignment with donor priorities and its relevance to UN and international commitments.

Relevance to women in fragile contexts: Stakeholders undisputedly reported that the WPHF is “*absolutely an important initiative and most relevant to the needs and priorities of women in fragile states*”¹⁸, and in the countries reviewed by the MTR. It is highly relevant to the work of the CSOs and women-led organizations working in difficult circumstances. It is well aligned with key international resolutions on peace and security such as the landmark UNSCR 1325(2000) and subsequent resolutions¹⁹, and conventions on gender equality to which governments in the five countries/group of countries

¹⁸ Stakeholder interviews

¹⁹ Subsequent resolutions include 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015).

reviewed are signatories. The Fund is aligned with International conventions and instruments on gender equality including the Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and Recommendation 30. The WPHF aligns with the UN General Assembly Resolution on Sustaining Peace 2282 (2016) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs,) and to SDG 5 and SDG 16.

Data from countries reviewed shows that women are disproportionately impacted in conflict and post conflict and humanitarian environments with limited access to resources to effectively lead and participate in these settings. This is evident for instance in gender-based violence as a result of armed conflict in Colombia, economic insecurity for poor Jordanian women and Syrian refugees, women's invisibility in both the development and humanitarian spheres of work that contribute to gender-blind development and response in the Pacific Island countries, and in Iraq, in the many years of conflict women have borne the burden of conflict including being subjected to GBV by ISIS. Women are key actors for change but require assistance and support to rebuild, recover, lead and contribute to the reconstruction of their communities and state. They need an enabling environment²⁰. The WPHF has been responsive and relevant.

While governments have committed to achieving the SDGs, have ratified several international human rights instruments (e.g. CEDAW, BPFA) to promote gender equality and offer legal frameworks addressing gender inequalities, their national contexts show serious discrimination against women and girls in both the public and private spheres.

Relevance to donor priorities and policies: Consulted donors who have contributed to the WPHF reported that their interest in the Fund was due to its alignment with commitments made by their respective governments. The WPHF goals and objectives are well aligned with donor priorities and government policies on WPS. For example, the WPHF objectives are aligned with Austria's 1325 National Action Plan²¹; are very much a part of the WPS agenda of the Australian Government and its National Action Plan 1325; aligned with the Government of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy; with Ireland's third National Action Plan 1325; priority of the UK Government 'Conflict Stability and Security Fund' with gender equality being central. It is also aligned with the UK National Action Plan 1325 on women, peace and security 2018-2022; with Norway's National Action Plan 1325 and with the European Union's (EUs) Strategic Approach to Women, Peace and Security 2018²².

Relevance to UN Women: THE WPHF reflects the priorities of UN Women to drive a global effort to accelerate implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. In the area of women, peace and security, UN Women's coordination and accountability role is recognized specifically in Security Council resolution 2242 (2015). UN Women's specific mandate on WPS is derived from a range of international standards and normative frameworks including the United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs), the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions²³.

2. MANDATE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE WPHF

Review Question: Review the ability of the fund to deliver on its 3 main functions:

²⁰ Annual Narrative Reports and Country Allocation Proposals (Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, and Pacific Island Countries)

²¹ Stakeholder interviews

²² Women, Peace and Security - Council conclusions (10 December 2018).

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/37412/st15086-en18.pdf>

²³ 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015).

- **Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance** by investing in enhancing women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phase of the crisis, peace and security and development continuum.
- **Addressing structural funding gaps for women’s participation** in key phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance.
- **Improving policy coherence and coordination** by complementing existing financial instruments and promoting synergies across all actor’s multilateral, bilateral entities, national governments’ women machineries and local civil society organizations.

WPHF has an ambitious mandate, and “yes it does have the ability to deliver this mandate successfully, it is beginning to happen,” stakeholders reported “but more efforts are needed to deepen and strengthen these functions”. The principle of breaking silos was strongly endorsed “it is s very much needed on the ground in fragile states and using this lens can maximize impact”²⁴. Delivering on this mandate remains work in progress.

▪ **Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance**

At the global level

Breaking silos is a challenge for donors. In stakeholder discussions it was indicated that the very fact of donor funds being channeled through the WPHF has broken silos for donors which have specific streams of funding. However, when their fund contributions are sent to the WPHF these get invested in women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the humanitarian, peace, security and development spectrum given that the WPHF applies a holistic and multidimensional approach²⁵. The importance of transcending these divides is a central pillar of the UN General Assembly Resolution on Sustaining Peace WHS, and of the Grand Bargain²⁶.

It was cited that Canada’s ‘Feminist International Assistance Policy’ is breaking silos (Canada is a donor). The policy recognizes that supporting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is the best way to build a more peaceful, more inclusive and more prosperous world. It works through a multidimensional approach inclusive of greater participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction efforts²⁷.

The WPHF partnership with the Spotlight Initiative is galvanizing stronger synergies between the two initiatives and specific outcomes; WPHF Outcome 5 and the Spotlight Initiative Outcome 6²⁸ and breaking silos (discussed under III, 6.). In addition, the partnership between the public and private sector in the WPHF is a step towards breaking silos.

At the country level

²⁴ Stakeholder interview

²⁵ Stakeholder interviews

²⁶ WPHF Annual Consolidated Report January -December 2016

²⁷ Stakeholder interview , Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/priorities-priorites/policy-politique.aspx?lang=eng

²⁸ WPHF **Outcome 5** protection of women and girl’s human rights safety physical and mental health and security.

Spotlight Annual Report July 2017-March 2018. **Outcome 6:** Women’s rights groups, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending VAWG.

Stakeholders reported that it is in the work of CSOs through projects implemented at the country level where there is a demonstrated breaking of silos between the humanitarian, conflict prevention, peace, security, and development continuum, a few examples of which are given below:

In Burundi: The WPHF has contributed to breaking the silos through engaging and enhancing women's leadership and participation in mutually reinforcing interventions in conflict prevention, economic recovery and peacebuilding. Towards this end it has also broken silos by instituting collaboration and coordination with multiple partners (CSOs and women-led organization, women mediators' nationwide network, government and local authorities, donors, UN agencies, women, men, youth and local communities)²⁹.

In Colombia: The sixteen WPHF approved projects support the state and CSO efforts to strengthen the link between women's rights protection, democratic strengthening and inclusive development towards sustaining peace. They provide an opportunity for the consolidation of territorial peace as set out in the Government's Final Peace Agreement. This allows for increased engagement of women and integration of women's voices in peacebuilding initiatives and early warning systems, an aspect very much needed at the Colombian local level. Both participation of women in peacebuilding and reconciliation, and in addressing socio-economic gaps is breaking silos and will create stronger communities with the know-how and tools to work in the context of crisis, transition, recovery and development³⁰.

In Jordan: A CSO partner has supported the founding and launch of the Jordanian National Forum (JoNaF) which is at the forefront of humanitarian response and development efforts in Jordan.

Stakeholders cited that silos are being broken through JoNaF, a coalition of different national, non-governmental, civil society and community-based organizations working with national and local governmental actors and decision-makers, including government such as the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Planning, Senate and Municipalities. JoNaF aims to change the ways in which humanitarian organizations operate and respond to the humanitarian crisis. It is viewed as having the potential to impact policy across the humanitarian and development nexus and advocates for common positions breaking down the silos between the various groups involved in humanitarian and development responses. The Forum supports programmes serving the needs of both vulnerable refugee and host communities that are impacted by conflict³¹.

In Pacific island countries: The CSO projects supported by the WPHF are breaking silos between development and humanitarian efforts and addressing the gender barriers in leadership and participation by actively engaging women in humanitarian and development efforts. Each of the projects provides capacity development, training, information platforms and gender specific services during disasters. Cumulatively, these projects have contributed in giving greater recognition to women in the disaster risk reduction and response spheres, addressing women's protection needs and showcasing women led innovations that are missing from development conversations³².

In Iraq: WPHF supported projects are breaking silos between peace, security, humanitarian and development efforts by empowering women and girls as peacemakers and peacebuilders to increase peaceful coexistence and dialogue in Iraq and to counter-extremism and violence, including gender-based violence³³.

²⁹ Burundi Case Study October 2019

³⁰ Annual Narrative Report 2017, Colombia.

³¹ Stakeholder interviews and Annual Narrative Report 2018, Jordan.

³² Stakeholder interviews and Annual Narrative Report 2018, Fiji Multi Country Office, 2018.

³³ Stakeholder interviews and Annual Narrative Report 2018, Iraq.

▪ **Addressing structural funding gaps for women's participation**

Stakeholders reported that CSOs and women-led organizations in the five countries/group of countries reviewed in the MTR lack adequate funding for women related programmes in conflict and post- conflict contexts and especially at the local level. This has seriously impeded their capacities to address and mitigate the effects of conflicts and in enabling them to effectively engage in decision-making, lead in preventing conflicts, promote economic recovery, dialogue and peacebuilding.

Not only is the Fund bridging the financing gaps, but it is strengthening the institutional capacity of local women's organizations as effective grassroots agents for change and *"giving greater visibility and legitimacy to the important role of CSOs"*³⁴.

While there are other funding mechanisms such as the Peace Building Fund (PBF) administered by the UN Peace Building Support Office (PBSO)³⁵ which has a funding window for CSOs through its gender and youth promotion initiative, it works primarily with the UN and international NGOs. Many of the small and locally based CSOs do not meet the requirements of the PBSO where grants for individual organizations range from USD 300,000 to USD 800, 000 and are accompanied with more complex procedures"³⁶. The WPHF complements this existing mechanism.

In Jordan, the WPHF bridges the gap in funding for economic opportunities, combatting protection risks, and empowering women. Well-structured proposals related to women, peace and security, while a new issue is important, but WPHF is the only current opportunity in the country for funding in this area³⁷. Similarly, it was found that in the Pacific island countries *"the Fund is first of its kind allowing women-led CSOs to access funding making a whole world of difference as there are not many funding streams"*³⁸. It was also emphasized that besides funding much remains to be done including a stronger focus in capacity building and truly empowering women and creating more equitable and peaceful societies.

Stakeholders indicated that the WPHF has addressed an important funding gap. For many women's organizations it is the first time that they can access donor funds that meet their requirements³⁹. A 100 percent of funds from the WPHF are allocated to local CSOs.

▪ **Improving policy coherence and coordination:**

The Funding Board as a multi partner platform provides a relevant forum for coordination on policy issues, one being the policy focus in reaching out to CSOs and women's grassroots organizations and building their capacity to achieve WPHF objectives and goals. It is in this space that policy coherence and coordination is evident.

Similarly, the Steering Committee at country level provides a multi partner platform for policy coordination and is a potential ground for improving policy coherence. For example, in Jordan, the need for the WPHF to align with government policies and priorities that emphasize stronger synergies between humanitarian responses and longer-term development priorities has potential for improved coordination

³⁴ Stakeholder interview

³⁵ The Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) was established to assist and support the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with strategic advice and policy guidance, administer the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and to support the Secretary-General in coordinating United Nations agencies in their peacebuilding efforts.

³⁶ Stakeholder interview

³⁷ GAI country Allocation Proposal 1 January 2017 -December 31, 2019, Jordan.

³⁸ Stakeholder interview

³⁹ Ibid

with the WPHF projects. It is an added opportunity for the WPHF to influence more gender responsive policies and advocate for a key role by CSOs.

In Burundi, among others, *synergies* and coordination have been promoted between the WPHF in its collaboration in an UNFPA/UNDP/UN Women joint initiative on the “*Contribution of young adults to strengthen peace in the electoral period*”⁴⁰ including the Ministry of Culture and Sports and ten civil society organizations.

The MTR finds that improving policy coherence and coordination has begun to happen, it is expected to increase with time and is an area of the WPHF to be strengthened and where more efforts will be required.

3. PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

Review Question: Review the theory of change and results framework

The WPHF theory of change (TOC) designed in 2016 (in Box 1.) is a comprehensive and integrated approach guided by UN Women’s programme on WPS and a series of commitments to women’s rights as set out in UN Security Council Resolutions and International Conventions and Commitments. The TOC addresses in a holistic way the multidimensional issues of women’s leadership, participation and decision making in conflict prevention and resolution, humanitarian responses, economic recovery, protection from all forms of human rights violations including sexual and gender-based violence and the need for an enabling environment. It includes strengthening national accountability for implementation of the WPS commitments to achieve transformative change

The WPHF Goal: More peaceful and gender equal societies

Box 1. Theory of Change of the Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund

The WPHF interventions are anchored in a strong theory of change. The following brief excerpt is from the Terms of Reference:

- If (1) an enabling environment for implementation of WPS commitments is created;
- if (2) women participate in decision-making processes related to conflict prevention, crisis response and the negotiation of peace in a quality manner;
- if (3) the safety, physical and mental health and economic security of women and girls are assured, their human rights respected, and their specific needs met in peacebuilding and recovery process;
- then (4) societies will be more peaceful and gender equal; because (5) evidence shows that women are drivers of peace, inclusive societies are more likely to be stable, and post-conflict settings are opportunities to address underlying gender inequality barriers.

Source: Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Terms of Reference updated May 2019, Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, A United Nations and Civil Society Partnership

The following six outcomes drive the TOC⁴¹:

- Outcome 1: An enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments
- Outcome 2: Women’s participation in decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention:

⁴⁰ Burundi Case Study October 2019
⁴¹ WPHF Operations Manual updated, May 2019.

Outcome 3: Gender inclusive and responsive humanitarian/crisis response

Outcome 4: Increased women's representation and leadership in formal and informal peace negotiations

Outcome 5: Protection of women and girls' human rights, safety, physical and mental health and security

Outcome 6: Promotion of economic recovery through peacebuilding and political participation.

Results Framework

The WPHF results framework translates the TOC into an operational matrix setting out the goal, outcomes, outputs and corresponding indicators. The Funding Board decisions on Fund investments and the decisions by the Country level Steering Committee on WPHF projects are guided by the TOC and results framework. Within its funding allocation, the steering committees select outcomes from the TOC that are relevant for the country, and in practice this has meant selecting two outcomes.

The findings show that Outcomes are inconsistently stated between the TOC and the results framework in the Call for Proposals.

Examples of outcomes being stated inconsistently:

Outcome 1: An enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments (WPHF Theory of Change, Operations Manual, 2019).

Outcome 1: National strategies, financing and accountability mechanisms are in place for the implementation of women, peace and security commitments. (WPHF Results Matrix, Call for Proposals).

Outcome 2: Conflict prevention: women participate in and inform decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention. (WPHF Theory of Change, Operations Manual, 2019).

Outcome 2: National and regional conflict prevention systems are gender sensitive. (WPHF Results Matrix, Call for Proposals).

According to the WPHF Operations Manual (page 23) the WPHFs results framework "will be revised every three years". The MTR (as per the Terms of Reference) reviewed the extent to which the said frameworks are relevant, valid and applied in the country context towards achieving the overall WPHF goal. Consultations with all stakeholders at global and national level on this subject revealed divergent views and the findings are summarized below.

A high percentage of stakeholders consulted noted considerable strength in the design of the TOC which is a comprehensive and multidimensional approach addressing women's leadership and participation across the humanitarian, peace, security and development continuum. The TOC was found to be a relevant guide including by country level stakeholders responsible for the WPHF. However, it was pointed out that outcomes in the TOC and results framework need to be consistent, adjusted and rephrased. From a results-based management (RBM) perspective the results framework requires further improvements as regards the formulation of results and indicators which need to be specific and measurable, both qualitative and quantitative and harmonized with adjusted TOC outcomes.

- A few stakeholders (3) stated that they were not well familiarized with the TOC and results framework.
- **The TOC and Results Framework are relevant and valid:** A large number close to 65 percent of those interviewed found the TOC and results framework to be a "relevant, valid tool, it provides a focus and a common vision". "It is comprehensive and creates a space to carry out a number of activities – this is good". "It is very important to have the TOC as a broad and flexible framework for all the WPHF countries, it works well in our context and we are able to set out our own national priorities within the six outcomes". The TOC "resonates with the situation women face in fragile states". The global TOC and results framework "design lends coherence to the work of the WPHF across countries, its flexibility is

critical.” In the Burundi context “it is very relevant and works well”. The TOC is well constructed as “an overarching framework encompassing 6 outcomes that contribute to peaceful and gender equitable societies, allow for a range of work across the nexus of humanitarian, peace, security and development. The outcomes are intrinsically linked and well connected”. In the Pacific islands for example “we have selected Outcome 3 and 5 as these objectives closely match the needs of women and girls in the Pacific and our proposals are aligned to the outcomes”⁴².

- **The TOC and Results Framework needs improvement:** Among other stakeholders (remaining 35 percent) a range of views were expressed that the outcomes need to be “better rephrased” though no specific modifications were offered. “There was need to perhaps combine Outcome 2 on conflict prevention with Outcome 4 on conflict resolution. Outcome 1 on an enabling environment was cross cutting and needed to be adjusted accordingly”⁴³. One of the issues pointed out was that indicators for conflict prevention and peace building are not easy to design in tangible terms. “What is most required is guidance to country offices and capacity building of CSOs in aligning the TOC and results framework as some CSOs struggle to work with these tools which may not be as simple and easy for small women’s organizations”⁴⁴.

Stakeholders reported that it is not the design of the TOC or results framework, but rather the issue lies in the monitoring and reporting of results. This is because of weak M&E capacity at the country level among the CSOs including the Management Entities (MEs) in terms of human and financial resources to lead on a robust RBM and monitoring system”⁴⁵. In addition, several stakeholders emphasized the need for *quantitative and qualitative indicators* in the Results Framework to capture not only the numbers reached but the qualitative changes (see example below) that result for women in fragile contexts and difficult community situations. “Donors need to be presented with a strong case of value for money”⁴⁶. The reporting on the WPHF has been on a quantitative scale thus far.

- **Views and suggestions to improve the theory of change and Results Framework:** Concrete views and suggestions have been provided by a key stakeholder in a well thought out paper prepared, that provides insights on the TOC and Results Framework⁴⁷. Among others, it includes the need for the TOC to:
 - “Include a problem statement, assumptions (with supporting evidence) and external factors (such as the political environment, governance issues, climate change), and write it out in a narrative format.
 - Incorporate the terms of reference objectives of the fund (**on breaking down silos, addressing funding gaps and increasing policy coherence**).
 - Create a new template for implementers to use in designing their project results frameworks, with new guidance. **Ask them to adopt the Fund-level outcome as their country-level impact, and to identify specific, measurable, achievable outcomes for their projects that can be delivered within the timescale of their funding.**
 - Encourage them to adopt **qualitative as well as quantitative indicators**. For example, in addition to the ‘number of women and girls that receive justice, health and psychical-social support’, include a second indicator to measures the **quality of the service provided (e.g. service satisfaction scores)**”.

⁴² Stakeholder interviews

⁴³ Stakeholder interview

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ Stakeholder interview

⁴⁷ Review of the monitoring and reporting of the Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

Peter Riddelsdell, M&E Adviser, Multilateral Policy Department, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London. 24 July 2019.

The said paper points out other issues: “Country-level indicator-based performance assessment (included in the annual reports) are heavily dominated by output indicators. Results statements, indicators and means of verification often appear in the wrong boxes. Indicators are often inappropriate for the results they are supposed to measure”⁴⁸.

Given these stakeholder perspectives, the MTR found that from a results-based management (RBM) perspective⁴⁹ consistency and harmonization would enhance these important tools in the formulation of the outcomes and indicators and give greater consistency to them. Some steps are suggested below:

Steps to be taken

- Revisit the TOC and the results framework, update, revise and rephrase the outcomes building on the suggestion provided above, but preserving the *multidimensional and holistic approach and its demand-led nature* that is the value added of the WPHF. Clarify that it is a generic framework for the WPHF.
- Revise and rephrase the indicators in the results framework to reflect a results-based perspective and ensure that indicators measure planned results and are well aligned.

For example, as seen in the existing results framework:

Result statement	Outcome indicator
Outcome 6: The socio-economic recovery of women is promoted in post-conflict situations	Labour force participation rate for persons aged 15+, by sex.

The outcome indicator above does not seem well matched for Outcome 6.

A more likely indicator could be – *Increased numbers of women with the knowledge and skills for employment, and an increase in women - led and managed sustainable economic initiatives in the post-conflict context.*

- Ensure consistency and harmonization in the language of the outcomes both in the TOC and in the results framework and in the Call for Proposals used by countries (in other WPHF documents and materials as well).
- Maintain existing flexibility for countries and CSOs to adopt two outcomes from the adjusted global results framework) making this the impact for civil society so they can report on their own outcomes and design their own projects. They should apply a results-based management perspective to ensure coherence with the global framework and at the same time to reflect relevant country priorities and contribute to national ownership of the WPHF
- For the WPHF Secretariat reporting by CSOs on outcomes would provide a higher level of results and enable assessment of progress on results in a more systematic and meaningful manner.
- In the above context, CSOs need to design their own outcomes and outputs that can be managed within a given time frame for the projects. . Indicators should be *specific, measurable, achievable, a qualitative and quantitative* to reflect changes being sought.

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Results- based management is an important strategy in the UN system for an integrated approach to project and programme management, including planning, monitoring for results and evaluation.

https://www.unodc.org/documents/SDGs/UNODC_Handbook_on_Results_Based_Management.pdf
<https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/UNDG-RBM-Handbook-2012.pdf>

- Include assumptions and risks based on an analysis of the country conflict context.
- **Most importantly** the WPHF Secretariat and the M&E Specialist recommended, should provide new guidance to the Management Entities (MEs) and they in turn to the CSOs in using the adjusted global results framework. The TOC and results framework should be accompanied with a capacity building component, workshops and training to ensure that MEs at the country level and CSOs applying for the WPHF projects are fully oriented to the adjusted TOC and Results Framework and also to results based monitoring. Mentoring for CSOs by MEs may be essential.

Quality of Monitoring and Reporting

As pointed out by stakeholders and given in the Operations Manual, the WPHF follows a reporting system that includes:

- CSOs at country level report to the Management Entity based on the rules and regulations of the ME. In the case of UN Women, it has been through quarterly narrative and financial reporting.
- ME submit annual reports to the WPHF Secretariat. A narrative report must include numbers of direct beneficiaries (girls, women, boys and men) and indirect beneficiaries; a narrative report on the outcome and outputs; lessons learned; and an example of ‘a story that has been important to your Programme in the reporting period.’ All the country reports as well as the Secretariat report on the use of the direct costs are uploaded on the MPTFO gateway.
- The Secretariat consolidates all the reports and produces an annual narrative report.
- The financial report is produced by MPTFO.
- The consolidated annual financial report and the consolidated narrative report are then submitted to the Funding Board. This involves the Secretariat liaising with the MPTFO, responsibilities which have been effectively carried out.
- The MPTFO uploads the consolidated narrative and financial reports on the project page of its Gateway website.

Box 2. Finding coherence and balance in the TOC and results framework in different country contexts

Given the different fragile country contexts in which the WPHF operates, a balance is sought between ensuring coherence and comparability of efforts and at the same time maintaining the flexibility in the WPHF projects developed in different contexts which is the hallmark of the WPHF approach.

A TOC and common results framework provide structure and guidance in this regard, outlining key elements of a holistic gender responsive and multidimensional approach that the WPHF applies. At the same time, country level flexibility for specific outputs and activities and CSO partners to work with, is important for national ownership and needs to be better harmonized.

It was noted that country annual progress reports for WPHF were uniformly structured and this uniformity of progress reports allows for comparability across countries.

Management Entities at the country level are responsible for monitoring project activities in line with the project results framework. The monitoring should include regular follow up with CSOs, field visits and regular reporting. At the Fund level, the global Technical Secretariat is responsible for monitoring progress on behalf of the Funding Board, through the regular project level reporting and field visits.

Findings from stakeholder consultations show that the quality of reporting was uneven and sometimes difficult given that often *“outcomes/outputs, activities and indicators are not systematically arranged. Outputs may read as an activity”*⁵⁰ such as “61 community members were trained on establishing

⁵⁰ Stakeholder interview

community committees for women” but does not mention if committees were established⁵¹. Project reporting templates do not adequately encourage an analysis of achievements and learnings from activities implemented. Some stakeholders indicated that reports were satisfactory but that for the most part have been activity oriented and quantitative, and donors are keen to know the concrete results achieved. *“While lots of activity is visible, it does not bring an understanding of the overall achievements of the Fund against its stated objectives”*⁵². Projects implemented very recently were only able to report on their activities. The quality of reporting has significant implications for the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting system of the WPHF.

In volatile security situations as in Iraq, staff are often unable to make regular field visits particularly to remote areas where CSOs are working. Monitoring presents challenges in the Pacific because of the distances to travel across the islands, costs and time involved. *“In the Pacific region the UN Women Office has tried to provide additional support in terms of monitoring, evaluation and capturing stories, and in improving the CSO results frameworks which are often inconsistent. However, this exercise remains unfunded and where we have provided support, this has happened through funding through other ongoing activities. The overall design for WPHF should consider funding for building in reflection, monitoring, lessons learned exercises for individual projects and across the programme as a whole”*⁵³.

The MTR noted that in all countries, the capacities of implementing partners especially of community-based organizations) to systematically collect, analyze, and report on activities and results were limited. The technical and financial capacity of the UN Women Management entities are constrained.

The need for an RBM perspective and a robust M&E system has been highlighted by stakeholders at the global and country level including being emphasized by the NSC in Jordan⁵⁴ as an important investment to be made by the WPHF.

Review Question: Review the impact and progress made to date in the WPHF supported countries

This section of the MTR highlights findings on the progress and impact of the WPHF supported projects in 5 countries/group of countries (Burundi, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan and the Pacific island countries), significant achievements and impact. It draws on stakeholder consultations and the country progress reports and the WPHF Annual Reports.

Table 1. A Snapshot: Countries, Outcomes, Project Starting Dates and Approved Budgets ⁵⁵

COUNTRIES	OUTCOMES	Project Start Date	APPROVED BUDGET (real time)
Burundi	<p>Outcome 2: Women’s meaningful participation in conflict prevention</p> <p>Outcome 6: Peace building and economic recovery</p>	2016	USD 1,974,047
Colombia	Outcome 4: Conflict Resolution, increased women’s representation in leadership in formal and informal peace negotiations	2017	USD 2,000,000

⁵¹ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018 and stakeholder interview
⁵² Stakeholder interview
⁵³ Stakeholder interview
⁵⁴ Country level Steering Committee Meeting, 25, September 2018.
⁵⁵ Stakeholder interviews & WPHF Annual Country Reports and Consolidated Reports

	Outcome 6: Peace building and economic recovery		
Iraq	Outcome 1: Enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments Outcome 2: Women’s meaningful participation in conflict prevention	2018	USD 5, 070,200,
Jordan	Outcome 3: Women and girls affected by crisis, lead participate and benefit from relief and response efforts & meaningful participation in conflict prevention Outcome 6: The socio-economic recovery of women is promoted in post-conflict situations	2017	USD 999, 789
Pacific islands: Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Palau, Samoa	Outcome 3: Gender inclusive humanitarian response Outcome 5: Protection of women and girls’ human rights, safety, physical and mentally	2017	USD 1, 994, 095
Approved Budget for 5 countries/group of countries (2016-2019)			USD 12, 083, 131
NOTE: Funds provided to Burundi in 2016 (as explained below)			USD 700, 000
TOTAL			USD 12,783,131

(Source for approved budgets <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>)

Table 1. shows that investments in five countries/group of countries total USD 12, 083, 131 to date. It should be noted that *the approved budget for Burundi shown in Table 1. does not include USD 700, 000 which was provided in 2016 prior to the Fund being set up, and does not show up in the system* <http://mptf.Undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>.

Outcomes have been selected by countries from the WPHF theory of change and results framework as relevant to the country situation and are as follows: Outcome 1 Iraq, Outcome 2 Burundi and Iraq, Outcome 3 Jordan and the Pacific island countries, Outcome 4 Colombia, Outcome 5 Pacific island countries, Outcome 6 Burundi, Colombia and Jordan. The political, social, economic, humanitarian and development context in each country is different and distinct and this has a differential impact on project implementation and results. Each of the countries is at a different stage in project implementation.

“In some countries the Fund has cooperated longer, and results are more evident as in the case of Burundi. In other countries that have embarked on projects more recently a longer time will be needed to realize results and impact”⁵⁶.

Stakeholder consultations and WPHF reports show that a total of fifty six CSOs implemented 41 projects in the countries reviewed. A list of the CSOs is attached in **Annex 4**. Overall it was assessed that countries have made positive and good progress in implementing activities towards the outputs defined and are working towards outcomes which remain to be achieved.

BURUNDI: Women lead and participate in conflict prevention, early warning and economic recovery

Burundi remains in a state of protracted conflict with poor governance, socio-economic instability and a high incidence of poverty. Many have fled to seek refuge in the region, while others struggle to find peace

⁵⁶ Stakeholder interview

and security within the country.

In Burundi, WPHF has worked with 9 CSOs since 2016 to support a nation-wide network of 534 women mediators in efforts on conflict prevention, effective early warning and peacebuilding and economic recovery efforts across all 18 provinces of Burundi.

This powerful network of women mediators' functions as a women-led, community-based early warning system that has helped to **address 21,800 local conflicts** since the programme's inception and successfully engaged **1.5 million community members in dialogues** on peace and security and socio-economic recovery

Impact:

Impact is noted in that a well-structured nationwide women mediators' network has prevented conflicts and sustained peace through engaging 1.5 million people in a country of a little more than 11 million people. (*The Burundi Case study provides more details on the progress and impacts⁵⁷*).

COLOMBIA: Empowering women in conflict resolution, increased women's representation in leadership in formal and informal peace negotiations and in economic recovery efforts

Decades of conflict and various negotiations have resulted in a Peace Agreement signed in November 2016 between the Colombian Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia guerrilla group (FARC). This Peace agreement contains important gender provisions to address grave inequalities in the country.

In Colombia, WPHF supports women's meaningful participation in the implementation of the peace agreement and projects to ensure women's active engagement in economic recovery efforts.

WPHF supports 16 ongoing projects with civil society organizations (10 implemented by women's organizations, 4 by indigenous and afro-Colombian organizations; 11 out 16 implementing partners are community-based organizations).

Key results

Specific project results include:

- Strengthened women's participation in implementation of peace agreements.
- **976 women and 204 men** have benefited from local economic empowerment initiatives as a result of trainings supported by WPHF projects. WPHF funding has also contributed to the establishment of two Funds to provide credit for economic initiatives led by women resulting in the launch of **35 local savings and credit groups**, directly benefiting **358 women and 145 men in** conflict-affected communities.
- 16 women in 16 municipalities of the country will run in the departmental and local elections of 2019 as result of trainings supported by the WPHF.
- One pact was signed on the protection and guarantee of the rights of women to a life free of violence.
- It is estimated that 4,484 people in conflict-affected areas have benefited directly from WPHF (80 per cent women and girls); which includes participants in several trainings, dialogues, mediation and prevention of GBV trainings.
- Over 12,000 indirect beneficiaries (80 percent of women and girls) have been reached through the projects.
- Over USD 1 million in 2018 was delivered (over US\$ 1.3 million disbursed to CSOs).

⁵⁷ Burundi Case Study, December 2019 (Midterm Review)

Early Impact:

A most significant early impact reported in Colombia is that the WPHF projects have opened opportunities for women to be part of an important Peace Agreement, women's voices are being heard and it is changing their lives. Women are empowered and running for elected office which is a significant and important development at the community level. Economic recovery has increased women's income and resources as they have no other access to funds, but what is not clear is the sustainability of these income activities which would likely need more time ⁵⁸.

IRAQ: Enabling the implementation of WPS commitments and women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention

The experiences of women and girls in Iraq have been dramatically shaped by decades of war, protracted conflict, violent extremism and displacement. Women's contribution and voices have remained low in negotiations and development of peace strategies.

In Iraq, WPHF is financing CSO projects that support an enabling environment for the implementation of the government's WPS commitments, while providing funding for women's deepened engagement and leadership in conflict prevention and responding to violent extremism.

WPHF has supported 14 CSOs and 8 projects in Iraq since 2018. It is funding grassroots projects that are strengthening the implementation of the Iraqi National Action Plan (INAP) 1325 at both Federal and Kurdistan levels.

Key interventions and results

- **40 women trained** on monitoring, evaluation, and accountability mechanisms to ensure government WPS commitments.
- A total of **20 women CSO members** were trained on UNSCR 1325 and early-warning signs of conflict, and **61 community members** were trained on establishing community committees for women. WPHF financing also contributed to the training of **50 women journalists** on UNSCR 1325 and women's enhanced participation in peacebuilding.
- **1,324** women and girls received legal and psychological support and benefited from peacebuilding awareness raising campaigns
- WPHF funding has contributed to more meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, **benefiting 2,230 people** across the country.
- Support has been provided towards women's participation in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, with a total of USD 2 million invested. In addition to the above several other activities were implemented which are detailed in the Annual Progress Report of Iraq 2018.

Early Impact:

It is too early to ascertain the full impact of the projects in Iraq. Nevertheless, stakeholder discussions indicated that a most important early impact has been the "*visibility and voice of women in public fora*". and recognition of their key roles. Very conservative women are empowered and speaking out, this has long been overdue. For example, one woman at a meeting spoke of the miserable conditions she was able

⁵⁸ Stakeholder interview

to overcome. “Through training activities and creation of platforms women’s voices have been amplified. This is bringing about changes in community life and more importantly empowering women”⁵⁹.

In addition, SAWA CSO involved police officers/religious men and community leaders (key community influencers) plus women from local community to discuss the main issues through expressing problems they faced and their needs for a better future. Targeting key community leaders, and raising local awareness is having an impact at the community level bringing about changes in perceptions towards women”⁶⁰.



Women in discussions with police officers and religious leaders -Photo UN Women Iraq

JORDAN: Ensuring women and girls’ safety and security and the socio-economic recovery of women is promoted in post conflict situations

Since the Syrian conflict erupted in 2011, neighboring Jordan has become a host country for countless Syrians seeking refuge, many of who are women and girls who face critical challenges and barriers to life-saving services and information. Women, both Syrian and Jordanian face higher levels of employment than men and are less well protected by Social Security. Female headed households are disproportionately represented amongst both the Syrian and Jordanian poor⁶¹.

In Jordan, WPHF is investing in joint economic empowerment initiatives of women Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities in 5 Governates, while supporting 5 CSO projects working to protect the rights of women and girls in Jordan including against sexual and gender-based violence.

Key Results

- WPHF supported projects have benefited a total of **6,162 women and girls among Syrian refugee and Jordanian host communities** through the establishment of clinics on sexual and reproductive health and trainings on emergency contraception, early-marriage prevention, psychosocial services and legal support.
- The Jordan National Forum for Women (JNFW) undertook interventions to support marginalized and vulnerable refugees and Jordanian women in host communities by enhancing their employability and skills and by linking them to potential employment opportunities as well as reducing exposure to negative coping mechanisms. The project targeted women’s vocational and employment skills ensuring these were market oriented and created linkages with potential private sector employers. Though 350 jobs were secured for beneficiaries only 75 jobs were accepted as many women shied away, citing social stigma.
- 80 percent of 238 women have increased knowledge of their legal rights and confidence in navigating the Jordanian legal system as a result of one-on-one legal consultation sessions (1252 sessions) provided in Mafrq and Irbid over the course of 2018.
- Networks of women were formed who have similar skills to mutually support each other in establishing their own small businesses.

⁵⁹ Stakeholder interview

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ GAI Country Allocation Proposal, Jordan , 1 January -December 2019.

Early Impact:

- Jordanian host communities and Syrian refugee women have benefited from sexual and reproductive health services not previously in their reach; and women have improved confidence to access the justice system.
- The WPHF projects opened new market-oriented opportunities to women but social stigmas about women’s employment led to limited results.

THE PACIFIC: Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Palau, Samoa

Increasing participation of women in humanitarian planning and programming; and protection of women and girls’ human rights, safety, physical and mental health and security

The humanitarian situation in the Pacific is marked by a range of increasingly urgent natural disasters, such as cyclones and volcanic eruptions in which women are playing crucial roles in local community responses. Gender based violence is a serious problem requiring responses to focus on women and girl’s safety and security.

In the Pacific region, WPHF is supporting women’s enhanced engagement in humanitarian action as well as their protection against sexual and gender-based violence across Fiji, Palau, Tonga, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu. In total, the WPHF has supported eight CSO partners in five countries in the Pacific Islands.

Key results

- WPHF projects are contributing to women’s deepened engagement in humanitarian action, technical trainings for women spanning early-warning systems, emergency preparedness, crisis response and recovery.
- WPHF-supported projects are helping to mainstream gender in humanitarian action, financing technical trainings for grassroots women on planning for and responding to SGBV in emergencies. For example, WPHF funding allowed OXFAM to advocate for the increased priority of gender and protection within disaster management frameworks at a National level and build capacity to mainstream gender into humanitarian response efforts. These national and localized efforts are designed to ultimately increase the number and influence of women in decision-making structures relating to disaster management at a Provincial level.
- The Provincial Disaster Offices in Guadalcanal and Temotu (Solomon Islands) agreed to have at least 30 per cent of committees chaired by women from different sectors. Six women were elected to be chairs and co-chairs of their village disaster committees.
- Medical Services Pacific (MSP) has undertaken the, “Protecting Our Women Engaging Rights” (POWER) project to respond in preventing GBV and extend services for survivors’. Power Project delivers confidential Sexual and Reproductive Health Services (SRHR) services through the One-Stop Shop and Rapid Response Team in the Northern Division and the team is on standby to respond rapidly to disasters, epidemics to respond to the needs of SGBV survivors at their locations.
- WPHF-funded programming has directly served **11, 573 women and girls**, reached a total of over 20,150



Womanitarian training in action
-UN Women MCO Fiji

women, girls, men, boys and benefitted 1,9 million people across Fiji, Palau, the Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu⁶².

Early Impact:

The projects have contributed to increased numbers of women and girls from the community, local government and national CSOs acquiring the knowledge, confidence and skills and being empowered to participate in emergency preparedness and humanitarian response efforts. This has been “tested” in real time. Women who were trained have participated in response to disasters which happened after the trainings . Women feel safer and are more empowered through important access to SRHR services and responses to SGBV survivors.

Stakeholder discussions confirmed that the engagement of men and boys who also participated in trainings is crucial to increase their understandings of gender and protection issues and the importance of identifying and responding to them in an emergency. While not an intended outcome of the project, there are indications that this has contributed to creating male advocates to support women responders within provincial government and at community level.

Review Question: Assess the catalytic nature of the fund and its influence on policy making at the national and international levels

Influencing global policy: Stakeholders indicated that the process of policy development is ongoing. It may be too early to assess the catalytic effect and influence that the WPHF is having at the global or country level. It has heightened the conversation and attention on inclusion of civil society and small women-led organizations to participate and lead on critical issues encompassing humanitarian, peace, security and development actions. This is visible in that donors are supporting WPHF initiatives and that is catalytic. The proactive communications strategy of the WPHF also contributes to influencing policies⁶³.

The WPHF has influenced global policy on the Grand Bargain and localization through joint advocacy with UN Women and member states (such as Norway) which influenced the localization workstream’s agenda and work. The Grand Bargain localization relates to increased support and funding tools for local and national responders in humanitarian action. WPHF interventions at local level demonstrate a concrete response to the Humanitarian Summit.

Another example of policy influence includes: The Secretary General has asked WPHF to open a rapid response window to support women’s participation in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements. The WPHF is currently working on the design of this window. This rapid response concept includes facilitating and funding women's access to peace negotiations through support for travel, childcare, providing safe spaces for their discussions and thus enabling their increased and meaningful participation. The idea is that when a peace talk is scheduled, we have the instrument to react quickly and help the women get to those spaces. The exact details are still to be determined⁶⁴. This demonstrates that after 3 years of operations the WPHF has strongly established itself as a credible instrument in the field of women, peace and security and humanitarian action, and as a useful mechanism to help solve challenges identified by the international community.

⁶² Annual Progress Report 2018, UN women Multi country Office Fiji

⁶³ Stakeholder interviews

⁶⁴ Stakeholder interview.

Influencing national policy: Building a strong body of evidence on the ground and strengthening gender responsive projects can enhance the WPHF influence on policy. In this context increased cooperation and more deliberate efforts with governments are required to influence policies⁶⁵.

It is too early to report on major policy influences at country level and there was no mention of specific policies that have been influenced. The MTR found that the work of the nationwide network of women peace mediators in Burundi has resonated well and has the potential to influence government policy. This is with regards to the strategic importance of CSOs and women mediators at the community level in preventing conflict and driving positive changes in peacebuilding and economic recovery.

The Burundi initiative has contributed to influencing an important ban on 'Concubinage' in the country. In Colombia one pact was signed on the protection and guarantee of the rights of women to a life free of violence.

Review question: Include a case study on the impact reached by the Fund in Burundi

The Burundi Case Study is included as a separate report of the Midterm Review.

4. THE WPHF GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Review Question: Review the set-up of the Fund, its structure

The set-up of the Fund and its structure

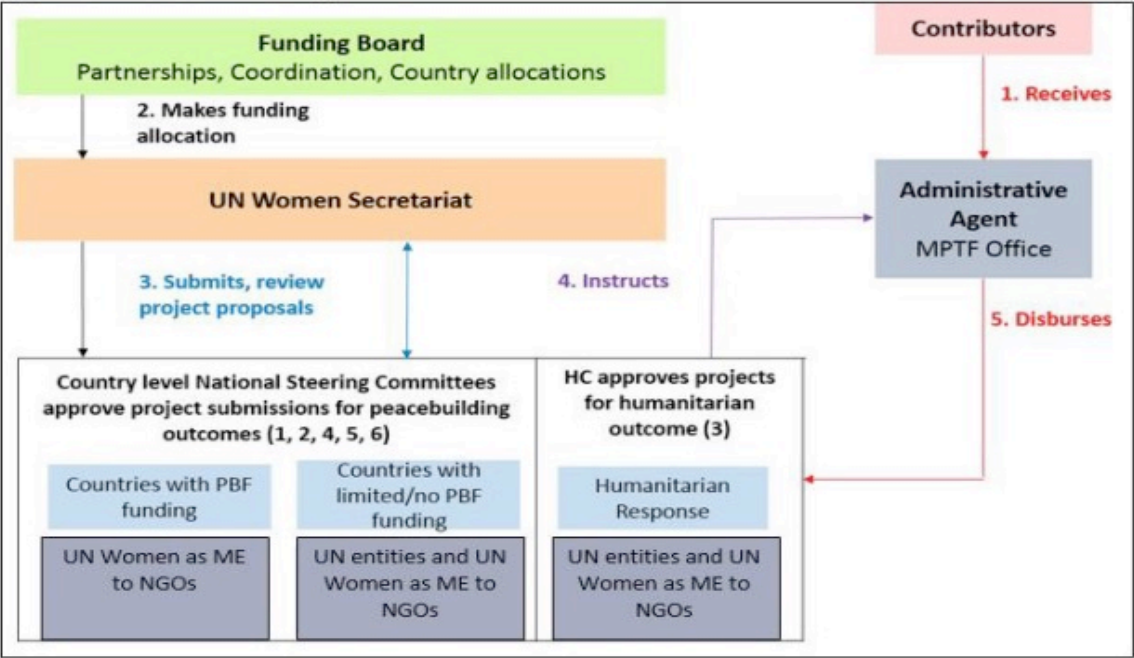
The WPHF was launched in February 2016 as a multi-partner trust fund including partnership between Member States, the United Nations and civil society. The Fund became fully operational in October 2016. The fund governance has three levels: 1) Partnership coordination and country allocations and fund operations (Funding Board, National Steering Committees and Secretariat); 2) Fund design and administration (MPTF Office); and 3) fund implementation (implementing organizations).

The global oversight mechanism (Funding Board) and country specific steering committees ensure flexibility and country ownership. The WPHF Secretariat ensures operational support for the Board⁶⁶.

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ More details of the Governance and Management Structure and the roles and responsibilities of the different entities are included in the WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019 pages 7-22.

Figure 2. A summary of the WPHF governance arrangements



Source: Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund, Operations Manual, May 2019.

GLOBAL LEVEL

The Funding Board

At the global level the Funding Board is comprised of 12 members represented by Member states, UN agencies and civil society organizations: Four representatives of the largest contributors to the WPHF serve on an annual rotational basis.

The 2019 WPHF funding Board membership comprises:

- Governments: Austria, Canada, the Netherlands and Norway,
- Four civil society representatives self-nominated on a biennial rotating basis: Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Civil Society Action Network on women’s rights, peace and Security (ICAN) , Transitional Justice Institute , and Women Enabled International
- Four UN bodies currently include UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and the PBSO
- The Funding Board nominates the Chair on a biennial basis, a position currently held by UNFPA.

Box 3. Funding Board – roles and responsibilities

- Provides a platform for partnerships, coordination advocacy and resource mobilization.
- Provides oversight including on countries’ eligibility and the Fund’s investment.
- Provides strategic directions based on the WPHF theory of change and results framework.
- Authorizes that Administrative Agent to allocate funds to eligible countries and to UN Women managing projects at global and country level.
- Monitors progress of the WPHF.

Details of the Funding Board responsibilities are given in the WPHF Operations Manual, pages 8-12.

WPHF Global Technical Secretariat

UN Women acts as the WPHF Technical Secretariat, thus ensuring that dedicated funding is accompanied by technical expertise, political support, and the appropriate partnerships. UN Women coordinates with the rest of the UN system through the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee on WPS. As the WPHF Technical Secretariat at the global level, it provides technical support to the Board in managing the Fund on a day-to-day basis. The WPHF Technical Secretariat at the global level has major functions highlighted below with *numerous* responsibilities under each of its major functions which are elaborated in the WPHF Operations Manual⁶⁷ and briefly outlined below in Box 4.

Box 4. WPHF Global Technical Secretariat – roles and responsibilities

It is important to state that the WPHF Secretariat has major and multiple responsibilities, a few of which are listed below.

- Management of all WPHF operational activities.
- Planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation of the Fund portfolio.
- Liaison with the Administrative agent on submission of fund allocation and transfer requests on behalf of the Funding Board and national steering mechanisms.

Details of the WPHF Secretariat responsibilities are given in the WPHF Operations Manual, pages 16-18.

Administrative Agent UN Multi-Purpose Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) at global level (New York)

Fund design and administration is the responsibility of the MPTF Office: The WPHF Fund is hosted by the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office in New York which acts as the Administrative Agent and administers the Fund.

Box 5. Administrative Agent MPTFO-role and responsibilities

- Concludes a Standard Administrative Agreement (SAA) with each contributor wishing to provide financial support for the Fund.
- Receives contributors' financial allocations and deposits them in the Fund account.
- Makes country allocations in accordance with the decisions of the Funding Board.
- Subject to the availability of funds, releases funds to UN Women in accordance with the decisions of the Funding Board and the national level steering committees.
- Uploads narrative and financial reports on the Gateway.
- Administers funds received, in accordance with UNDP rules and procedures policies.

Details of the responsibilities of the Administrative Agent are given in the WPHF Operations Manual, pages 18-19.

COUNTRY LEVEL

National Steering Committees

Country or national-level steering mechanisms have delegated responsibility from the Funding Board to manage the WPHF allocation at the country level. The UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator and UN Women as the Secretariat at country level submit the most appropriate country level steering mechanism to the Funding Board for approval as part of the country allocation process. In countries where UN Women has a field presence, UN Women plays the role of the country level secretariat.

⁶⁷ WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019 pages 16-17.

National Steering Committees comprised of representatives from the UN, the government, two representatives from civil society and two from the donor committee at country level manage the country

Box 6. National Steering Committees-roles and responsibilities

- Provide a platform for partnership, coordination, advocacy and resource mobilization at the country level.
- Manage WPHF allocations at the country level including approval of projects.
- In coordination with the Technical Secretariat, request the Administrative Agent to transfer funding to UN Women on approved project documents and available cash balance in the fund Account.
- Monitor progress and provide oversight on project performance.

Details of the responsibilities of the country level steering committees are given in the Operations. Manual (pages 13-15)

allocation proposals on behalf of the Funding Board and hold meetings at least once a year. Each country specifies the composition of the national level steering committee in its proposal to the Funding Board. Existing structures at the country level are used to the extent possible rather than establishing new ones such as the coordination committees for WPS, including National Action Plans coordination mechanisms, PBF Joint Steering Committees, or other MPTF Steering Committees.

Country level Technical Secretariat -UN Women Office

UN Women country offices act as the WPHF's Technical Secretariat for the Fund at the country level. This is in countries where UN Women has a full-fledged country presence. It supports the national steering

Box 7. UN Women as the UN Management Entity (ME) -roles and responsibilities

It is important to state that the ME has major and multiple responsibilities for the WPHF a few of which are listed below:

- Assumes an oversight function and programmatic and financial responsibility for funds received from the Administrative Agent and ensures timely disbursements of funds to CSO partners and other designated institutions or entities in accordance with the decisions of the country level steering committee and its rules and regulations.
- The ME has major responsibilities to provide technical, capacity building and management support to CSOs required in all aspects related to their effective and efficient project development, implementation, management and monitoring of the WPHF; and provides reports on CSO funded projects to the WPHF Secretariat and status of progress to the National Steering Committee in line with its rules and regulations.

Details of the multiple responsibilities of the ME are given in the WPHF Operations. Manual. (pages 20-22)

committees in all secretariat functions: including calls for proposals; receiving project proposals and reviewing for compliance and completeness; sharing these with the global Technical Secretariat for technical review; circulating endorsed projects by the global Technical Secretariat to the national level steering committee members for review and approval; and submitting signed and approved project documents and fund transfer request forms to the global Technical Secretariat for onward submission to the Administrative Agent. UN Women country offices coordinate communications between the global and national level.

UN Women as the Management Entity: UN Women acts as the Management Entity for civil society organizations (CSOs) in countries where it has a field presence.

Review Question: Review overall effectiveness of the 2 -tier governance structure.

Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear?

Is decision making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner?

Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Governance and Management Structure

“The WPHF architecture provides legitimacy in delivering at grassroots level”⁶⁸. The MTR found that almost all stakeholders confirmed that the model of the two-tier governance and management structure manifested at global and country level as described above, is appropriate, effective and efficient in supporting the WPHF implementation and its mandate. *“It is the best option as it connects the global to the country level with the UN playing a key role”⁶⁹.* It provides a mechanism for channeling much needed resources to civil society and women’s organizations engaged in the humanitarian, conflict prevention, peace and development space. The WPHF architecture as currently set up provides the Fund with a *“legitimacy in delivering at grass roots level”⁷⁰.*

Stakeholders reported that *“the same structure that exists at global level, such as in the composition of the Funding Board, its decision making, and oversight role is also reflected at the country level in the national level steering committees”⁷¹.* Lines of decision making, and responsibilities are clearly set out in the WPHF Operational Manual. The Funding Board at global level and the National Steering Committees at country level act as *“multi stakeholder platforms that bring together member states, donors, UN agencies and civil society organizations”* to collaborate and coordinate on the WPHF. This for the most part is positive.

A stakeholder interviewed proposed that the global and country level structures could be enhanced by the *“participation of UN Women regional offices to provide closer backup support to the countries in their region”⁷²,* as for example in the case of the UN Women East and Southern Africa Regional Office which covers Burundi.

Decision making in the WPHF is carried out at two levels; by the Funding Board and the respective National Steering Committees at country level. This implies that while the global Funding Board makes decisions on the WPHF investment plan and the country allocations, projects at country level are selected by National Steering Committees composed of government, UN, donors and civil society. Stakeholders confirmed that this type of governance structure and decision making is most appropriate.

The section below examines the effectiveness and efficiency of each of the entities of the governance and management structure.

THE FUNDING BOARD

An analysis of the findings from stakeholder interviews show that overall the performance of the Funding Board is effective and efficient given its major role and responsibilities. There are however variances in views and suggestions for improvement that are presented below.

- The Funding Board has been a dynamic and committed group of members particularly in the early years and during the start up the Fund including having an active group of CSOs. It has played its role very effectively in promoting partnership, coordination, advocacy and resource mobilization at the global level. In principle the Board works very well in shaping the direction of the WPHF. CSO members have contributed substantially to the development of the WPHF Operations Manual and in supporting partnerships for the WPHF. The composition of the Board is *‘unique’* in that it brings together member states, donors, UN agencies and civil society as equal and engaged partners to a global platform for the WPHF. What is also unique, commendable and a good practice is the process of self-selection of CSOs

⁶⁸ Stakeholder Interview

⁶⁹ Ibid

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Ibid

⁷² WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019

every two years lending greater continuity to their participation on the Board. CSOs nominate other CSOs at the end of their term on the Board.

Comparative advantage: *“Board members come from diverse backgrounds and have strong experience and are knowledgeable and committed to women, peace, security and humanitarian issues. The Board has demonstrated a good sense of ownership in the Fund activities”*⁷³. All these factors contribute to the comparative advantage of the Board.

▪ **Functioning of the Board**

A review of the minutes of the Funding Board meetings since April 2016 to September 2019 show that Annual Meetings have been held regularly as specified in the Operations Manual and have been well supported technically by the WPHF Secretariat with adequate documentation. The Funding Board holds working level meetings and principal level meetings. Principal level meetings are where all key decisions are made and a total of 4 principal meetings have been held. Two principal board meetings were needed and held in 2016 to launch the fund, 1 meeting was held in 2017 and another in 2019. A principal meeting was not required in 2018 as there was no money to be allocated. A total of 10 working meetings have been held since 2016.

Working level meetings are meant for discussions and brainstorming on key issues and for updates on the Fund’s activities. Several stakeholders confirmed that the working level meetings provide *“more space for interaction and Board members attending these meetings are well prepared”*, having received the necessary information and documentation from the WPHF Secretariat for an informed discussion.

Working level meetings of the Board were considered as being *“very useful providing members an opportunity to engage in more in-depth discussions on specific issues than could be done in a larger meeting”*⁷⁴.

▪ **Funding Board addresses a host of WPHF issues**

It is important to note that working level meetings and subsequent decisions made in principal meetings of the Funding Board have addressed a host of important issues pertaining to the WPHF as given in the minutes of the meetings⁷⁵. These range from decisions on the 24 eligible countries⁷⁶ of the Fund, finalization and approving the founding documents including the Operations Manual and theory of change and any amendments and changes in these documents, maintaining transparency, organization of country level steering committees including use of existing institutional structures and working with existing

Composition of the WPHF Funding Board (2019)

- UNFPA Chair
- UN Women
- UNDP
- UN Peacebuilding Support Office
- Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)
- International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
- Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University
- Women Enabled International
- Austria
- Canada
- The Netherlands
- Norway

⁷³ Stakeholder interview

⁷⁴ Stakeholder interview

⁷⁵ WPHF documents on minutes of meetings

⁷⁶ WPHF eligible countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burundi, C.A.R, Colombia, D.R.C., Haiti, Iraq, Jordan, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pacific, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen.

MPTFs as in the case of Colombia and the challenges of multi-country allocations in the Pacific.

The minutes of meetings show that discussions addressed a range of issues; such as challenges of multi country allocations, flexibility in financing small grants, decisions on country fund allocations, updates on communications and resource mobilization efforts, private sector engagement and partnerships and knowledge management. The importance of local civil society engagement in all decision-making process was emphasized, and support to civil society in terms of capacity building of small grass roots organizations and other matters relating to the effectiveness and efficiency of fund implementation. Updates were provided on the Spotlight Initiative, and on a new country allocation opened in Mali. It demonstrates the time, thought and interest invested by the Funding Board members in the work of the WPHF.

▪ **Decision-making by the Board**

The WPHF decision-making follows the principle of subsidiarity. All members of the Board operate on a level playing field with equal opportunity for participation, decision making and voice. To the best of their knowledge, stakeholders pointed out that decision-making in the Funding Board has been based on discussions, sharing of facts in a cooperative and congenial atmosphere. *“Decisions are reached by consensus even though everyone has their own agenda and priorities, but generally decisions are made on what is good for the Fund. For example, there are times when consensus could not be found, such as in the allocation of USD 2 million unearmarked funds. After much discussions and negotiations Palestine was selected as an eligible country to receive the fund. Often this type of decision-making is challenging”⁷⁷.*

Decisions have been communicated regularly to all stakeholders through the WPHF Secretariat e.g. the selection of 24 countries” which was based on country eligibility and prioritization criteria as given in the Operations Manual⁷⁸.

Some stakeholders indicated that they would like to see a more demand-led process of decision-making to prioritize countries for country allocations based not only on the priorities of member states but also on solid data and analysis of the conflict context and women’s needs at ground level, and the perspectives of Board members in reaching consensus in a transparent manner.

An email communication April 9, 2019 shows that the Secretariat had communicated with Board members on decisions regarding WPHF next country priorities.⁷⁹

The above concerns seem to reflect limited understanding of the process and documentation that the Secretariat prepares on these matters for Board decision-making and there is need for further emphasis and clarification. This would be further enhanced by the improved M&E system feedback to the Secretariat that provides the necessary data and analysis for the Board.

▪ **Board member participation**

⁷⁷ Stakeholder interview

⁷⁸WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019 (page 33)

⁷⁹ An email communication April 12, 2019 from the Secretariat to the Board members on the Subject: WPHF next country priority for USD 2 million states *“I have now consulted all the members and 8 of you have responded within the deadline. The initial results show Palestine as the next country where WPHF will invest. Can I please ask you to check whether your contribution was properly reflected and confirm you are comfortable moving forward? “Still waiting for the Chair to give feedback on the minutes but will circulate them soon as well”.*

While stakeholders broadly stated that board members have been engaged and participate well, and that perhaps it *“takes time for new board members to catch up”*, a few divergent views emerged about the role and participation of board members in the WPHF. *“We see it a privilege to participate in the WPHF, it comes with a serious responsibility, and expertise certainly exists among Board members on the WPHF issues”*. At the same time a concern was expressed that participation of Board members may appear to be merely *‘perfunctory’*⁸⁰. Some Board members may find themselves in a cycle of decision making that is ongoing and they are not fully engaged in an in-depth manner on the WPHF matters as they would have liked.

The above situation according to a respondent is attributed to the limited level of orientation of new members to the WPHF. This could have been addressed if there was a *“full and proper induction of Board members at the outset and orientation to the WPHF activities especially at country level”*. Such an induction would give Board members a better grasp of the WPHF, enabling them to be more engaged and informed in decision-making, participation and ownership. *“There is certainly room for CSOs and other Board members to be more active”*⁸¹.

Scheduling of Board meetings: An additional concern expressed was that Board meetings are held often at short notice of two weeks which does not allow Board members adequate time for arranging their participation in view of their busy schedules and commitments. A clear yearly calendar of meetings needs to be set up in advance by the Chair of the Funding Board in order that the WPHF Secretariat can organize meetings accordingly.

▪ **Level of ownership in the Fund**

The MTR found that a higher and stronger level of ownership by the Funding Board was demonstrated in the early two years of the WPHF and by those who had served for a longer term and were more involved with the Fund than newer members⁸². The Review also found that the level of ownership of the Funding Board varied, but overall was considered good.

▪ **Venue for Board meetings**

*“Face to face meetings are ideal”*⁸³, however, stakeholders expressed that most Board meetings are conducted virtually, and this has worked well though it lacks the strong dynamics that a face to face exchange offers. A few Board members in proximity to New York can attend the Annual Board meetings, but for many, online and Skype calls are common practice and often pose challenges because of the different time zones that need to be accommodated. CSOs, but also others are handicapped in terms of financial resources to attend meetings in New York. Some CSOs pointed out that they could manage if there was enough advance information about the dates of the Board meetings to coincide these dates with their advocacy work in New York.

While most stakeholders considered a once a year physical face to face get together ideal, it was recognized that the costs including travel may not be justified given limited resources.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT - UN MULTI-PURPOSE TRUST FUND OFFICE (MPTFO)

Review Question: Review the role of MPTFO as Administrative Agent

⁸⁰ Stakeholder interview

⁸¹ Stakeholder interview

⁸² Stakeholder interviews

⁸³ Ibid

(Effectiveness and efficiency)

Stakeholders unanimously agreed that the UN MPTFO has played a highly effective and efficient role in administering the WPHF and in demonstrating true value for money. The UN MPTFO (also referred to as the Administrative Agent) has a fee of 1 percent and provides client-oriented services. Its excellent and meticulous work in receiving and depositing funds from contributors for the WPHF was highly commended by stakeholders.

Comparative advantage: Informant interviews showed that the “UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) is the only UN entity dedicated to the design and administration of multi-stakeholder pooled financing instruments. Hosted by UNDP, it has supported the UN system since 2004 with the design and administration of over 150 multi-partner trust funds (MPTFs) and joint programmes”⁸⁴. Although housed within UNDP, the MPTF Office is firewalled from all UN implementing entities, UNDP included. It acts independently and ensures a neutral function. It has the capacity, technical knowledge, expertise and good practices which have been applied to administering trust funds including the WPHF⁸⁵. These factors illustrate its comparative advantage. It is an ex-officio member of the Funding Board.

“Disbursements for the WPHF are carried out within 5 business days, but this depends on whether or not all documents required are in place to complete the transfer of Funds to the UN Women Office”⁸⁶. Working relationships between the WPHF and the MPTFO are most cordial and supportive, communications are frequent and the MPTFO Portfolio Manager coordinates with the WPHF Secretariat in finalizing the annual financial and narrative reports of the WPHF projects and uploading them on the relevant WPHF project pages on the Gateway website which provides real time information <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00> Accountability and transparency is ensured through the MPTF Gateway which provides financial information such as contributor commitments and deposits, programme budgets, fund transfers made, interest income and other expenditures.

It was reported that the MPTFO efficiently advised and supported the WPHF in implementing its partnership with the UN Foundation. It has been quick and responsive and is an entity in the governance and management structure without which the WPHF *“could not operate as effectively, efficiently and rapidly”⁸⁷*. The Portfolio Manager participates in the Funding Board working level meetings and is well informed of the various issues being addressed by the WPHF.

Review Question: Review the role of the WPHF SECRETARIAT

THE WPHF SECRETARIAT

UN Women acts as the WPHF Technical Secretariat, thus ensuring that dedicated funding is accompanied by technical expertise, political support, and the appropriate partnerships. UN Women coordinates with the rest of the UN system through the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee on WPS.

UN Women’s comparative advantage is strong as it is uniquely situated to drive a global effort to accelerate implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. In terms of sources of support from the UN system, a civil society survey conducted for the Global Study on Security Council resolution

⁸⁴ 2018 Annual Report UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office

⁸⁵ Stakeholder Interview

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Ibid

1325 revealed that almost two thirds (63 per cent) of civil society organizations receive their support from UN Women for their work on women, peace and security⁸⁸. Civil society organizations, women's organizations, play a vital role in promoting women's rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women. UN-Women's longstanding relation with the women's movement gives it the comparative advantage and opportunity to bring their voices, capacities and contributions in support of gender equality and women's empowerment, notably to those most likely to be left behind⁸⁹.

UN Women is also recognized within and outside the UN system as leading global efforts to address the gendered aspects of conflict prevention, post-conflict participation, protection and early recovery, through strategies including knowledge generation, partnerships with key stakeholders, global programming and evidence-based advocacy. UN Women is entrusted the coordination and convening role in the area of gender equality and promoting women's rights, including women, peace and security, by the UN General Assembly (UN GA) in its founding resolution A/RES/64/289⁹⁰ UNGA resolution A/RES/63/311 on system-wide coherence⁹¹, and work under the guidance of its Executive Board. In the area of women, peace and security, UN Women's coordination and accountability role is recognized specifically in Security Council resolution 2242 (2015).

In line with the WPHF's Terms of Reference, in addition to the general management support costs, UN Women will utilize no more than five percent of the overall budget to cover direct costs related to the Secretariat functions.

Effectiveness and Efficiency

This section reviews the effectiveness and efficiency of the WPHF Secretariat as a separate project in delivering on its role mandated in the Operations Manual and in the context of the:

'Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Project Document (included in the list of documents in Annex 3) WPHF Secretariat Results Framework'' **Total Project Cost:** USD 1,821,858. **Other contributions:** USD 102,600 (UN Women in kind contribution Management staff and support staff)

Project Description: The project covers the Secretariat function for the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

The expected outcome of the Project is to enable the achievement of the WPHF's theory of change through sound technical and policy support, a strong culture of accountability and transparency and results-based management, reporting and evaluation, as well as solid knowledge management and communication strategies.

The Outcome will be reached through four identified outputs given in the Results Framework of the report⁹²:

Output 1.1 Quality technical support and advisory to the Funding Board

Output 1.2. The Secretariat promotes in its operations a culture of risk management, accountability and transparency

Output 1.3. Results-based monitoring, reporting and evaluation successfully contributes to achieving the Outcomes of the WPHF

⁸⁸ WPHF Project document Secretariat of the WPHF August 2019

⁸⁹ UN Women Strategic Plan 2018-2021 (page 10)

⁹⁰ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/289&Lang=E

⁹¹ http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/63/311&Lang=E

⁹² Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Project Document, Annex A, WPHF Secretariat Results Framework.

Output 1.4. The WPHF is a recognized hub of knowledge in the field of Women, peace and security and humanitarian action

The MTR shows that UN Women has continued to act as the Secretariat of the WPHF since 2016 to date. On 30 August 2016, MPTFO transferred \$ 360,929 to UN Women to provide Secretariat functions to the Fund. The Secretariat launched and operationalized the Fund in 2016, including the drafting of the Operations Manual and the Resource Mobilization Strategy, the Funding Board meetings, as well as country prioritization and selection process⁹³.

The data collected and the analysis shows that excellent progress was made by the Secretariat in achieving the four outputs towards the outcome and results as reflected in the WPHF Secretariat Results Framework. Activities have been completed effectively and efficiently and the Secretariat has demonstrated a high level of competence in undertaking its role and responsibilities.

There was praise for the WPHF Secretariat from almost all stakeholders interviewed for the “excellent, dedicated, highly effective and efficient performance” by a “nimble three-person, very capable team led by the Head of the Secretariat”⁹⁴. Until June 2019 this team actually consisted of 1,75 persons. The Secretariat has demonstrated strong leadership in initiating the Fund activities and bringing the Fund to its present position of high visibility in the public space. Stakeholders lauded the achievements of a “small and lean team” which has done an “amazing job, it is a miracle!”⁹⁵. This is evident in the main achievement and results of the work of Secretariat described below.

Output 1.1 Quality technical support and advisory to the Funding Board

The Secretariat prepared a long list of eligible countries based on approved methodology by the Funding Board, as well as selection criteria for the prioritization of countries for approval by the Funding Board.

Funding Board meetings have been organized by the Secretariat in compliance with the Operations Manual which states that the Board will meet at working level at least every three months, in (January, May, August and December 2018). Board meetings have been supported by relevant documentation and the documents were circulated at least 15 working days before the Funding Board meetings. The Secretariat drafted and circulated the minutes of the Funding Board meetings and records, and tracked all decisions made and followed-up on the Board meetings to ensure that the decisions were implemented in a timely and adequate manner and reported back if necessary.

The Funding Board did not hold a high-level meeting in 2018 due to the absence of unearmarked funding to be allocated. Since 2016 the Secretariat has organized a total of 4 principal⁹⁶ and 10 working level meetings thus achieving *a 100 percent target in this task*.

Based on the WPHF’s country eligibility criteria and in consultation with Funding Board members and Resident Coordinators, the Secretariat reviewed the country allocation proposals for technical compliance and consideration by the Funding Board. The Secretariat also ensured quality control of the global project proposals directly submitted to the Funding Board’s approval.

The Secretariat in close collaboration with Funding Board members, drafted a Resource Mobilization Strategy and its annual operational plans which was approved at the working level and implemented in

⁹³ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2016

⁹⁴ Stakeholder interviews

⁹⁵ Stakeholder interviews

⁹⁶ Principal meetings are where decision making takes place.

2018. *Very good progress is noted with huge increase in resources mobilized for the WPHF as discussed in this report (see section on Finances).*

Output 1.2. The Secretariat promotes in its operations a culture of risk management, accountability and transparency

An Operations Manual based on a culture of risk management, transparency and accountability was elaborated by the Secretariat and submitted to the Funding Board for discussion and approval. The Board approved the changes in the Operations Manual in May 2019 pending the inclusion of language on sexual harassment⁹⁷.

A risk assessment was conducted by the Secretariat based on available documentation and consultations and a risk management strategy was elaborated and submitted for the Board's approval and will be updated yearly. *The target of once a year has been reached.*

The Secretariat has undertaken technical evaluations of country proposals and prepared all the relevant document for the fund transfers including Fund transmittal forms and has liaised closely with the Administrative Agent's office to facilitate fund transfer to the Management Entities in country. *These tasks have been fully completed.*

The Secretariat has efficiently coordinated and managed the day-to-day activities necessary for the smooth running of the Fund and ensure compliance with the Fund's rules and procedures as approved in the Operations Manual. *Very good progress is noted in the management and coordination role.*

Output 1.3. Results-based monitoring, reporting and evaluation successfully contributes to achieving the Outcomes of the WPHF

The Secretariat prepared the Fund's results framework for consideration and approval by the Funding Board. Concrete suggestions have also been made regarding the results framework and its indicators, which will be considered during the Fund's midterm review occurring in 2019). *This is work in progress.*

In order to monitor progress, the Secretariat conducted a field visit to Burundi and Jordan in 2017 to observe WPHF activities and meet with stakeholders. The Secretariat has provided technical support to the Secretariats at country level, including quality control on project proposals submitted at the national level.

Consolidated reports based on country project reports, have been prepared annually by the Secretariat, and it has liaised with the Administrative Agent in finalizing the Annual narrative and financial reports. Annual Secretariat Reports have been completed. It has met *100 percent of the target in this responsibility.*

The Secretariat has also provided regular updates on the status of the implementation of its resource mobilization strategy. It is currently (2019) managing the conduct of a mid-term evaluation of the Fund, in line with the UNDG evaluation guidelines and methodology. *This is work in progress.*

The Secretariat plans to provide support to Country Level Secretariats in terms of quality control of projects, guidance on issuing and managing calls, establishing the National Steering Committees, as well as on the ME role.

Output 1.4. The WPHF is a recognized hub of knowledge in the field of Women, peace and security and humanitarian action

The WPHF strategy emphasizes communication, knowledge management and capacity building. The Secretariat has ensured that information on the WPHF, its priorities, activities and performance are

⁹⁷ WPHF Project annual narrative progress report January -December 2018

communicated and circulated to all stakeholders at national and international level. It has monitored the elaboration and implementation of its *Communication's Strategy* including through the development of a dedicated web portal, a social media presence, the organization of high-level events and the engagement of celebrities in support of its mandate. *This task has been carried out very effectively with positive results.*

The Secretariat is in the process of establishing a knowledge management platform as a Community of Practice for the WPHF in partnership with DELL which will be operational by 2020. It will ensure that quality knowledge products are available and widely and freely disseminated. The Secretariat plans to consolidate and disseminate lessons learned and good practices from the Fund. In addition, it will ensure that partners of the WPHF meet and exchange on a regular basis, with a strong focus on regional meetings in support to the multi-country allocations. *This is work in progress.*

Regarding capacity building, the Secretariat plans to ensure that small organizations or organizations with low capacities can access financing. It will elaborate a capacity building strategy in partnership with Global CSOs and develop guidelines and material for capacity building for CSOs. *Planned tasks to be undertaken.*

In order to achieve all expected results, the Secretariat has used no more than 5 percent of the available resources.

Balancing Priorities

Notwithstanding a high level of performance from the Secretariat, the MTR found that concern was reported by a stakeholder as to the role and priorities of the Secretariat. It was indicated that given that the capacity of the WPHF is constrained *“too much time and effort of the Secretariat has been focused on high level public events, search for celebrities and gaining visibility for the Fund, preparation of visual materials including on private sector partnerships”*⁹⁸. Resource mobilization is a labor-intensive effort. While these are useful and important activities, a balance would be more in order by focusing and investing much more time in *“quality implementation and obtaining project outcomes in the WPHF countries which would speak for themselves, and in building strong capacity at the country and community level. Bringing about change in the lives of women affected by conflict and empowering them must be a priority”*⁹⁹. The latter issue was emphasized by some other stakeholders. Attention is required on planning for use of funds in the country and M&E activities. In parallel this should be balanced with the need to ensure that the Fund survives, and the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat in implementing an effective resource mobilization strategy. The Secretariat also has limited staff capacity and financial resources.

Capacity constraints of the WPHF Secretariat were emphasized by stakeholders. These include the constraints (human and financial) of a low 5 percent fee structure that limits the Secretariat in recruiting and for monitoring activities. Challenges to mobilize resources are ever present at the Secretariat level.

Review Question: Review the effectiveness and efficiency of the National Steering Committee

NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

The National Steering Committee (NSC) as a partnership between the Government, the UN donor and civil society plays an important decision-making role at the country level. It mirrors the structure of the Funding Board and provides the strategic direction and supervision for the WPHF country level allocations. Based on previous lessons learned that multi trust funds are centralized, the WPHF instituted the NSC at

⁹⁸ Stakeholder interview

⁹⁹ Ibid

country level as a mechanism best positioned for this role because of its better understanding of national and ground level issues and local stakeholders. The design and working methods of country level steering committees is to be guided by principles of inclusion, transparency and accountability¹⁰⁰.

Government's presence does not only ensure sustainability and increased efficiency of the process, but it has also provided advocacy opportunities for both civil society and the UN on women, peace and security and humanitarian issues, but also on gender equality issues. The presence of donors has helped avoid duplication in funding projects that were already receiving financial support. Civil society's participation and voice is critical in ensuring the transparency of the process and the relevant targeting of the call for proposals. The United Nations Offices, and the Office of the Resident Coordinators and UN Women Offices, have been key in coordinating the process and offering their operational capacity on the ground¹⁰¹.

The NSC meets once a year to make decisions on the call for proposals and keeps track of progress made in implementing WPHF projects. In each country the NSC sets its own modalities and procedures.

From a stakeholder's viewpoint *"the NSC provides an avenue for donors represented at country level to have a say and take ownership – and that civil society locally gets to define needs and the way forward. We are still finding out what it really looks like in practice, but what we do know is that our embassies are being involved and that they get to take part and we will need to follow up .It also helps donor commitment as it is motivating to see funds given to a global fund having impact locally – and through partnerships that we can build on. This is often not the case when we disburse money from HQ to various funds and programmes"* ¹⁰².

Comparative advantage: The NSCs comparative advantage is evident in that it provides a platform for systematizing coordination between national actors, government, donors, UN and CSOs represented on the NSC, thus avoiding duplication on projects funded. Members of the NSC are also familiar with the political, social and economic context in the country which helps in selecting the calls for proposals as a response to women's priorities in fragile states and ensuring their coverage geographically. The NSC role in decision-making on the WPHF interventions provides opportunities for national ownership.

NSC modalities, effectiveness and efficiency varies in countries: Stakeholder interviews and reports show that the NSC set up, modalities and functioning vary in different countries. In Burundi and Colombia, the WPHF uses the established PBF Joint Steering Committee and the UN MPTF Steering Committees respectively. In Jordan, Iraq and the Pacific island countries, ad hoc steering committees have been established. In Jordan and Iraq, the Steering Committees called for acceptance of proposals in Arabic and donors agreed to it recognizing their obligation to address language issues rather than put the onus on the country.

- **Jordan-**Stakeholder interviews, reports and the minutes of the NSC indicated that the *"NSC is an important entity holding actors accountable for country level projects. CSOs participate actively and with interest as also the various members, Jordanian National Commission of Women (JNCW) donors and he UN"*¹⁰³. There is a good level of ownership by the NSC through its role in decision making and tracking progress and implementation. Ownership is also demonstrated in its interest in undertaking

¹⁰⁰ WPHF Terms of Reference updated March 2019.

¹⁰¹ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2017

¹⁰² Stakeholder Interview

¹⁰³ Stakeholder interview

field site visits to CSO projects to observe implementation. The MTR shows that only *one* CSO participates in the NSC.

- **Iraq** -Based on available data and stakeholder interviews, the MTR found that the NSC functions well, demonstrates a good level of ownership, its *“members including in the higher echelons of government have shown a lot of interest in the WPHF projects. Not only do they meet annually but meet as necessary. All documents provided to them by the country Technical Secretariat are read carefully and call for proposals are considered thoroughly and carefully”*¹⁰⁴. The NSC members have invited to their meetings other key individuals and previous board members to provide inputs to the committee and members have advocated for a Gender Ministry in Iraq¹⁰⁵. Since the WPHF projects have been in operation for a short period of time it cannot be conclusively stated that all requirements of national ownership have been met but there is reason to believe that will likely take place.

It was indicated in a stakeholder consultation that *“while the first Steering Committee meeting was not well organized, the second meeting performed very well with a high quality of deliberations from all participants including on substantive areas such as the need for projects to reach out to a diversity of geographical areas not previously covered, and other issues”*¹⁰⁶. In contrast it was also reported that in the second call for proposals the NSC had accepted proposals from CSOs which had not made the short list in the first round¹⁰⁷. It was not possible for the MTR to verify the latter.

Currently the Iraq Steering Committee lacks the representation and participation of CSOs as noted in the minutes of the Steering Committee and in a stakeholder interview¹⁰⁸, though CSOs had participated previously. This is an issue that needs to be addressed at the country level by the Committee.

- **The Pacific island countries**

The WPHF Annual Report¹⁰⁹ points out the challenges in operationalization of the multi-country allocation in the Pacific (in Fiji, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu during the first round). These included the fact that the UN and, by definition, Governments and Member States, operate on a country basis. The issues related to the membership of a Steering Committee that has a multi-country coverage, and in trying to determine which governments of the Pacific countries to include in the Steering Committee. Continuous discussions between the Secretariat at country level, the global Secretariat, MPTF Office and the WPHF Funding Board has allowed the challenges to be addressed and to ensure the roll out of the Fund in the Pacific. The Steering Committee met for the first time in October 2016.

Stakeholders reported that the Steering Committee meets only every two years and mainly engages in the WPHF over a period of about six months that coincides with the time for call for proposals and their approval, and ownership is limited. Calling committee meetings has posed challenges. The extent of CSO participation in the Steering Committee was not evident from the minutes of the Committee Meetings as they were absent for two meetings and once because of a conflict of interest¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid

¹⁰⁵ Stakeholder interview

¹⁰⁶ Stakeholder interview

¹⁰⁷ Ibid (there is nothing reported on this issue in the Minutes of the Meeting)

¹⁰⁸ Iraq National Steering Committee, Minutes of Meeting, July 2019

¹⁰⁹ WPHF Annual report January -December 2017

¹¹⁰ Minutes of Steering Committee meetings January 2016, and June 2018.

- **Burundi**-The MTR obtained a limited understanding of the functioning of the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) in Burundi as explained in the Burundi Case Study. The Field Mission was unable to meet key members of the JSC including CORDAID a CSO member to gain an understanding of the modalities of its operations. As such it was not appropriate to assess the functioning of the JSC and its level of ownership in the WPHF.
- **Colombia**- In Colombia the WPHF uses the existing country level steering mechanism, the National Steering Committee of the UN MPTF for Post-Conflict. According to the TORs of the MPTF, the Steering Committee is chaired by the High Counselor for Post-Conflict and co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator in Colombia. The MPTF also includes representatives of government, donors, UN and Civil society with the country Secretariat as an observer. “The balanced representation in the Steering Committee will ensure that coordination does not undermine the liberty of civil society to prepare independent proposals, although projects will need to be aligned with the overall peace-building strategy of Colombia”.¹¹¹ The MTR was unable to identify which CSOs participate in this committee though it was reported that there had been one CSO representative. The current political environment in Colombia where the role of CSOs is not actively encouraged may affect their participation and decision-making role in the MPTF.

It has been emphasized that it was important for the WPHF to operate through the “UN Post-Conflict MPTF for Colombia channeling the funds within a high-level governance mechanism and contributing to the post-conflict multi-stakeholders’ strategy aligned with Government priorities. This may have increased national ownership, relevance and legitimacy of the entire Call”¹¹². Despite the multiple benefits of such implementation arrangements the findings of the analysis show that coordination and working through the UN MPTF has posed challenges in harmonizing the work of the WPHF with the MPTF governance mechanism and procedures. Delays have been experienced in the approval of two additional projects and coordination of field visits to projects’ sites¹¹³. It is difficult to ascertain the ownership of the UN MPTF.

In Columbia “UN Women Technical Secretariat in the country has to report to the MPTF Secretariat in the country and to the WPHF Secretariat at the global level, besides our internal corporate reporting mechanisms”¹¹⁴. This results in a heavy workload for UN Women as the Management Entity in its reporting functions. In sum, the findings highlight some of the challenges in working through an existing structure. In going forward measures will need to be identified by the Colombia ME, Funding Board and the WPHF Secretariat in addressing these important implementation issues.

The example of the Mali National Steering Committee was highlighted by a stakeholder (though Mali is not one of the countries under this MTR). Nevertheless, it illustrates some issues that may arise in the functioning of steering committees. In this instance there was “organizational uncertainty about the time of meetings, lack of clarity on the appraisal process and how criteria for selection of proposal were set and overall a lack of transparency. It would have helped to have a clear timeline of actions and roles and responsibilities in the steering committee, timely communication and minutes on meetings and decisions, and greater transparency”¹¹⁵.

CSO participation on the Steering Committees is limited

¹¹¹ GAI Country allocation Proposal for Columbia ,2016-2019.

¹¹² Annual Report Colombia, 2017 page 8-9.

¹¹³ The two additional projects were only approved by the MPTF in December 2018.

¹¹⁴ Stakeholder interview

¹¹⁵ Stakeholder interview

The MTR assessed that CSO participation in country level steering committees appears limited as also their representation as members of the committees, and there are differences in each country reviewed. The Burundi JSC has one CSO member (the MTR was unable to meet this individual); in Colombia there is a lack of clarity as to CSO participation, in Iraq there is no CSO representative currently though two CSOs had participated and attended the first NSC meeting. Jordan has one CSO member, in the Pacific island's countries CSOs are members but minutes of meetings indicate that they have been absent from committee meetings.

The WPHF gives due importance to CSOs as “*not merely recipients of the Fund but as active decision makers*”¹¹⁶, which also gives the Fund its unique character. However, this has not translated fully into practice and every effort needs to be made by countries to ensure that Steering Committees are inclusive of CSOs and make efforts towards this end.

Challenges for the WPHF as a rapid financing mechanism

The MTR findings show that the call for proposals and selection of the projects in all countries reviewed takes a minimum of 4-5 months and then one month for the country Steering Committees to review and approve proposals making it a minimum period of 6 months or more before Funds can be disbursed and projects started up. In some countries this could take longer such as in Colombia which works through added layers of approval processes required by the MPTF and in Jordan because of government administrative procedures. After approval of projects all CBOs/CSOs must get registration in Jordan to be able to accept the funds for humanitarian assistance. It depends on the individual projects and the extent to which revisions are required to be accepted by the state all of which takes time. In the Pacific islands start-up of projects may take even 9 months if time is factored in for obtaining supplies or equipment with disturbing cyclic weather patterns that pose persistent challenges.

Review Question: Review the role of the Management Entities at the Country Level

(Effectiveness and efficiency)

UN MANAGEMENT ENTITY FOR THE WPHF AT COUNTRY LEVEL

UN Women is the Management Entity (ME) for civil society organizations (CSOs) in the countries reviewed and acts as the Technical Secretariat for the WPHF at the country level and in supporting the work of the NSCs. The ME uses the indirect costs (up to 7 percent) to cover costs related to both the management Entity and country level Secretariat role.

Comparative advantage: As stated earlier, UN Women has a strong comparative advantage in the WPHF implementation (cross reference to III point 4 and WPHF Secretariat role). At the country level UN women has an added comparative advantage because of its field presence in the countries/group of countries reviewed. It is in a position to provide ongoing support to the WPHF projects in terms of technical and management support, have frequent communications and interactions with CSO implementing partners and monitor the projects firsthand. While this does provide a comparative advantage the MEs have limited capacity and may have taken on more than could be managed with a multitude of programmatic and administrative matters.

Role of the ME: The ME responsibilities are all encompassing and multiple (outlined in point 4 WPHF Governance and Management structure and set out in the WPHF Operations Manual). Among others, the

¹¹⁶ Ibid

UN Women MEs tasks include sending out the call for proposals, technical support to CSO in proposal drafting including orientation sessions on the WPHF proposals; screening these documents; forwarding to the Global Secretariat and then to the NSCs. At the same time MEs provide all secretariat functions for the NSC. Once the projects start there are follow up tasks for monitoring, report preparation and ensuring programmatic and financial accountability. *“Staff often have to even provide hands-on support to CSOs in report writing because of language issues as all CSOs are not fluent in English¹¹⁷”*. Stakeholders shared that a high level of financial rigor is maintained by the MEs.

A 7 percent fee allocated at country level to the Management Entities covers, to a certain extent, basic services such as grant-making, monitoring, financial and narrative reporting. The findings show that the MEs have an enormous and challenging task in their oversight role of CSOs grant implementation, for financial accountability, and in their functions as a Technical Secretariat operating in fragile and difficult contexts. This was also confirmed during the Burundi Field Mission.

While the performance of the MEs varies and some countries have more capacity than others, it is to the credit of the MEs and their staff whose strong dedication and engagement has contributed in propelling CSOs and their interventions towards the goals and objectives of the WPHF and the results achieved to date¹¹⁸ despite the limited capacities in the MEs .

What is significant however and understood in stakeholder reporting, is the commonality of the capacity challenges faced by the MEs and stakeholders at the country level to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the WPHF and an effective and efficient M&E role. These challenges were expressed at two levels:

- **Limited capacity - dedicated staff and financial resources for the UN Management Entities** to oversee and manage WPHF projects spread across the country and for effective and efficient monitoring, follow up and reporting.

Stakeholders including country offices reported that a strong need exists for more resources (human, and financial); staff and enhanced capacity development of staff responsible for WPHF with sharpened skills in results based management (RBM), monitoring and evaluation (M&E) including resources for travel and monitoring to field sites.

In other words, UN Women as a Management Entity requires dedicated staff for the WPHF and enhanced staff capacity (staff are currently stretched in their numerous responsibilities) and technical expertise among staff in M&E to improve the quality of reporting for results and to better show case the impact of the WPHF. While the 7 percent fee covers to a certain extent these functions, stakeholders indicated that increased financial resources are required to build solid capacity of the MEs for its tasks and M&E and ensure effective implementation. It is important to take this into account .

This need was expressed by one respondent *“It is very important to have a minimum of one UN Women staff (a second would be better) who is solely committed to the WPHF to manage the multitude of tasks that include technical, management and financial accountability. M&E support is crucial¹¹⁹”*.

- **Limited resources to support a programme of capacity development for local CSOs** and grass roots women-led organizations in project development skills, thematic areas, results-based management (RBM) organizational, and administrative management as called for in their responsibilities.

¹¹⁷ Stakeholder interview

¹¹⁸ Refer to Annual reports of respective countries, Burundi, Colombia, Jordan, Iraq and the Pacific island countries

¹¹⁹ Stakeholder interview

“Women led CSOs are very committed; they are pouring their hearts to implement project activities, but this does not come through in their report writing because of language barriers”¹²⁰. In all five countries/group of countries concerted capacity building of CSOs is needed in programme development and management, M&E, reporting, gender analysis and needs assessment to respond effectively to women’s needs.

In Jordan and Iraq plans are being considered to strengthen the capacity of CSOs and women-led organizations in programme management and other skills, whereas in the Pacific island countries/ sub-countries several initiatives have been taken by UN Women. *“We provided training and subsequently one on one staff time to improve the reporting against the results framework, it’s all about building institutional capacity which is what UN Women has to bring to the table in this case, but we need more support”¹²¹.*

In Colombia the UN Women Technical Secretariat has taken initiatives with the support of a small amount of unassigned budget received as per the decision of the Steering Committee to strengthen CSO capacities. *“We are also strengthening CSO capacities on RBM, gender budgeting, conducting KM activities to extract lessons and promising practices on reintegration processes of women ex combatants and promoting initiatives for projects’ sustainability and knowledge exchange”.*

In Jordan it was estimated that funding for capacity building would need an additional 5-8 per cent over the 7 percent received by the UN Women Management Entity. These initial efforts in countries will need to be supported in a more comprehensive and systematic manner. The WPHF is not only about bridging funding gaps but capacity development is a cornerstone in the WPHF. It is fully aligned with its key focus to increase the capacities of women’s organizations for project development and management, which will help increase their absorption ability and capacity to monitor and report.¹²²

The main take-away emerging from this broad spectrum of interviews points to a focus required on strengthening the capacity of the UN Management Entity including in M&E and investing in parallel in the institutional capacity of CSOs as being of strategic and paramount importance. This would indeed make a vast difference and have far reaching impact including as the Fund moves forward and expands. It was hoped that the *“Midterm Review will put more emphasis on this important challenge and issue and bring it to the forefront”¹²³.*

Given that the ME is allocated a 7 percent fee, this does not suffice to deliver on capacity building for civil society organizations – which is one of the key functions of the WPHF. The WPHF aims at reaching local, grassroot and community-based organizations, which has to go hand in hand with a strong capacity building component that looks at making these organizations strong and sustainable after the end of WPHF funding. Some innovative approaches, such as providing capacity building for applicants who failed the WPHF call for proposals in country, could also be explored.

A good practice towards this end would be to set aside a part of the Country allocation for capacity building purposes, which NSCs have adopted in some contexts such as Colombia and Iraq and needs to be duplicated. Specific guidelines could be produced and included in the Operations manual. In addition, it is suggested that a specific capacity building funding stream is established at the Global level, with the purpose not only to provide funding support for capacity building needs at the Country level, but also to support harmonized approaches and training modules for civil society organizations, through the WPHF Community of Practice.

¹²⁰ Ibid

¹²¹ Stakeholder interview

¹²² WPHF Project Document August 2019

¹²³ Stakeholder interview

Review Question: Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear

The MTR found that the responsibilities and reporting lines of each entity in the governance and management structure are clear and well outlined in the Operations Manual (pages 7-22) and provide an important reference point and guideline for the different entities to work in synergy and coordination as an integral part of the overall Fund structure .

Review Question: Review any delays in programme start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.

Programme implementation delays have been experienced in several countries and resolved as explained below.

Colombia

In Colombia the WPHF call for proposal and the approval processes are managed by the existing UN MPTF Steering Committee. While the multi partner platform has the benefits of enhancing national ownership, relevance and legitimacy of the calls and their approvals and avoiding duplication in projects; considerable delays have been experienced in harmonizing with MPTF procedures¹²⁴. The approval process has several layers which take time. As a result, the projects that were submitted by August 2017 only actually started in early 2018. From stakeholder discussions it was learned that there has been some progress in resolving this issue and continuing to coordinate with the UN MPTF procedures and mechanisms. However, UN Women ME continues to face the underlying issue of working through a bureaucratic structure and delays may still be encountered¹²⁵.

Additionally, risk and threat situations are encountered in Colombia which cause delays in the implementation of some projects. Faced with this situation and as a result of a dialogue with the organizations, the issue was resolved by requesting a time extension from the UN MPTF in order to facilitate the implementation of all the activities, consolidate interventions, and support the capacity of women's organization to sustain their initiatives¹²⁶.

Jordan

In Jordan the WPHF projects have faced administrative delays in implementation. This is mainly due to the Government of Jordan having a fairly robust and at times, lengthy, process for NGOs /INGOs /UN to be approved to spend donor fund¹²⁷.The requirement is also that projects be aligned with government priorities as set out in the Jordan's Response Plan to the Syria Crisis 2019; as well as the Jordan National Action Plan on Implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (launched in March 2018).

In the above context and to resolve the issues, the WPHF projects endorsed by the National Steering Committee for funding have undergone a second approval process under the Jordan Response Platform to the Syria Crisis (JORISS), resulting in delays in initiating implementation. However, this approach is resulting in stronger national ownership, while also ensuring that WPHF-funded interventions form part of a larger response approach in contributing to peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts¹²⁸.

¹²⁴ Annual Progress Narrative Report 2017, Columbia.

¹²⁵ Annual Progress Narrative Report 2018, Colombia.

¹²⁶ Ibid

¹²⁷ GAI Country Allocation Proposal, January 2017-December 2019.

¹²⁸ Annual Project Narrative Report, 2018, Jordan

According to the Jordan National Forum for Women (JNFW) implementing a WPHF supported project, the first challenge faced by the project team was the delay in the implementation of planned activities due to government approval process. As a result of delays, activities began in late June 2018, instead of in January 2018. To address the delay the JNCW was able to adjust its capacity-building component¹²⁹.

Pacific island countries

Administrative delays: Reports show that disbursement of funds are delayed because the paperwork and supporting documents are not received in a timely way from grantees; the competing nature of priorities that a small (UN Women) operations team handles for an office as large as the Pacific office; the additional clearance procedures required from regional offices; and a high turnover of CSO staff. These delays were resolved through continuous follow up by the UN Women team and collaboration with the CSO partners.

Logistical delays: Obtaining goods from off island takes time and adds to project implementation delays. In one example, procurement in Palau was delayed because local suppliers were unable to fill the tender. The successful bid was received from Guam for all the items including water quality kits. As a result, implementation activities had to be moved to January 2019 to resolve this difficult situation.

Cyclic bad weather and poor infrastructure

The Pacific islands are impacted by cyclic bad weather, flooding and difficulties in air access which delays implementation exacerbated by difficult infrastructure and logistics issues to reach remote and hazardous geographic locations with unsuitable vehicles. For example, Save the Children in Vanuatu reported that the most significant challenge faced in project implementation, was the ongoing Ambae emergency response which has involved both CARE and Save the Children staff, as well as representatives from the four CSO partner organizations.

The strategy employed to address this challenge and resolve the issue: The Gender and Protection cluster member agencies responded to the disaster during all phases of response and several members including CARE and Save the Children seconded their staff to lead protection monitoring assessment teams. Involvement in the Ambae response caused delays in the roll out of project activities. Beyond this the WPHF needs to consider a longer implementation period of about 2-3 years for its projects¹³⁰.

5. FINANCE

Review Question: Does the Fund have the appropriate financial resources to implement its mandate?

Stakeholders concurred that currently there are adequate financial resources to meet the objectives of the Fund. It is important to recognize that this financial status has been arrived at because of the commitment of the Secretariat to concertedly mobilize resources. The Fund was started with a low capitalization of USD 3, 7 million which was not sustainable given the fee structure (the 5 percent) for the Secretariat. This also explains the limitation of what could be done in terms of recruitment and monitoring. The Fund wants *“to build gradually and carefully based on evidence on the ground and not simply channeling too much money which may create problems with the absorptive capacities of implementing partners, CSOs and small grass roots women-led organizations”*¹³¹. A very promising start has been made by the Fund, knowing that *“there are never adequate resources for carrying out such a*

¹²⁹ Stakeholder interview

¹³⁰ Stakeholder interview and Annual Project narrative progress report 2018 -MCO Fiji.

¹³¹ Ibid

huge and ambitious mandate as that of the WPHF¹³². More funds are being mobilized by the WPHF as it expands its operations and reach.

Data from the WPHF Annual Report 2016 shows that the total contributions to the WPHF for that year were **USD 3,726,957**.

The remarkable and exponential increase in contributors and funds since 2016 is displayed in **Table 2**, showing the current status of financial contributions and the number of contributors and donors that have been added.

Box 8. Contributors' Commitments and Deposits, as of 31 December 2016- in US Dollars: 3, 726, 957













Donors: Australia, Ireland, Republic of Lithuania, and the United Kingdom

Data provided by the Secretariat shows that in addition to the commitments of USD 24,485,580 in **Table 2**, WPHF received USD 7 million from the of Spotlight Fund + USD 300, 000 from Ireland (contract is being signed) + USD 300,000 from the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and 2 million EUR were recently committed by Austria¹³³, resulting in an exponential increase in funds from US Dollars: **3, 726, 957 in 2016 and growing to USD 33 million as of November 2019**.

The WPHF has worked in a gradual and incremental manner beginning with activities first in Burundi in 2016. It added two other countries Jordan and the Pacific Island countries in 2017, and Colombia where projects selected by the UN MPTF in 2017 started implementation in 2018. Iraq was added in 2018. *This gradual mode of scaling up* and expanding is considered efficient and realistic. The WPHF is currently supporting 12 countries and there are other deserving countries. It has an approved budget of US\$ 28 million¹³⁴. The Fund allocates USD 2 million for each country decided as being eligible by the Funding Board¹³⁵.

¹³² Ibid
¹³³ WPHF Secretariat
¹³⁴ WPHF 4 pager 2019
¹³⁵ Operations Manual, page 33

Table 2. Contributions, commitments and Deposits to the WPHF as of November 2019

Contributor/Partner	Commitments (real-time)	Deposits (real-time)	Deposit rate (real-time)
 AUSTRALIA, Government of	3,976,030	3,463,209	87.10%
 UNITED KINGDOM, Government of	3,676,789	3,676,789	100.00%
 GERMANY, Government of	3,280,002	3,280,002	100.00%
 CANADA, Government of	3,254,119	3,254,119	100.00%
 NORWAY, Government of	2,816,832	1,864,111	66.18%
 Austrian Development Agency	2,291,400	2,291,400	100.00%
 NETHERLANDS, Government of	2,272,727	1,136,364	50.00%
 SPAIN, Government of	1,356,937	1,356,937	100.00%
 JAPAN, Government of	892,857	892,857	100.00%
 IRELAND, Government of	562,602	562,602	100.00%
 LITHUANIA, REPUBLIC OF, Government of	80,290	80,290	100.00%
 LIECHTENSTEIN, Government of	24,996	24,996	100.00%
Totals	24,485,580	21,883,676	89.37%

Source: Trust Fund Fact Sheet for the WPHF on the UN MPTF Gateway <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>

It was reported that the WPHF gained momentum and received additional resources from donors and member states, and contributions from the private sector. Overall, 2018 was a year of significant growth for the WPHF and its capitalization and visibility. Resources mobilized in 2018 doubled compared to the previous year and USD 13 million were raised in 2018 alone (multi-year)¹³⁶. As a result of its resource mobilization efforts, three new donors joined the WPHF in 2018, namely Austria, the Netherlands and Norway. An effective and proactive Resource Mobilization Strategy¹³⁷ was pursued by the WPHF Secretariat which led to an enormous growth in funds.

WPHF Resource Mobilization Strategy

The WPHF has mobilized critical funding for CSOs and women’s organizations working on the front lines of conflict and crisis and for the development of longer terms plans to expand Fund activities across its 24 eligible counties. Consultations with stakeholders and document reviews show that the WPHF Secretariat has invested considerable time and energy in resource mobilization efforts with significant intensification of these efforts since 2017. During the period reviewed a resource mobilization strategy was developed, discussed with the Board and implemented. This included a systematic round of visits to donors, reaching out to the private sector and in parallel using a communications strategy to create awareness. All these activities yielded good results. The resource mobilization strategy is closely related to the partnership and communication strategy (cross reference to III ,6 & 7 on stakeholder engagement and communications).

¹³⁶ WPHF Annual Project narrative progress report-Secretariat of the WPHF 1January-31 December 2018

¹³⁷ Ibid

A significant resource mobilization strategy led by the Secretariat in 2018 with traditional donors comprised of: *Advocacy; Briefings of donors; Events* such as a high-level pledging event during UNGA on 27 September 2018, where 5 countries pledged support; *Bilateral meetings* in 2017 with 17 current and potential traditional donors; and a *Campaign* was launched - the 40by20 for women campaign, which aims to raise \$40 million by the end of 2020 for women peacebuilders and responders. USD 40 million is the amount needed for WPHF to be present in all its 24 eligible countries. October 2020 is the 20th anniversary for UNSCR 1325.

Expenditures by Project

The Table (5.3) below excerpted from the WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018, shows the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by participating organizations within each country as of December 2018 and a more updated report will be provided at the end of 2019. The average delivery rate across all five countries is 43 percent.

Table 5.3 Expenditure by Project within Country, as of 31 December 2018 (in US Dollars)

Country / Project No. and Project Title	Participating Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %	
Burundi						
00103750	ME Function of the Global Acce	UNWOMN NGO	1,274,047	1,274,047	986,629	77.44
Burundi Total			1,274,047	1,274,047	986,629	77.44
Colombia						
00104486	Disbursement to Colombia Post-	COL_MPTF	2,000,000	2,000,000	1,112,085	55.60
Colombia Total			2,000,000	2,000,000	1,112,085	55.60
Fiji						
00105450	ME Function of the Global Acce	UNWOMEN		998,995		0
00105450	ME Function of the Global Acce	UNWOMN NGO	1,994,095	995,100	616,651	61.97
Fiji Total			1,994,095	1,994,095	616,651	30.92
Iraq						
00112477	ME function of the Women's Pea	UNWOMN NGO	2,000,000	2,000,000	130,841	6.54
Iraq Total			2,000,000	2,000,000	130,841	6.54
Jordan						
00105709	ME function of the Global Acce	UNWOMN NGO	999,789	999,789	705,385	70.55
Jordan Total			999,789	999,789	705,385	70.55
Unidentified						
00105450	ME Function of the Global Acce	UNWOMEN		(998,995)		0
00105450	ME Function of the Global Acce	UNWOMN NGO		998,995		0
Unidentified Total						0
Grand Total			8,267,931	8,267,931	3,551,591	42.96

Source: Trust Fund Fact Sheet for the WPHF on the UN MPTF Gateway <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GAI00>

A key challenge : Stakeholders indicated that a main capacity challenge for the WPHF is having to mobilize adequate financial resources. This means that the WPHF Secretariat must consistently keep up a quickened pace in managing, sustaining the Fund, bringing in new donors, show casing the quality of the

grantees and strong results on the ground, and ensuring the fund is reaching the most marginalized¹³⁸.

Review Question: Do the Secretariat, the Administrative Agent and the Management Entities have appropriate resources to deliver on their respective role? Review the Fee Structure.

This question is addressed both in terms of capacity (human and financial resources) including **the fee structure** or financial resources available which have been stipulated for the Secretariat, the Administrative Agent and the Management Entities to deliver on their respective roles.

WPHF Secretariat

An analysis of data clearly indicated that while the Secretariat with its small team has carried out an “*enormous task*” and done an excellent job, it is understaffed and under-resourced¹³⁹. Until June 2019, the Secretariat was comprised of only 1 team member (the Head of the Secretariat) and 2 part time consultants (1,5 day per week and 2 days per week, respectively). Since June 2019, the global Secretariat team is comprised of 3 full time team members: Head of the Secretariat, one new full time Consultant recruited on country support, the Communications and Knowledge Management Analyst . A Consultant for the Private Sector works for the WPHF Secretariat 1 day a week.

The list of functions assumed by this small WPHF Secretariat have been immense and covered numerous tasks included “managing the Funds operational activities, and the planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation of the Fund Portfolio” and all that this encompasses as outlined in the Operations Manual (pages 16-18). While the WPHF Secretariat has a major responsibility for ensuring quality programming, implementation and monitoring, it has worked on a very limited budget since the start of the Fund to deliver on its role.

Stakeholders recognized that “*the Secretariat is hamstrung and especially as the fund activities expand which needs a high level of technical capacity, foresight and creativity in managing quality programming, and ensuring that at the country level it is concretely supporting capacity development and strengthening of CSOs, women -led organizations and reaching out to the marginalized*”¹⁴⁰.

The Operations Manual states that for the Secretariat “operating costs shall be charged to the Fund as direct costs (no more than 5 per cent)”. At the startup of the Fund the WPHF Secretariat faced challenges to begin with a 5 percent fee out of a total of about USD 3.5 million in contributions which was simply not adequate to initiate the Fund activities and meet the Secretariat costs. It was reported that UN Women subsidized the Secretariat cost in the early years. This situation has improved since with greater resources being mobilized by the WPHF as described above.

Many stakeholders concurred that a 5 percent fee structure does not rationally take into account the huge workload borne by a small team of 4 persons managing a global fund and trying to ensure quality programming and expansion. This fee needs to be assessed and revised at the earliest to match the volume of work being carried out. For example, to undertake effective communications and private sector strategies and reach out to a wide audience requires some very basic tools for startup, among others these include costs such as for websites, strong social media, advertisements and other costs. None of this can be adequately covered with a 5 per cent fee.

The case for increasing the fee remains strong and it was proposed that it be raised to **7 per cent** to continue the momentum of activities generated by the Fund and to build on these and expand.

¹³⁸ Stakeholder interview

¹⁴⁰ Stakeholder interview

The Operations Manual shows that adjustments can be made stating that “For the first year, the full requested amount based on resource mobilization targets shall be transferred to UN Women and adjustments can be made on the following years with the Funding Board’s approval depending on actual resources mobilized.”

Administrative Agent (MPTFO)

Respondents in the review confirmed that the UN MPTFO has the technical and staff capacity to administer the WPHF. The MPTFO is currently comprised of 25 persons including a Portfolio Manager, a Programme Associate and a Finance Officer who are responsible for administering funds including for the WPHF¹⁴¹. According to the Memorandum of Understanding , Standard Administrative Arrangement For Multi-Donor Trust Funds Using Pass-Through Fund Management “the Administrative Agent will be entitled to allocate an administrative fee of one percent (1%) of the Contribution by the Donor, to cover the Administrative Agent’s costs of performing the Administrative Agent’s functions¹⁴². The Operations Manual also stipulates a fee of 1 per cent for the services provided by the Administrative Agent as discussed earlier.

The 1 per cent fee according to UN Guidance is appropriate and not questionable¹⁴³ . It was acknowledged by all that the Administrative Agent has been most effective and efficient in supporting the WPHF and has delivered well on its role.

Management Entities (country level)

Similar to the WPHF Global Secretariat the Management Entity of the Fund at the country level undertakes a range of responsibilities¹⁴⁴ including risks, working closely with CSO partners across the conflict, peace, security and humanitarian continuum.

Stakeholders firmly reported that the entity is under staffed and under-resourced and the 7 percent fee structure does not cover all the tasks it performs and neither does the ME have the capacity and resources for capacity development of CSO partners which is a strategic and an integral part of its work and also time intensive. At the country level there is no specific ‘dedicated staff’ for the WPHF. The responsibilities for it fall within the general portfolio of other projects being managed by UN Women programme staff with competing demands on time.

A 7 percent fee allocated at country level to the Management Entities covers, to a certain extent, basic services such as grant-making, monitoring, financial and narrative reporting. However, this does not suffice to deliver on capacity building for civil society organizations – which is one of the key functions of the WPHF. The WPHF aims at reaching local, grassroot and community-based organizations, which has to go hand in hand with a strong capacity building component that looks at making these organizations strong and sustainable after the end of WPHF funding. Some innovative approaches, such as providing capacity building for applicants who failed the WPHF call for proposals in country, could also be explored.

A good practice towards this end would be to set aside a part of the Country allocation for capacity building purposes, which NSCs have adopted in some contexts such as Colombia and Iraq and needs to be duplicated. Specific guidelines could be produced and included in the Operations manual. In addition, it is suggested that a specific capacity building funding stream is established at the Global level, with the

¹⁴¹ Stakeholder interview

¹⁴² Standard Administrative Arrangement for Multi-Donor Trust Funds Using Pass-Through Fund Management

¹⁴³ Stakeholder interviews

¹⁴⁴ WPHF Operations Manual pages 20 -22

purpose not only to provide funding support for capacity building needs at the Country level, but also to support harmonized approaches and training modules for civil society organizations, through the WPHF Community of Practice.

While the above responds to the capacity building requirements of CSOs, it does not fully address the capacity requirement of the MEs, which play a critical oversight role for CSOs and the expanding number as the WPHF grows in size. These issues are highlighted in the MTR (cross reference with section on the Role of the Management Entities). The Funding Board and the WPHF will need to give due consideration to these expressed concerns to ensure effective implementation at the country level.

Review Question: Are funds disbursed in a timely manner?

It was reported and confirmed that the Administrative Agent disbursed funds in a timely manner and within 5 business days if all the necessary documents were received from the WPHF Secretariat. The MPTFO records provided evidence of this disbursement:

- Burundi – transfer of funds show that no delay was noted
- Columbia - no delay is noted in the disbursement record
- Jordan - no delay was noted in the records
- Pacific Islands - transfer finished within five-day business timeframe without any delay
- Iraq – transfer finished within five-day business timeframe without any delay

This data reflects the efficiency of the support extended by the Administrative Agent to the WPHF.

Review Question: Are the decisions regarding the projects to be funded properly informed?

For the most part stakeholders informed that decisions regarding the projects to be funded are properly informed and follow the requirements given in the formats, procedures and criteria for selection in the Operations Manual (pages 36-39) evident from the document review. Decisions for funding WPHF projects are made at the country level by the respective country level steering committees before being forwarded by the ME and country Technical Secretariat to the Global Secretariat, which then forwards the decisions on proposals to be funded to the Administrative Agent for transfers of the funds to UN Women. Information regarding the projects are checked at several levels for any information gaps that may exist.

Decisions on projects to be funded are made based on screening procedures which pass through several steps:

At the country level Secretariat: the country level technical secretariat ensures the following criteria are adhered to in the Operations Manual (page 36):

- Lead applicant is legally registered in the country
- Compliant with the call for proposal
- Correct usage of the template
- Inclusion of all mandatory information.

At the global Technical Secretariat level: UN Women MEs at country level submit the initially screened projects to the global Technical Secretariat, which further reviews the proposals to ensure projects meet the criteria in terms of (1) Programme management and monitoring, (2) Budget, (3) Project Design and Objectives and (4) Viability and national ownership (Operations Manual page 37). Following this review, it submits the short listed and technically endorsed proposals to the country Technical Secretariat confirming that the proposals are technically sound; or recommending that the proposal is not approved because it does not meet minimum technical standards.

The *country level Secretariat* forwards this information to the National Steering Committee at least ten working days in advance including the results of the full technical examination, recommendations and the full project proposals submitted. The steering committee members have adequate time to further review the project proposals.

The *National Steering Committee* then makes informed decisions on projects to be funded based on the shortlist and technical reviews provided but adds its own review of proposals and changes that may be required as proposed by the committee members and in the national context. Again, procedures are followed as given in the Operations Manual (page 39). The Steering Committee may recommend that CSOs provide more detailed information and revise projects proposals. For example, the minutes of the country level Steering Committee in Jordan show that the committee emphasized the need for proposals to have “*a defined M&E and sustainability plan with corresponding budget allocations*”¹⁴⁵.

One stakeholder reported that issues may arise such as when a CSO considered it deserved to be funded despite not passing the technical review and put pressure on the Steering Committee to fund its proposal. This was countered by the respective secretariat and appears to be an isolated case¹⁴⁶.

In summary and to the best of the information received by the MTR, findings show that decisions on projects to be funded are properly informed.

6. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Review Questions:

Has the Fund enabled and /or leveraged strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders at global, regional and country levels?

Has the Fund succeeded in engaging innovative partnerships to raise awareness and funds for WPHF?
What is the level of ownership shown by the different stakeholders involved in the Fund?

Review question: Has the Fund enabled and /or leveraged strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders at global, regional and country levels?

GLOBAL LEVEL

There is no one actor who can effectively implement the holistic approach required for the implementation of the WPHF. Partnerships and collective efforts of multiple stakeholders are critical in ensuring accountability to achieve the WPHF goal, and to draw in the comparative advantage and strengths and maximize synergies between partners. Stakeholders interviewed perceived this as most effective in building a broad base of support and ensuring sustainability of the WPHF initiatives. As a multi partner trust fund, partnerships are at the very core of the WPHF mechanism.

Strategic partnerships at the global level: Most stakeholders upheld that the WPHF Secretariat has done a “*great job*” and “*led exceptional and effective initiatives*” in identifying partners, building and strengthening strategic partnerships and alliances, diversifying partnerships including with diverse traditional and non-traditional stakeholders¹⁴⁷.

Partnership building is a *significant strategy* to achieve the WPHF goals and objectives and maximize women’s capacity for leadership and participation across the humanitarian peace, security and

¹⁴⁵ Minutes of the Country Level Steering Committee in Jordan (25 September 2018)

¹⁴⁶ Stakeholder interview

¹⁴⁷ Stakeholder interviews

development agenda. It is viewed as a tool for strengthening its knowledge management, capacity building and communication strategies. Stakeholders reported that partners selected by the WPHF are appropriate and strategic.

The WPHF has built partnership with UN entities and uses the UN Inter Agency Standing Committee to coordinate with UN agencies; with Member States to accelerate the WPHF goals as set out in the theory of change; and with CSOs working in the field of women, peace, security and humanitarian action including through the Funding Board. Some examples are given below:

▪ **Member states**

Very good partnerships have been established such as with the Government of Australia the largest donor to the WPHF which supported the WPHF secretariat by convening several donors round tables throughout 2018. Two briefing sessions were organized. The first one took place in April in Berlin, the second meeting took place in June in Geneva and focused on the Geneva humanitarian community. Overall, the partnership with Australia acting as a convener for other donors, has been instrumental in leveraging additional resources. It led up to the WPHF United Nations General Assembly pledging event and the launch of the 40by20 campaign¹⁴⁸.

Partnerships were successfully established with three new donors in 2018, the Netherlands, Austria, and Norway. As per the Dutch contribution earmarked for Mali, WPHF opened a new country allocation in Mali, as well as another allocation in Iraq.

▪ **Partnership between the WPHF and the Spotlight Initiative**

WPHF has established a partnership with the Spotlight Initiative which aims at eliminating violence against women and girls, seen as a major obstacle to the fulfilment of women's and girls' human rights and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. "The Spotlight Initiative is a way for the United Nations and the European Union to support a comprehensive approach to preventing and responding to Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in target countries and do so in innovative and new ways. The initiative builds on knowledge and lessons learned from past programmers"¹⁴⁹.

Stakeholder consultations indicated that the Spotlight Initiative reflects the core principles of the SDGs "leaving no one behind" and clearly connects with the objectives of the WPHF. This partnership with the Fund is highly appreciated¹⁵⁰.

- The Spotlight Initiative /WPHF Partnership covers 6 African countries (DRC, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, Liberia, Mali) with a focus on funding projects that respond to violence against women within the nexus of peace, security and humanitarian action.
- Grants range from \$20,000 to \$200,000 USD, up to 2 years
- Open Days were organized by the UN Women Country Offices to answer questions from prospective applicants: 65 participants in Liberia, 42 in Northern Nigeria, 32 in Uganda and 17 in Malawi¹⁵¹.

Concerns and issues raised: While many stakeholders saw the Spotlight Initiative as another exciting innovative effort of the WPHF partnerships, the MTR highlights some concerns expressed on issues of donor coordination and the different requirements in the Call for Proposals under the Spotlight Initiative

¹⁴⁸ WPHF Annual Narrative Progress Report -Secretariat of the WPHF 1 January -31, December 2018

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/spotlight-initiative/assets/pdf/spotlight.tor.08.pdf>

¹⁵⁰ Stakeholder interview

¹⁵¹ WPHF Funding Board Working Level Meeting Minutes,3 September 2019

which may likely be more complex for CSOs to address¹⁵². In this context it is important to ensure that partnership arrangements are based on a collaborative and coordinated approach. For example, suggestions were offered for the Pacific region:

- “To enhance donor collaboration, donor harmonization, and support partnership approaches in the Pacific region, donors need to be mindful not to duplicate efforts and harmonize donor support”.
- “Calls for proposals should be streamlined; additional requirements should be assessed in light of accessibility for grassroots organizations engagement”. Partners should recognize and understand that “donors have their own safeguards and due diligence issues that will need to be addressed”.
- “Recommend that grant rules and procedures, while meeting safeguards, be accessible to local CSOs – A question was raised, “Does WPHF support and guide the development of applications, as a capability building exercise for local CSOs?”

The MTR found that the above are important issues that the WPHF will need to take into consideration as it continues to strengthen and expand its partnership arrangements with multiple and diverse partners. Capacity building of local CSOs remains a high priority of the WPHF.

▪ **Group of Friends of 1325**

A stakeholder reported that partnerships with the Group of Friends of 1325 have been initiated. This is an informal or *ad hoc* group of UN member states who formed to advocate for the implementation of Resolution 1325 which is organized by Canada. The group brings together like-minded states to discuss and coordinate positions on issues pertaining to women, peace and security and to keep pressure on the UN system to implement resolution 1325. The group also consults with relevant NGOs (<https://www.peacewomen.org/node/97373>).

▪ **Civil Society:**

Good partnerships have been forged with civil society at the global level and with CSOs currently serving as funding board members such as the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), Women Enabled International and the Transitional Justice Institute. In the early two years of the WPHF the dynamic participation of the Global Network of Women Peace Builders (GNWP) and Cordaid on the Funding Board was recognized by stakeholders as having contributed substantially to the development of the WPHF Operations Manual. The WPHF provided GNWP with a partnership with eBay, and GNWP has contributed significantly to the resource mobilization efforts for the Secretariat.

Reports show that GNWP, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and Cordaid led three global projects in the field of knowledge management, capacity building and communications¹⁵³. CSOs expressed that they prioritize capacity building and networking for grassroots organizations and in heightening their leadership and participation at global and local level including in decision making. Stakeholders affirmed that partnerships with CSOs is a key WPHF approach.

Review Question: Has the Fund succeeded in engaging innovative partnerships to raise awareness and funds for WPHF?

¹⁵² Stakeholder interviews and email communications.

¹⁵³ WPHF Annual Report January -December 2016.

Private sector partnerships

An analysis of the data shows that almost all stakeholders concurred that the outreach to the private sector and to the public has been imaginative and innovative, positive results have been achieved and funds have been mobilized evident in the increased fund portfolio of the WPHF to date. Innovative partnerships have been galvanized with the private sector and were initiated in March 2017 when the Secretariat brought on board a Private Sector Consultant who works for one and half day per week. Stakeholders confirmed that the Consultant has done an “excellent work” and paved the path for diversifying the WPHF partnership portfolio by reaching out to partners who are totally new to the subject of women’s leadership in the humanitarian peace, security and development spheres.

Though the private sector partnership initiative is creative, it is a highly competitive field in which other UN agencies such as UNDP, UNICEF are also vying for partnerships with the private sector. The suggestion was made that for greater efficiency a collective effort better coordinated by the UN should be pursued. It was also informed that the UN Deputy Secretary General is creating a focal point for the private sector¹⁵⁴.

Private Sector Partnership Strategy

Reports show that the WPHF has divided private sector donors into five categories – corporations, foundations, high-net worth individuals, women’s philanthropic organizations, and the public via crowdfunding. WPHF’s private sector strategy and operating plan were developed by May 2017.

Stakeholders described that working with the private sector has been a whole new area of exploration, trial and error as well. Corporations have never heard of WPHF. Foundations are a little easier to approach as they have some idea of what is implied by the WPHF having been exposed to other international organizations including UNICEF.

The private sector partnership strategy is guided by key needs, priorities and action and prioritizes donor groups. It is displayed in a simple manner in Box 9.

The Secretariat attended a cause marketing conference in Chicago, USA to raise awareness of the WPHF’s work among corporations and foundations and to accelerate corporate partnerships. *“It is important to be able to package and sell our issues in an accessible and emotionally compelling way emphasizing the problem and positioning WPHF as the solution”¹⁵⁵.*

<p>Box 9. Reaching out to the private sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness • Build on resources they have • Encourage private sector to donate • Create a win -win situation <p style="text-align: right;"><i>-Stakeholder interview</i></p>
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The Private Sector Consultant introduced WPHF to individuals from 15+ corporations and foundations and secured contact information for an additional 50 companies. Messaging was tested with this audience and tweaked to see what parts of WPHF’s work were most appealing to corporate and foundation audiences.

Findings from the WPHF Annual Reports and stakeholder discussions show that a key emphasis has been on driving the visibility of the Fund. In December 2017, the WPHF secured American actress Kristen Bell as its global advocate. Possible crowdfunding options were explored to raise funds by engaging the public. Increasing visibility has included having private sector entities attend the Fund’s UNGA side event; having

¹⁵⁴ Stakeholder interview

¹⁵⁵ Funding Board Working Level Meeting 18 May 2017

meetings with corporations, foundations, and philanthropic advisors to high-net-worth individuals; working with celebrities to amplify WPHF message; and encouraging the public to donate through social media campaigns.

Table 3. Private Sector Outreach

WPHF Private Sector Outreach Summary March to December 2017
1 celebrity advocate
1 Cause Marketing Conference attended
100 organizations researched for potential partnership
65 companies and 15 PR and CSR agencies that represent corporations pitched
30 companies were provided with additional information
8 meetings with corporations
7 Meetings with PR and CSR Agencies
3 meetings with prominent foundations
3 meetings with influencers who sit on or work for foundations
1 meeting with a financial advisory firm for high-net worth individuals

Source: WPHF Annual Narrative Progress Report -Secretariat of the WPHF 1 January -31, December 2017

A stakeholder reported that that three strong partnerships have been developed with DELL, Starbucks and 180 LA as seen in Box 10.

Other shorter-term partners:

In 2018, the Secretariat worked with eBay on a charity auction where WPHF Global Advocate, Kristen Bell, auctioned off a visit to the set of her TV show, The Good Place. In June, WPHF was selected for TripAdvisor’s employee volunteer campaign where two employees donated their time to translate the WPHF website into other languages.

Samsung provided USD 50,000; Kristen Bell has helped to bring in funds through her 14 million followers using language that resonates with her audience. ‘Omaze’ company has offered a once in a lifetime experience through a raffle trip to Los Angeles to view the movie Frozen 2.

Partnerships and Visibility Opportunities

It is reported that the Secretariat secured a partnership with the Empire State Building in September 2018, to facilitate a lighting ceremony with WPHF Global Advocate Kristen Bell¹⁵⁶. The purpose was to promote the mission and further raise visibility of the fund with the general public. This free partnership strategically leveraged Kristen Bell’s celebrity profile to enhance awareness of the fund by lighting up one of the world’s most

Box 10. Three Strong Partnerships with the WPHF

Starbucks: In its corporate strategy it includes a focus on women and girls. A partnership has been undertaken with Starbucks in the DRC where Starbucks is funding a project improving the situation of women and girls in the coffee and, tea and cocoa plantations . It is funding a WPHF project in the DRC that focuses on women’s economic empowerment reaching about 400 women.

DELL: has offered its pro bono services to help establish a knowledge management platform which will function as a community of practice for the WPHF. DELL is looking for ways to be engaged in social issues.

180 LA: It is a company providing crowd funding support.

(Source: Stakeholder interview)

¹⁵⁶ WPHF Annual narrative Progress Report -Secretariat of the WPHF 1 January -31, December 2018

celebrated landmarks in honor of women peacebuilders and humanitarians that WPHF supports around the world.

Review question: What is the level of ownership shown by the different stakeholders involved in the Fund?

The findings indicate that a very good level of ownership is demonstrated by member states, CSOs and the Spotlight Initiative given that the WPHF objectives align with their own priorities and commitments to the WPS and humanitarian agenda and on VAWG. However, it is difficult and not simple to ascertain the level of ownership among the different private sector stakeholders (the Consultant did not hold any interviews with private sector partners). It is likely that the shorter-term private sector partners may have a lesser level of ownership in comparison with those in a longer partnership arrangement. It will also depend on the kind of partnership experienced with the WPHF, results achieved and their corporate agendas'. It is too early to assess at this stage.

COUNTRY LEVEL -partnerships

At the country level, variances exist in partnerships and ownership levels of stakeholders (government, UN, donors and CSOs) who partner with the WPHF through the steering committee structure. Stakeholder interviews show that partnerships of UN Women with government and UN agencies in countries such as Burundi, Jordan, Iraq are considered strategic and useful and there is a good level of ownership in the WPHF by the Steering Committees such as in Iraq and Jordan. Partnerships with CSOs in all countries reviewed are strong, cordial and working well in favor of the WPHF with a high level of ownership demonstrated by CSOs in the WPHF.

However, the findings also indicate that partnerships at the country level need to be extended including to various institutions, women’s human rights organizations, the media and the public as it is crucial in ensuring that the WPHF objectives are met as a collective effort and sustainable. Such efforts will require strong capacity at the ME level in the country.

To summarize: The partnership approach implemented by the WPHF scores well as a highly effective strategy that is contributing to the goals of the WPHF and building commitment of partners and sustainability. The MTR finds that assessing partnerships and ownership is often difficult as a long-time scale is required to realize the impact.

The *challenge* for the WPHF will be to nurture and sustain the dynamics of partnerships with a wide array of partners and to ensure consolidation of these alliances over the long term. A key challenge is to expand and promote strong partnerships at the country level with government, donors, civil society and grass roots institutions to sustain and expand the WPHF initiatives. Building strategic alliances and partnerships is essential and a good practice. Successful and strategic engagement with a wide range of key partners is critical to effect change.

7. COMMUNICATIONS

**Review Questions: Review internal communications with stakeholders:
Is communication regular effective?
Are there key stakeholders left out of communication?
Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of programme results?**

Communications Strategy: The Fund has designed a communications strategy that encompasses a wide range of communications and public advocacy initiatives to develop and deepen the communications infrastructure and enhance the Fund’s internal and external communications, visibility and global reach¹⁵⁷ as reviewed below.

Internal communications with stakeholders

At the country level

Stakeholders confirmed that internal communications at the country level consist of:

- Day to day communication between the UN Women staff responsible for the WPHH and close communication with the UN Women Representative, conducted face to face, by emails or by phone.
- Communications with the WPHF partners are frequent, good and regular and respond to specific needs of CSOs, and are conducted face-to-face, by email or phone exchanges.
- Quarterly updates which are country specific are held with the WPHF Secretariat over Skype and are found to be useful in sharing progress and challenges, and how best to address these.
- When clarifications or other support are required, the WPHF Secretariat has responded promptly with appropriate guidance.
- Skype calls have been arranged by the WPHF Secretariat to link the 5 countries/group of countries implementing the WPHF projects. While this is considered a good communication method, some respondents indicated that language barriers limit ease of conversation across the 5 countries /sub-countries.
- The Burundi staff responsible for the WPHF have requested a *residential workshop* with all countries to engage in ‘face to face’ exchanges on the WPHF and in sharing of lessons learned which could be beneficial for all. This is awaiting a response from the WPHF Secretariat.
- Skype and emails are regular communication channels for internal communications.

Internal communications at the country level were assessed as regular and satisfactory and were found to be useful and effective. Face to face exchanges with all five WPHF countries are preferred in order to create a new dynamic between these countries in sharing of experiences and peer learning.

External communications with national stakeholders

Informant interviews show that communications with a broad range of external stakeholders and institutions at the country level varies for each country. Besides steering committees’ meetings which bring national partners together and provide a platform for exchange, efforts have been made in all countries to collect stories of change and photos. In some instances, as in Colombia, it was reported that 10 innovative communications initiatives were led by students of secondary schools, and 644 women used the “ELLAS” mobile application to address GBV issues. Social media has also been used to give greater visibility and inform stakeholders on the WPHF.

However, it was recognized by country level stakeholders that this is an area that deserves greater attention and needs to be strengthened. Key reasons stated for limited in communications work with external stakeholders, such as in Burundi, are the technical and staff capacity constraints of the Management Entity of the WPHF.

At the global level

Internal communications: The Review found that internal communications at the global level within the WPHF Secretariat and its small team are regular, frequent, efficient and aimed to accomplish the

¹⁵⁷ WPHF Annual Project narrative progress report -Secretariat of the WPHF January -December 2018.

tasks of the Secretariat and carried out through emails, Skype and phone calls. The Communications, Advocacy and Knowledge Management Analyst who since June 2019 is working full time (previously it was for one and a half days per week for two years) has also maintained good internal communications and contact with the UN Women WPHF focal points in the country offices.

Building communications capacity in WPHF countries: The communications, advocacy and knowledge management work focuses on building the capacity of not only the 5 countries covered by the MTR but also the 12 countries where the WPHF is now operational and responsibilities have expanded. The objective is to put systems and infrastructure in place at the country level to enhance both internal communications and facilitate country offices to have the capacity to communicate with national stakeholders. In this context the Communications and Knowledge Management Analyst undertook a field mission to Burundi in 2017 to support the communications effort¹⁵⁸.

Communications support to Burundi: In this context the Communications and Knowledge Management Analyst undertook a week-long communications field mission to Burundi in February 2018 to support the communications effort¹⁵⁹. The purpose of this mission was to strengthen the communication skills and capacity of UN Women ME and the WPHF grantees to better understand the importance of good communication and strategies to document the impact of projects supported by the Fund. A one-day communications training, attended by UN Women staff and WPHF partners was followed by 4 days of field visits in the provinces which consisted of taking photos, collecting testimonies that could be helpful to communicate about the WPHF, and a final presentation was made of assets collected.

Staff at the UN Women office confirmed to the International Consultant on her Field Mission to Burundi in September 2019, that the technical support from the WPHF Secretariat had been very useful. However, because of limited staff capacity in the UN Women office and technical expertise in this subject the follow up on communications is currently limited but needs to be pursued¹⁶⁰.

Such communications missions for capacity building could prove to be very useful for other country offices as well. More resources, funds, time and effort need to be invested to achieve impact through effective communications.

Review Questions: Review external communications: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the Funds progress and Intended impact.

External communications: Communications with external partners and stakeholders is equally important. It is reported that in February 2017, the Secretariat hired a part-time communications analyst to review initial communications initiatives, identify key challenges, and map out strategic communications goals to raise the global visibility of the WPHF over the year. The WPHF Secretariat followed a systematic and energetic pathway in developing a comprehensive communications strategy and implementing an impressive range of communications and outreach initiatives, as was informed in stakeholder discussions and the WPHF documents reviewed.

Consulted stakeholders highly commended the work of the Communications Advocacy and Knowledge Management Analyst and the WPHF Secretariat as being “*excellent and extremely effective*”¹⁶¹. It has created impact, contributed to elevating the visibility of the Fund, increased awareness of the WPHF in

¹⁵⁸ Stakeholder Interview

¹⁵⁹ Stakeholder Interview

¹⁶⁰ Refer to Burundi Case Study December 2019.

¹⁶¹ Stakeholder interviews

the public sphere and has helped to effectively mobilize resources. The findings show that well considered priorities were followed through with concrete activities and proper means of communications were established to express progress and intended impact. The communications process at the global level has been intensive.

Identifying Core Communications priorities

Core communications priorities were identified as displayed in Box 11.

Implementation of key communication priorities

Brand Awareness: In April 2017, the WPHF Secretariat finalized a multi-channel brand redesign process, to enhance overall marketability and name recognition with the wider public. This comprehensive brand refresh included an official name change, from the former **Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) on Women, Peace, and Security and Humanitarian Action** to the current “**Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)—A United Nations & Civil Society Partnership**.”

Website Development. WPHFund.org was launched in September 2017. In 2017, the WPHF website gained an average of 500 unique users per month, with the highest concentration of users visiting from the United States. In 2018 the Secretariat increased all key website metrics of WPHFund.org. The highest concentration of WPHF website visitors are from the United States, followed by Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and France¹⁶².

Social Media-and expanding social reach: Starting in February 2017, WPHF generated enhanced online visibility and engaged growing audiences through the establishment of organizational pages on three popular social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. WPHF has successfully grown its combined social media audience from 800 followers at the end of 2017 to over 4,500 followers at the end of 2018¹⁶³.

Visibility Events: Several visibility events have been held such as the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund held a high-level event to bring global awareness to the central role of women’s organizations in sustaining peace in March 2017 during the 61st session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In October 2017, a second high-level event was coordinated in partnership with GNWP and Cordaid to spotlight the gap in global financing and encourage increased financial support for women working in situations of conflict.

40 X20 for women global campaign

WPHF launched the 40 x 20 for women global campaign in 2018 aimed to mobilize USD \$40 million by the end of 2020 to support community-based, grassroots women’s organizations across its 24 eligible countries. Already more than half-way towards its ambitious funding target, WPHF is engaging with government donors, individuals, companies and celebrities to raise awareness and support (WPHF 4 pager).

Box 11. Core communications priorities identified

- Brand Awareness
- Media Outreach
- Website development
- High level visibility events
- Social media management
- Partnerships with social influencers
- Cultivation of contact lists
- Establishment of centralized communications guidelines

¹⁶² WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018

¹⁶³ Ibid

A more recent visibility event held Monday October 28, 2019 at the UN by the WPHF was the launching of the one-year countdown to UNSCR 1325+20 “Investing in Women Peacebuilders and Humanitarian Responders” 365 days of Action¹⁶⁴.

Communications Guidelines

A Communications Guidelines prepared by the WPHF Secretariat was shared with the MTR. It shows that the Guidelines are clearly and precisely detailed for applicability at the global and country level and provide guidance for partners to communicate effectively on the work of projects funded by WPHF.

Women’s Peace & Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Communications and Public advocacy Guidelines
The guidelines are meant to provide guidance for managing partners and project grantees to communicate effectively on the work of projects funded by WPHF.
Source: WPHF Secretariat, October 2019

The guidelines created in 2017 are being updated for managing partners and grantees in the field to have clear information regarding basic communications policies and procedures of WPHF; information about WPHF’s visual identity and guidance for the use of its logos; guidance for producing communications materials related to implementing WPHF-supported programs; providing information and raising global visibility of local projects for WPHF’s use, including quotes, case studies, interviews; and to provide useful resources for in-country partners to support the accurate representation of WPHF¹⁶⁵. Stakeholders confirmed that other communications measures are also very effective and consist of :

Advocacy Video & Publication: In 2018, the Secretariat conceptualized and produced a 1-minute informational video narrated by WPHF Global Advocate Kristen Bell. It introduces the mission of the WPHF and its primary functions to general English-speaking audiences in a compelling and accessible format. In addition, the WPHF drafted, designed, and published an advocacy brochure outlining the goals of its new “40x20 for Women” Campaign¹⁶⁶.

DELL supports the development of a digital knowledge management platform for the WPHF.
-Stakeholder interview

Knowledge production and management: Stakeholder discussions revealed that a knowledge management initiative is being developed with pro bono support of DELL as a partnership was secured with the company. The plan is to create a knowledge management platform as an online **community of practice** where WPHF grantees can share and exchange knowledge products, access resources, hold webinars. The platform is informed by a survey conducted with WPHF CSO partners. DELL is building on this data and creating a digital platform which will be functional by 2020¹⁶⁷.

Many stakeholders indicated that communications have created awareness in the UN, among member states, donors, CSOs and the public all of whom may visit the website.

The extent to which stakeholders have been left out is hard to determine in this broad field. As the MTR highlights, stakeholders at the country level need to be reached in a more concerted manner. The

¹⁶⁴ WPHF Secretariat
¹⁶⁵ WPHF Annual narrative Progress Report -Secretariat of the WPHF 1 January -31, December 2017.
¹⁶⁶ WPHF Annual narrative Progress Report -Secretariat of the WPHF 1 January -31, December 2018
¹⁶⁷ Stakeholder interview

translation of the website into other languages will enhance the reach to those left out. A group that needs to be reached more deliberately is youth (young men and women) given their high stake in gender equitable and peaceful societies.

8. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability of the WPHF is critical for scaling up and replicating the WPHF supported project initiatives on a wider basis and sustaining the results/gains at the country and community level. Sustainability is related to generating an enabling environment in support of women's leadership and participation at the community and national level. In terms of the likelihood of sustaining the benefits of the WPHF, the results achieved to-date are important though risks and challenges related to sustainability are also present.

The assessment shows that some key elements of sustainability were incorporated in the design of the WPHF such as:

- The establishment of country level steering committees and/or use of existing steering committees (Colombia and Burundi) comprised of a partnership between government, UN, donors, and civil society is an important mechanism that anchors the WPHF activities to ensure sustainability. The Steering Committee in Jordan felt that an increased effort was needed to ensure sustainability and it has given due attention to this issue as reflected in the Minutes of the Steering Committee meetings. It emphasized that proposals should focus on and *“elaborate sounder sustainability and exit strategies”*¹⁶⁸. The MTR received information on the Country Sustainability Strategy prepared by Burundi and signed by the Resident Coordinator¹⁶⁹. This is according to the requirements in the WPHF Operations Manual which includes a Country Sustainable Strategy (Annex 6 page 80).
- A project proposal assessment format from Palestine incorporates an element of sustainability that was assessed by the WPHF¹⁷⁰. The WPHF Operations Manual provides a template for project document development (Annex 2 page 57) that includes a section on *sustainability*, however, the MTR did not receive detailed country project documents for the review.
- The Call for Proposals from 5 countries/group of countries reviewed by the MTR, found no reference to sustainability issues in these proposals. It may be useful to also add 'sustainability' in the Call for Proposals.
- The minutes of the Funding Board working level meeting of May 2, 2018¹⁷¹ indicate that initial discussions were held on the WPHF's exit strategy. Several options were discussed but it is not clear if any specific decisions were made at the time.
- The approach in the WPHF design to invest in local civil society organizations while at the same time developing their capacity has a strong sustainability element for sustaining gains beyond the WPHF funding cycle for projects.
- The emphasis of the WPHF on building synergies and partnerships with local actors and institutions and collaboration with them, contributes to a commonality of purpose with potential for continuity and sustainability of the WPHF activities.

Some factors likely to contribute to sustainability of the WPHF include:

¹⁶⁸ Minutes of the Jordan Country level Steering Committee meetings March 26, 2017, and 25 September 2018.

¹⁶⁹ WPHF Country Sustainability Strategy, Burundi (undated).

¹⁷⁰ WPHF Project proposal assessment form Palestine(2019)

¹⁷¹ Minutes of the Funding Board Working level meeting May 2, 2018 (the minutes did not give the year, I assume this was 2018.)

Creating an enabling environment

A key potential factor for sustainability of the WPHF is creating an enabling environment to ensure women's leadership and participation in the humanitarian, peace, security and development nexus including their important role in decision making in conflict preventions and peace building. This is a key pillar in the TOC and a major outcome. For example, in Iraq, WPHF supported projects to create an enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments. This included providing support to CSOs and women's organizations to spearhead relevant interventions which are beginning to have results at the community level. In Burundi, evidence exists that in targeted communities of the WPHF a more enabling environment has been generated at the local level for women's active leadership and participation in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and economic recovery efforts working in partnership with local government which further lends sustainability. Such efforts will need to be continued and sustained.

Institutional sustainability at the Steering Committee level and local ownership

The functioning of the steering committees varies between the countries reviewed. Good ownership was demonstrated by the NSCs e.g. in Jordan and Iraq which is an important factor for sustainability of the WPHF. But since the WPHF has been in operation for a short period of time it cannot be conclusively stated that all requirements of national ownership have been met. However, in all countries the steering committees provide a clear mechanism for partnership building (between government, CSOs UN and donors), coordinating on and integrating the WPHF initiatives into relevant government policies and programmes that would contribute to sustainability. This is evident e.g. in Jordan where the government is moving towards an integrated process of planning that includes both humanitarian and development priorities and to which the WPHF is aligned. In Burundi, the WPHF efforts are well supported by government at national, provincial, commune and colline level.

Investments in local grantees' capacities and expertise

The WPHF strategy to invest in local CSOs to design, implement, monitor and report on projects produces greater impact and sustainability. It supports localization and grounding initiatives in the realities that exist and are context specific to each country. The experience and technical knowledge gained by CSOs in the country, if shared more broadly would build a strong base for sustaining actions related to the WPHF objectives. Strengthening the network of women mediators in Burundi and working through this network demonstrates a strong element of sustainability. Increased ownership by civil society is evident in the WPHF supported countries and noted in the implementation of projects at the community level and results achieved to date which contribute to sustainability.

At the level of 'rights holders'/women beneficiaries

An important dimension of sustainability is the new knowledge, skills, and capacities developed by rights holders/women beneficiaries in conflict prevention, fostering social cohesion and peace building, advancing their economic life and self-sufficiency and taking on important leadership roles in humanitarian responses. All of these are valuable permanent assets that contribute to sustainability at the individual and community level. Women's contributions to family income and their knowledge about managing household finance are empowerment gains likely to be sustained beyond the project periods. However, women's IGAs might not be sustainable without establishing better links to markets and other resources. Especially if their IGAs are sustained, women are likely to maintain increased confidence in both the private and public spheres.

Financial Sustainability

The findings show that the issue of financial sustainability of the Fund was addressed by the Funding Board and the WPHF Secretariat from almost the time that the WPHF was launched in 2016. At the time

the WPHF Secretariat drafted the Resource Mobilization Strategy and has successfully implemented it with dramatic increases in funds realized in 2018 and at the time of writing the MTR (October 2019) .

Sustainability even in the best cases remains dependent upon strong political commitment, available resources and the capacity of partners at global and country level to sustain commitment and momentum towards the WPHF goals. Support for the above sustainability elements needs to be strengthened and continued by the WPHF.

IV. CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED, GOOD PRACTICES

Key Challenges

High volatility in the security, political and humanitarian situations: Stakeholders indicated that high levels of volatility in security, political or humanitarian situations accompanied with uncertainty and instability are a major challenge in the WPHF supported countries covered in the MTR. A changing political environment, changes in government, social unrest, political instability, and natural disasters directly and indirectly impact project implementation.

A lack of security and stability reduces the ability of development agencies and civil society to operate in many areas and to effectively implement projects and deliver services, especially to remote areas. This disproportionately impacts on women and girls' access to services. Security challenges also exacerbate women's physical mobility because of their concern with the threats of violence to their own physical security.

Details on the said challenges in the 5 countries/group of countries have been elaborated in the WPHF Annual Report January- December 2018 (under the section new developments) and is cross referenced here to avoid repetition. The 'Burundi Case Study' also elaborates the challenges in the country context and these are not repeated here.

Capacity challenges: A major challenge that emerged for the effective and efficient implementation of the WPHF is the limited capacity of key actors at different levels as reported to the MTR.

Capacity of CSOs and women-led organizations: It was reported from all countries that the capacity of CSOs and small women-led organizations is limited in skills and knowledge in project development, management, monitoring and reporting impeding their efficiency and effectiveness in project implementation. Language barriers are an added challenge in writing quarterly project progress reports. CSOs face challenges in having adequate financial resources to continue and sustain activities.

Capacity of beneficiaries: Women participants particularly in rural areas have low levels of education and skills which pose difficulties for implementing partners e.g. when providing training in financial literacy or other as was indicated in Burundi.¹⁷² Women beneficiaries/participants need deliberate enhanced support in 'empowerment' aspects including decision-making and in managing their economic activities.

Capacity of the UN Management Entities (MEs): This issue was raised in many stakeholder consultations regarding the limited capacity both financial and staff capacity of the UN Management Entities to effectively support increasing numbers of CSOs and undertake M&E, there being no dedicated staff as such for the WPHF. In the Pacific islands, a small operation team as well as a high level of turnover within the staff are related challenges that impact project implementation¹⁷³.

¹⁷² Stakeholder interviews

¹⁷³ Stakeholder interview

Capacity of the WPHF Secretariat: Despite the impressive work carried out by the WPHF Secretariat, its capacity is constrained both financially and in terms of human resources to manage an expanding global initiative within a 5 percent fee structure and to undertake effective M&E activities. While the WPHF takes pride in its lean management structure, low overhead costs and frugal management in order to drive more resources to projects at the country level; its efficiency may be impeded by an overload of tasks for a small team. Resource mobilization undertaken by the Secretariat is a huge challenge requiring large investments in time and effort. As such, key functions, such as monitoring, and evaluation have received lesser attention.

Persisting gender barriers in countries where the WPHF operates: Challenges were reported by a WPHF partner in Jordan, where social and gender barriers limit the ability of partners to identify girls who could potentially be in a situation for early marriage. Girls and their families often hide the subject of engagement, for fear of depriving girls of education or discriminating against them. In addition, in some cases pushback are observed and discussions are made complicated for partners when it comes to emergency contraception or SGBV, since they are misconstrued. These barriers also made it difficult for women in Jordan to accept job offers¹⁷⁴.

In the Pacific it was reported that several projects such as Medical Services Pacific (MSP), Samoa Red Cross Society and OXFAM face social structural barriers which impede programmatic advances. For example, MSP reports that if men are not engaged in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) awareness and education, then women of childbearing age face difficulties to access SRHR services. When accessing family planning services, women may face parental disapproval/fear, spousal or in-law disapproval; may under-report sexual and physical violence or child abuse. Therefore, MSP continues to engage men and women and discuss reproductive rights and services to ensure all can access MSP's SRHR services¹⁷⁵.

Annual turnover of projects and CSO partners: The WPHF Operations Manual stipulates that projects should be formulated for a maximum period of 3 years¹⁷⁶. The Secretariat stated that project duration is for two years and this is the common practice in the countries reviewed. Stakeholders in Burundi reported concerns at the turnover of partners and projects every year because of the short duration of projects—one year only as stipulated in the call for proposals. Launching calls for proposals in the same country every year has proven to be extremely challenging. It led the JSC to approve projects for one year only, which is a very short implementation period. It affects the efficiency and continuity of the project and impacts the capacity development of partners and their ability to achieve substantial and good results in a short time span. It also strains the capacity of the ME in the tasks related to this approach. Respondents in Burundi emphasized that projects and partnerships should be extended to *three years* instead of one year and should apply a programmatic approach¹⁷⁷. The Pacific island countries indicated the same.

LESSONS LEARNED

A critical role for civil society organizations in conflict prevention, sustaining peace and supporting localization

Stakeholders affirmed that civil society and women-led organizations play a critical role in preventing

¹⁷⁴ Annual Project Narrative Progress Report 2018, Jordan.

¹⁷⁵ Annual Project Narrative Report 2018, Fiji Multi Country Office

¹⁷⁶ The MTR reviewed and found that the WPHF Operations Manual, May 2019, Annex 2 Template for the Project Document page 58 footnote 33, also pages 37 and 76 stipulate a maximum duration for projects for **3 years**

¹⁷⁷ Burundi Case Study October 2019.

conflicts, in mediation, resolving conflicts, engaging in gender sensitive humanitarian responses, economic recovery and peace building. Working in tense political contexts as in Burundi, CSOs and women's organizations have attempted to keep a low political profile at the national level and increase their investment in locally driven activities. The "Burundi Case Study" has elaborated this important role¹⁷⁸ and it is cross referenced here.

CSOs and women-led organizations with their knowledge and understanding of the grassroots and links to poor rural women at the community level gives them legitimacy as important agents for change. They are best situated to drive the momentum towards the WPHF objectives. WPHF support for women's agency, power and influence needs to align with locally driven changes and realities and should be flexible. It builds the momentum towards *localization* of the WPHF initiative.

It is stated in the WPHF terms of reference that "*humanitarian, peace and security and development assistance continue to operate in silos. They each have different aims follow different principles, operate over different spatial and temporal scales and are aligned with different budget lines and rules managed by different actors*"¹⁷⁹. In each of the five countries/group of countries reviewed, examples have been given of how CSO supported projects have broken silos responding to the realities on the ground and focusing on a '*localized*' approach.

The experience in the five countries also shows that investing funds and capacity building support for CSOs could have far reaching impact at the local level including in strengthening and capacities of rights holders. In Burundi, a total of over 52,075 women beneficiaries were reached since 2017¹⁸⁰ through different project activities. Notwithstanding the potential of CSOs, their organizational capacities need to be strengthened with concrete technical and financial support in project development, management and monitoring for results, as was brought out in many stakeholder discussions.

The WPHF had planned to invest a minimum of 50 percent of the funding in civil society organizations when it was established in 2016. However, in practice the WPHF has invested 100 percent of its resources into civil society organizations, recognizing that the Fund's niche added value was in support of CSOs¹⁸¹.

Contrary to the existing narrative of the limited absorption capacity of women led and women's rights civil society organizations, WPHF experience has shown that in certain contexts, needs are immense. In Iraq, WPHF received 96 applications when running its call for proposals. In June 2018 it was only able to support 8 projects. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) 570 applications were received in 2019. In Burundi, CSOs confirmed that they have absorptive capacity, and a high demand is demonstrated by them to engage in the WPHF effort.

A narrowing public space for many CSOs and small women's organizations working in difficult and fragile contexts means finding innovative ways of supporting them; such as supporting women's organizations in their training programmes; in improved support for information; mobility; communications activities, and encouraging small CSOs which may not have the administrative capacity to submit proposals and partner with a larger organizations to access WPHF funds. This was done in Burundi where four CSOs that applied separately for funding, on different issues (conflict prevention and economic recovery) ended up working together around the same objective with good guidance of the UN Women Office in Burundi.

Partnerships and collective efforts

¹⁷⁸ Refer to Burundi Case Study, October 2019.

¹⁷⁹ WPHF Terms of Reference updated, May 2019

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

¹⁸¹ WPHF Annual Report January-December 2018

A key lesson learned is that partnerships and stakeholder engagement at the global and country level as demonstrated in the WPHF activities has galvanized a broad base of support and joint commitment towards implementation of the WPHF objectives. The partnership strategy has been most effective with promising results. The depth and quality of partnerships varies including in specific country contexts and it requires a longer time to assess the durability of partnerships. Moving forward, it will be increasingly important that the WPHF continue to leverage, expand and nurture strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders and extend partnerships at the country level.

Women's participation in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and economic recovery needs a long-term perspective

An important lesson from all five countries/group of countries is that women's leadership and participation in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, economic recovery and development as implemented through the WPHF supported projects is a significant narrative that emerges from the work carried out. In Burundi the WPHF funding since 2016 enabled women to play a key role in conflict prevention and in bolstering social cohesion and economic recovery. It strengthened the nationwide network of women mediators which played a lead role. However, to have sustained impact it requires a *long-term perspective* in order that interventions can mature, become grounded and strengthen women's empowerment and the continuity of their efforts and sustainability. There are no quick and easy solutions or pathways to reach these important goals.

Engaging with men in the WPHF projects

In the Pacific islands, it is reported that OXFAM experienced gender barriers in encouraging women who were trained and equipped with leadership skills in disaster risk reduction from taking up leadership roles within disaster committees and other disaster management decision-making structures. To counter these barriers, OXFAM programme staff increased dialogue with and among men and women in the disaster committees to enable an environment where women's participation in leadership roles was supported by men at the community and provincial levels.

Stakeholders reported that in Iraq, WPHF projects are engaging religious leaders, policemen and community leaders (mostly men) who are key social influencers, to participate in discussions with women's groups to gain an understanding of and become aware of women's priorities and concerns.

The Burundi Case Study highlighted that engaging men in support of women's empowerment in peace building, security and economic issues has been *strategically important* to bring about more attitudinal changes and address gender barriers. Men's participation in the community dialogues organized by women mediators created greater awareness on women's issues and concerns. Several women in the group discussions in Burundi recounted how their husbands are more supportive, respect their economic initiatives and peace building activities and are more engaged. It is important and effective for women to identify common peacebuilding needs with men, such as security and economic development issues that could be well supported by them

Tailored approaches will be needed that provide incentive and motivation for men's participation such as identifying in consultation with them common economic development, security and peace building issues where they can best support women's efforts.

GOOD PRACTICES

Creating platforms for dialogue

A good practice highlighted by stakeholders are the platforms for dialogue that have been created by CSOs in several countries to bring diverse stakeholders together to discuss key concerns of women in the community in humanitarian, post- conflict and development related contexts. In Iraq, women have found a non-threatening space to share their issues and concerns. Very conservative women are coming forward and for the first time they have a voice, thus empowering them in this process. In Burundi, the nationwide network of women mediators has organized platforms for community dialogue that bring the divergent views of women, men, youth and other actors on issues of preventing conflict and promoting social cohesion. Reconciliation dialogues and exchanges between rural women and ex-combatant FARC women were promoted in Colombia. In Jordan platforms for dialogue were opened between Syrian refugee women and Jordanian women to promote social cohesion.

Engaging youth (young women and men)in conflict prevention peacebuilding and economic recovery

Reaching out to youth (young women and men) and engaging them in peacebuilding activities and economic recovery is found to be a good practice in countering an environment of instability and violence. This is demonstrated in Burundi in targeted communities where youth previously involved in the conflict situation in 2015 in the country have demonstrated a keen interest to be engaged in positive changes in their communities. Youth face enormous economic pressures and unemployment, a key trigger for conflict. They are often viewed as instruments to support political interests. Women mediators galvanized work on this front by motivating youth in productive livelihood and in peace building activities as integrated and parallel interventions. Some early results are becoming evident¹⁸².

Working with civil society

Working with civil society was most often cited by stakeholders as a good practice that demonstrates inclusiveness of the WPHF approach. It is a practice that needs to be fully supported and expanded. The role of civil society has been discussed under lessons learned and therefore is not elaborated here.

Collaboration and partnerships with government

A good practice is the positive collaboration and partnerships with the government at the country level, through the NSC structure. It encourages 'buy in' from the government for the WPHF and provides a platform for policy advocacy for women's leadership and participation on peace, security, humanitarian and development issues. In Burundi, collaboration with the government at the national and local level led to easier access to women and communities affected by conflict and supported the work of women mediators.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The MTR covered five countries/group of countries, Burundi, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, and the Pacific Region countries- Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Palau, Samoa. It has determined the conclusions based on the findings above and a wealth of perspectives and insights that emerged from the stakeholder interviews at global and country level including the Field Mission to Burundi and case study, and the global portfolio documentation review.

The WPHF is a complex multidimensional and multi stakeholder undertaking that has performed very well in initiating and gaining momentum and setting in place projects that continue to build women's capacity and that of women's organization in taking a lead role in crisis. It has achieved positive results since it began its operations in 2016 in one country.

¹⁸² Burundi Case Study November 2019.

Enhances Fund accessibility

Key stakeholders, member states, UN, donors and CSOs view the Fund as a successful and innovative initiative with an impressive performance given its short duration. One of its main features has been its focus in fully engaging with civil society and enhancing accessibility of funds to small CSOs which lack visibility and would otherwise have difficulty submitting project proposals. *Fifty six CSOs and local women's organizations have accessed funds and have been engaged in the countries reviewed.* From a donor perspective, the WPHF mechanism presents a much needed and excellent avenue for donors to partner, support and engage with local women's organizations at the grassroots level.

Relevant to women in fragile states and aligned with donor and UN priorities

In each of the five countries reviewed, women are disproportionately impacted in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian situations with limited access to resources to effectively lead and participate in peace and development efforts. The WPHF has been responsive and relevant. The Fund is well aligned with donor priorities and reflects the priorities of UN Women to drive a global effort to accelerate implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. It is aligned with key international conventions and instruments on gender equality to which governments in the five countries/group of countries reviewed are signatories including to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs,) and to SDG 5 and SDG 16¹⁸³.

The global theory of change (TOC) and results framework

The WPHF guided by the theory of change (TOC) manifests significant strength in its design as a holistic and multidimensional framework with six major outcomes translated into its results framework. And while a large percentage of stakeholders found the TOC to be a broad, flexible tool to guide project design at country level, inconsistencies were found in the indicators in the results framework. The TOC and results framework will need to be revisited, adjusted, and harmonized to better reflect a results-based management perspective in the WPHF.

Engages with 'rights holders' and 'duty bearers'

The WPHF projects have successfully engaged with '*rights holders*', marginalized women and grassroots groups, and '*duty bearers*' such as government, CSOs, local authorities and leaders at the community level in catalyzing the leadership and participation of women across the conflict, humanitarian, peace, security and development continuum. This is an important breakthrough. In Burundi, the powerful nationwide *network of Women Mediators* led the work in conflict prevention and peace building reducing conflicts and promoting social cohesion at the community level¹⁸⁴.

CSOs have a critical role and localization is supported

WPHF has rightly invested and engaged with CSOs, supported local responses and interventions, and continues to build CSO capacity in this direction. Support for women's agency, power and influence needs to align with locally driven changes and realities and should be flexible.

Experience from the five countries/group of countries reviewed highlights that women, CSOs and grassroots women's organizations are committed actors and agents of change. They are contributing to sustaining peace, preventing conflict, galvanizing socio-economic recovery as in Burundi, Colombia, Iraq and Jordan. Women are leading and participating in national peace agreements in Colombia, actively engaging in humanitarian responses and addressing GBV and the violations of their rights in the Pacific

¹⁸³ SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; SDG 15: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies

¹⁸⁴ Burundi Case Study November 2016

region countries and Jordan. Women at the community level have an *“increasing voice”* in the public sphere breaking persistent gender barriers in their participation. Women are tangibly benefitting from local economic recovery efforts.

Notwithstanding, the capacities of CSOs need to be further strengthened and women’s economic empowerment will require a more deliberate addressing of structural constraints and women’s rights.

Governance and management structure

The model of a two-tier governance and management structure at the global and country level is appropriate and effective in supporting the WPHF implementation with a good level of collaboration and coordination. A stakeholder view was that it missed a regional dimension and the involvement of UN Women Regional offices.

The Funding Board has created broad ownership in the Fund and has very effectively and efficiently contributed to providing strategic direction to the WPHF and maintaining oversight. A few stakeholders found that room exists for improving transparency in Board decision-making in country allocations, efficiency in scheduling meetings and enhancing greater ownership to lessen the sense of a perfunctory role for some members.

The WPHF Secretariat with a small team has in an excellent and innovative way carried out its role in planning and managing the WPHF, leading dynamic strategies in partnership building, communications and resource mobilization with very positive results. However, it is challenged in being under-resourced and understaffed for its huge tasks and its capacity must be enhanced to deliver on its role. Notwithstanding the high performance demonstrated, a stakeholder reported that the WPHF Secretariat may need to better balance its priorities by focusing more time and effort in achieving quality outcomes at the ground level and in building the capacities of UN Women management entities and CSOs at the country level including in quality M&E functions.

The Administrative Agent has demonstrated a high level of competence and provided very effective and efficient support to the Fund. It has been fast and responsive to contributors’ queries and is highly appreciated. Fund disbursements have been timely once the MPTFO receives the proper documentation from the Secretariat.

The NSCs at country level have added value as an inclusive multi partner platform that manages country allocations but show varying levels of ownership and performance. In countries such as in Colombia and Iraq, NSCs could be further strengthened through improved CSO representation and voice in the decision-making processes of the committees. In Colombia the functioning of the MPTF in relation to the WPHF may need to be revisited.

While the UN Women Management Entities at the country level, have demonstrated strong commitment to the WPHF approach and implementation providing effective and efficient support to the CSO partners, their capacity is stretched and constrained in terms of human and financial resources for their vast tasks and an M&E role they need to play, and their capacities need to be strengthened..

Finances

Financial resources are adequate for country allocations and more resources have been mobilized and expanded at an impressive level to support WPHF expansion. However, financial resources for the WPHF Secretariat and the UN women Management Entities at country level are inadequate to cover the technical, management and financial accountability support provided by them at global and country level.

Partnerships, communications and resource mobilization is effective

The MTR concludes that at the global level the WPHF has led dynamic partnerships and communication strategies reaching out to diverse partners including the private sector such as DELL, Starbucks, various companies and the public, to create awareness and engage partners on issues addressed by the WPHF. A high level of visibility has been generated by the WPHF. A proactive resource mobilization strategy linked with the communications and partnership efforts has expanded the resource base exponentially.

At the country level partnerships with CSOs has been an important element in the implementation of the WPHF projects as also the collaboration with government, donors and the UN in facilitating synergies. Partnerships need to be further widened at the country level and is an area to be strengthened.

Monitoring and quality reporting demonstrate shortcomings

Quality reporting though critical has been uneven and for the most part quantitatively oriented. Stakeholders placed a strong emphasis for the WPHF to strengthen and sharpen planning monitoring and reporting on results both qualitative and quantitative through a robust M&E system. It would require building capacity at the global Secretariat level and in the UN Women Management Entities at country level by investing in human and financial resources. M&E needs to be a priority.

Impact at the global level

A significant impact is the high visibility of the WPHF at the global level. An effective and well-functioning global mechanism has been established through which donor funds are being accessed by local CSOs and women-led organizations and *localization* has gained momentum, A huge impact has been realized by the Fund in its resource mobilization efforts resulting in an impressive expanded resource base since its operations began in 2016.

Sustaining the WPHF efforts is critical

Several conditions have been created to support the sustainability of achievements, such as working with civil society, government, local authorities, developing partnerships and strengthening the capacity of duty bearers and rights-holders. While the potential for sustainability exists, moving forward is dependent on available resources, political commitment of partners, and strong capacity of actors at the global, country and community level. Deliberate efforts will continue to be required in these areas, as also in empowering women at the grassroots to bring about systemic changes that contribute to gender equality and sustainability.

In looking forward, the MTR strongly supports the continuation and balanced expansion of the WPHF. It will be of the utmost importance to consolidate the achievements, address challenges, increasingly strengthen and widen partnerships and bonds of cooperation. Greater synergy and policy coherence with partners will need to be promoted and strengthening capacity of actors at the global, country and community level to capitalize on the momentum gained.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations of the MTR are based on the findings and evidence collected and consultations with stakeholders and detailed below. These should be considered by the WPHF.

RECOMMENDATION 1-Design a comprehensive capacity building strategy and empowerment process¹⁸⁵ matched with financial resources.

¹⁸⁵ It is not just a matter of technical skills, but awareness of rights and confidence building in accomplishing the work to be undertaken.

This recommendation addresses the crucial capacity constraints highlighted in the findings and for strengthening the effective and efficient implementation of the WPHF. *It sets out capacity building recommendations that should be addressed at several levels and is a priority.*

The Secretariat should design a comprehensive capacity building strategy to respond to the diverse needs of stakeholders engaged in the WPHF:

At the level of the WPHF Secretariat

Strengthen the capacity of the global Secretariat technically and financially for its responsibilities:

Invest resources (human and financial resources) to design a comprehensive well-defined M&E plan and mechanism for the WPHF and implement it

- Engage the services of a technically qualified M&E Specialist to lead in designing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan and mechanism for the WPHF. The aim should be to introduce a results-based management (RBM) approach at the global level and in country offices, develop capacities, improve M&E for quality monitoring and reporting on qualitative and quantitative results. It should show case the WPHF results more clearly to donors and local partners and should be of immense value to CSOs to understand how activities translate to results.
- The M&E Specialist should in the above context revisit the TOC and Results Framework, adjust and refine these tools to complement **Recommendation 2** (as discussed) and ensure harmonization and coherence of these tools. In all this the M&E Specialist should work in close consultation with the Management Entities (see below) at the country level.
- Appropriate training and orientation should be conducted by the M&E Specialist for the country level management entities to ensure an RBM culture is instituted and capacity is strengthened in the WPHF M&E system.

Increase the 5 percent fee currently stipulated for the WPHF and raise it to **7 percent** to better match the volume of work undertaken by the Secretariat and its team and to enable the Secretariat to hire appropriate staff (as above and consultants or interns). This is critical as the Fund expands activities in new countries.

At the level of the UN Women Management Entity for the WPHF at country level

Strengthen the UN Women Management Entity (ME) for WPHF implementation including in results-based management and M&E.

- Based on MTR findings, it is strongly recommended that a full-time dedicated staff be recruited at the Management Entity level to be responsible for all WPHF activities related to the role of the technical Secretariat including its oversight role of CSOs and M&E. The individual should be technically qualified in project development and results-based management and with specific expertise in **M&E** to fulfill this role with independence and minimum supervision. The dedicated staff recruited for the WPHF should work closely with the M&E Specialist at the global Secretariat level.
- Given that the 7 percent fee structure for the MEs does not suffice to cover the important capacity building role the MEs have for CSOs; it is recommended to use innovative approaches such as setting aside a part of the Country allocation for capacity building purposes, which NSCs have adopted in some contexts such as Colombia and Iraq. This needs to be duplicated.
- The WPHF Secretariat in the above context should produce and include specific guidelines in the Operations Manual guidelines

- In addition, it is recommended that a specific capacity building funding stream should be established at the Global level, with the purpose not only to provide funding support for capacity building needs at the country level, but also to support harmonized approaches and training modules for civil society organizations, through the WPHF Community of Practice.

At the level of CSOs

Strengthen the role of CSOs and women-led organizations engaged in the WPHF projects as facilitators, managers and influencers in support of the WPHF objectives

- Strengthen and develop the overall organizational capacity of CSOs including women-led organizations technically and financially, including in project design and development in the context of the adjusted TOC and results framework; and in applying results-based management and empowerment approaches and M&E.
- Strengthen the skills of CSOs in leadership, negotiations networking, facilitation and communications related to conflict prevention and management and economic recovery, to effectively achieve strong results.
- MEs should facilitate and train CSOs to efficiently manage their budgets, and NSCs should review project budget allocations to allow for sufficient financial resources to CSOs to expand their outreach to women and local communities to generate a multiplier effect.
- Continue to foster and deepen partnerships and cooperation of CSOs with government agencies at both the local and national level on the WPHF interventions

At the level of women beneficiaries

CSOs should empower women participants/actors and strengthen their capacities

- Increased resources should be invested through CSO projects to strengthen capacity-building interventions of '*rights holders*', women and women's groups at the community level especially those coming from rural areas. Given their low levels of literacy and limited access to information and skills, enhance their knowledge, in management, decision-making and entrepreneurial skills with a focus on their '*empowerment*' and '*agency*' at the household and community level to lead to more sustainable and systemic changes.
- CSOs should strengthen project interventions for women rights holders to facilitate access to much needed services, improved access to the justice system, participation in public dialogue and to amplify their voices. Refer to the Burundi experience.

RECOMMENDATION 2 - Revisit the WPHF theory of change (TOC) and results framework, adjust and harmonize including a results-based management perspective

As the findings show several steps should be taken to make improvements in this direction which have been detailed in the report (see section III point 3) and should be referred to. This recommendation is linked to **Recommendation 1**. and should entail:

- Revisit the TOC and results framework, rephrase outcomes appropriately and ensure consistency in language including in call for proposals, while preserving the *multidimensional and holistic approach* of the TOC *and its demand-based characteristic* which is the value added of the WPHF.
- Improve and sharpen the indicators in the results framework to be realistically oriented, reflecting both *qualitative and quantitative* dimensions and in obtaining specific measurable results in the given time frame of the projects.

- The above two steps should be initiated by the M&E Specialist recommended for the global Secretariat in close consultation with Management Entities to enhance their buy-in and ownership and subsequently their follow up with CSOs in calls for proposals and then with the M&E activities.
- Maintain existing flexibility for countries and CSOs to adopt two outcomes from the adjusted global results framework) making this the impact for civil society so they can report on their own outcomes and design their own projects. They should apply a results-based management perspective to ensure coherence with the global framework and at the same time to reflect relevant country priorities and contribute to national ownership of the WPHF
- For the WPHF Secretariat reporting by CSOs on outcomes would provide a higher level of results and enable assessment of progress on results in a more systematic and meaningful manner.
- **Most importantly** the WPHF Secretariat and the M&E Specialist recommended, should provide new guidance to the Management Entities (MEs) and they in turn to the CSOs in using the adjusted global results framework. The TOC and results framework should be accompanied with a capacity building component, workshops and training to ensure that MEs at the country level and CSOs applying for the WPHF projects are fully oriented to the adjusted TOC and results Framework and to results based monitoring. **Recommendation 2 is closely related to Recommendation 1.**

RECOMMENDATION 3-Improve governance functions; procedures for shortening the process of project approvals; and address the issue of yearly turnover of projects

Noted in the findings are the need to improve governance functions and processes for project approvals, and the issue of turnover of projects on a yearly basis. It is recommended that the said issues should be addressed:

Funding Board

- Transparency in Funding Board decisions should be enhanced in the prioritization of countries for country allocations. These issues should be discussed technically and more deeply, decisions should be based on solid data and analysis from the ground on women's priorities to reinforce the *demand-led* nature of the Fund. Furthermore, the process and documentation that the Secretariat prepares on these matters for Board decision-making should be further emphasized and clarified with the Board.
- Transparency in decision making should be improved by providing information to all Board members on the tally of consensus reached. Board members should continue to be informed on communications that the Secretariat sends out on these issues.
- The induction process for new Board members should be strengthened to be more in depth, including learning in greater detail about the WPHF implementation in specific countries; to generate ownership and lessen the chances of members viewing themselves in a perfunctory role.
- The Chair of the Board should ensure that Board meetings should be scheduled on a yearly calendar basis (rather than a two -week notice in practice) that allows adequate time for members to plan their own schedules and commitments, and factors in time for members to go through the information provided well in advance. On this basis the Secretariat can organize the meetings.

Steering Committees

- The representation and decision-making role of CSOs on the Committees should be improved and ensured, and awareness created in these committees that CSOs are not mere recipients of funds but also decision makers in the WPHF.

- The situation of the MPTF in Colombia should be revisited and options explored as regards the feasibility of establishing an ad hoc National Committee for the WPHF that would contribute to greater efficiency through shorter project approval processes, limit delays, reduce the reporting burden for the UN Women Management Entity and accelerate implementation .

Procedures for shortening the project approval process

The findings indicate that the project approval process on average takes between 6-9 months before project implementation can begin in the countries reviewed. Given that the WPHF is a ‘rapid and flexible financing mechanism’ it was recommended that:

Measures should be identified by the WPHF and the NSCs to reduce this time period.

Turnover of projects annually and duration of projects

- The WPHF should stipulate clearly in the call for proposals that WPHF projects have a duration of 2-3 years to allow greater efficiency in programming by countries and avoid a rapid turnover in partners and projects which does not lead to sustaining actions on the ground (in Burundi it was recommended that the project period should be 3 years and follow a ‘programmatic’¹⁸⁶ rather than a project approach. In the Pacific, 3 years is recommended to take into consideration the impact of cyclic weather patterns and weak infrastructure that impact implementation).
- Apply flexible approaches as needed.

RECOMMENDATION 4-Seek to leverage and expand partnerships at all levels to a greater extent and improve coordination

WPHF is predicated on leveraging stakeholders to play a part, and as noted in the findings and conclusions, the WPHF realised significant success when partnering with CSOs at global and country level, member states, the Spotlight Initiative and private sector partners such as DELL and other partners.

- The WPHF at global level should continue to widen and deepen partnerships established. It is equally important that the NSCs and MEs join with actors who are realistically capable of leveraging accountability at the local level such as CSOs, local government and local authorities across all sectors. The NSC should use its networking power to ensure that key actors and partners are communicating, sharing and moving the agenda forward together.
- Greater coordination with partners at global and country level which includes member states, UN, donors and CSOs, should be further strengthened by the Secretariat, NSCs and the MEs for maximizing limited resources and heightening synergies between partners.
- Partnering with donors and government at the country level should be strengthened through joint field site visits by the NSCs and the interest this generates. It should not be a missed opportunity.

¹⁸⁶ The ‘programmatic approach’ was explained by stakeholders in Burundi as follows: A holistic and integrated approach which builds strong synergies across outcomes and across partners; implemented by the same partners as are included in the design of the programme; a multi-year time frame to enhance planning and monitoring; with funding committed for a three year period to ensure effective results, capacity building and sustainability of interventions; given that it takes time to achieve results when working in a conflict related environment (Stakeholder discussions in Burundi) .

RECOMMENDATION 5-Strengthen engagement of men to support women’s empowerment in conflict prevention, humanitarian responses, peacebuilding and economic recovery

Based on the existing experience in countries of engaging men in the WPHF projects focused on women’s participation, leadership and empowerment in conflict prevention, humanitarian responses, peacebuilding and economic recovery, the WPHF projects should seek ways to strengthen this engagement. It is recommended that:

- Tailored approaches be implemented that provide incentive and motivation for men’s participation such as identifying in consultation with men common economic development, security and peace building issues where they can best support women’s efforts. This should provide an important entry point and motivating factor for engaging men in a sustained manner leading to more systemic changes towards equitable societies.
- Interventions to engage men should include e.g. sessions for men in gender awareness training on conflict prevention, sustaining peace and economic recovery. Strengthening men’s participation in various community fora, such as was done in Iraq by engaging the police, religious and community leaders (all of whom were male) in dialogue platforms with women should be pursued as appropriate in the country context.

RECOMMENDATION 6- Consolidate results, deepen existing interventions, expand the WPHF work in a balanced way, and capitalize on the momentum generated and the commitment of partners for sustainability

Good progress has been demonstrated in the WPHF activities. Strong factors exist for continuity, such as the immense and pressing needs of women in conflict and post conflict contexts, the demand from civil society organizations to be engaged more fully in responses to the local situation including their own commitment for change, and the collaboration that has been catalysed with governments.

Empowering women to participate, lead, and benefit from conflict prevention, crisis response, peacebuilding and economic recovery is an important focus in the broader context of efforts to improve women’s lives and promote women’s empowerment and gender equality in fragile states.

- It is recommended that the WPHF should pursue the above objective deliberately, build on the existing factors, deepen interventions and *sustain* the important gains achieved thus far.
- Expansion of the WPHF should be measured and balanced in that it should consolidate results and build on good practices. This includes increasing funding for longer periods in countries; building capacities of local partner CSOs providing strong technical and M&E support; strengthening and expanding the existing partnerships with CSOs and women’s organizations and with government partners. The focus should be on quality impact and sustainability of activities and avoiding spreading the resources thinly. Underscoring these actions should be a best practice of seeking to achieve realistic outcomes within the time and allotted budget.
- The WPHF should capitalize on the momentum generated through results achieved in the countries reviewed by the MTR, the expanded demand from CSOs as noted in the high response to the call for proposals; and increasing enthusiasm of communities and implementing partners to expand CSO project activities as noted in Burundi, Colombia and Iraq; to reach out to marginalized groups of women, men and youth. This forward movement should be supported through increased investments in resources and technical support, political commitment of partners, and strong capacity of actors at the global, country and community level.

RECOMMENDATION 7- Gather and disseminate best practices and lessons learned

Given the uniqueness of WPHFs focus on a partnership of the UN, member states, donors and civil society for women's participation and leadership in the conflict, peace, security, humanitarian development space;

- WPHF should host a *lesson learned dialogue* among its field staff and local partners across countries to document what has worked well and the challenges the project has faced. This would provide an opportunity to continue the learning process towards greater sustainability of all such efforts. The WPHF Secretariat is organizing a Forum in Vienna in February 2020 with partners and UN Women focal points to join and share lessons learned, results, challenges amongst CSOs from different countries.

Terms of Reference Midterm Review of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

Consultancy: Midterm Review of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

Location: Home based with a mission to Burundi

Type of Contract: Special Service Agreement

Level: International Consultant

Background

Since 2000 and the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325, remarkable normative progress has been made at the global, regional and national levels to further advance and operationalize the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda.¹⁸⁷ There is also increasing recognition that placing women's agency at the center of the transition from crisis to sustainable development offers enormous potential for leveraging transformative change.¹⁸⁸ The Secretary-General's 2015 Report to the Security Council on Women and Peace and Security confirms that the capacity of countries to prevent violence, negotiate peace, boost economic recovery and protect populations hinges on women's participation. Women's meaningful participation in peace and security increases by 50 per cent the likelihood that peace will be sustained.¹⁸⁹ Women can play a critical role in conflict prevention by creating early warning networks (including for violent extremism and radicalization), and bridging divides across communities. Research shows that women can greatly facilitate mediation efforts and peace negotiations by opening new avenues for dialogue between different factions. Furthermore, women's active participation in economic re-vitalization makes peacebuilding and recovery efforts more sustainable, as women are more likely to invest their income in family and community welfare.¹⁹⁰ Similarly, recent evaluations and mounting good practices demonstrate that security and justice sector reforms are more likely to respond to the diverse needs of a post-conflict society and address effectively grievances if security and justice institutions are representative of the societies that they serve.¹⁹¹

Despite recognition of the benefits that investing in women brings to improving conflict prevention, conflict resolution, protection, humanitarian action and peace consolidation efforts, their contribution continues to be undervalued, under-utilized and under-resourced. In 2012-2013 only 2 per cent of aid to the peace and security sector targeted gender equality as a principal objective.¹⁹² Similarly, in 2014, only 20 per cent of humanitarian projects were coded as making a significant contribution to gender equality, while 65 per cent of funding reported through UN OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS) simply did not use the gender marker introduced five years ago. Further, humanitarian, peace and security and development assistance

¹⁸⁷See: S/RES/1325 (2000), S/RES/1820 (2008), S/RES/1888 (2009), S/RES/1889 (2009), S/RES/1960 (2010), S/RES/2106 (2013), and S/RES/2122 (2013).

¹⁸⁸ UN Women, *In Pursuit of Justice : Progress of the World's Women* (2011-2012)

¹⁸⁹High Level Panel on Peacebuilding Architecture (2015).

¹⁹⁰Justino, Patricia. "Women Working for Recovery: The Impact of Female Employment on Family and Community Welfare after Conflict." *UN Women Sourcebook on Women, Peace and Security*. New York. October 2012.

¹⁹¹UN Integrated Technical Guidance Note on Gender-Responsive SSR. November 2012

¹⁹² OECD-DAC Gender Equality Network. "Financing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)." March 2015

continue to operate in silos. Each have different aims, follow different principles, operate over different special and temporal scales and are aligned with different budget lines and rules managed by different actors.¹⁹³

To address the financing gaps and create greater synergies between different sources of finance to meet the needs of women across the humanitarian-development divide, a Women, Peace and Security Financing Discussion Group (FDG) was established in June 2014. Composed of representatives from donors, conflict-affected Member States, United Nations entities and civil society, it recognized the urgent need to prioritize action and established the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund¹⁹⁴ - a global pooled funding mechanism which aims to re-energize action and stimulate a significant shift in the financing of the women's participation, leadership and empowerment in humanitarian response, and peace and security settings. The WPHF is a flexible and rapid financing mechanism. It supports quality interventions designed to enhance capacities to prevent conflict, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities. Sustainability and national ownership are key principles of investments.

The WPHF has the following three main functions:

- **Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance** by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum.
- **Addressing structural funding gaps for women's participation** in key phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance.
- **Improving policy coherence and coordination** by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies across all actors: multi-lateral and bilateral entities, national governments' women's machineries; and local civil society organizations.

The WPHF complements and co-finances strategic interventions with other financing instruments, such as supporting the implementation of a country's National Action Plan on WPS, or co-financing with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). In order to ensure complementarity with the PBF, the WPHF only support peace and security interventions by civil society organizations and Governmental institutions in countries where the PBF operates (with the bulk of the investment in CSOs). In countries where the PBF has a limited (below \$2 million allocation) or no interventions, the WPHF supports interventions by UN organizations, Governmental institutions and civil society organizations. This coordination is facilitated by the representation of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) on the Funding Board of the WPHF.

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund was launched in February 2016 as a multi-partner trust fund hosted by the UN Multi-partner trust fund office, who acts as the Administrative agent for the Fund. A Funding Board at global level, comprised of 12 members (UN, donors, and civil society organizations) makes strategic decisions, including on countries' eligibility and Fund's investment. UN Women acts as the Secretariat for the Fund, provides technical support to the Board and manages the Fund on a day-to-day basis. At country level, National Steering Committees comprised of the UN, the Government, the civil

¹⁹³ Visioning the Future: Reporting the findings of the Future of Humanitarian Financing initiative and dialogue processes (2015).

¹⁹⁴ Formerly the Global Acceleration Instrument on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action

society and the donor community manage the country allocation proposal on behalf of the Funding Board. A Management Entity for Civil Society Organizations manage the grants with the WPHF-supported Civil Society Organizations.

Since its establishment, the WPHF has identified 24 priority countries¹⁹⁵ and invested in five countries: Burundi as a pilot investment in January 2016, Colombia, Jordan, the Pacific (a multi-country allocation including Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and, more recently, Iraq.

The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund Mid Term Review (MTR) is intended to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund, and to identify good practices as well as areas of improvement that can be explored to accelerate the Fund's results by December 2020 (end date of the WPHF)

As the Secretariat of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, UN-Women is responsible for commissioning a mid-term review (MTR) of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. UN Women is seeking the services of an independent international consultant to conduct the MTR according to the objectives and scope detailed in Annex 1.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Consultant will conduct mid-term review of the WPHF with expected outputs and deliverables as detailed below. The estimated duration of this consultancy is 30 working days.

Outputs and deliverables:

- Inception report with proposed MTR methodology, work plan and structure of the MTR report;
- A draft preliminary MTR report and presentation, to be presented at a debriefing meeting with UN-Women (SPFII Team);
- Final report that should include the following in its structure:
 - Executive Summary;
 - Introduction (including context, scope, methodology and limitations);
 - Key Strategic Findings and Conclusions;
 - Recommendations (corrective actions for on-going or future work, not more than 10);
 - Summary on challenges, lessons learned and best practices;
 - Annexes (list of interviewees, list of documents reviewed, etc.)

Timeframe:

Proposed timeframes for each deliverable:

- Desk review and inception report: 7 working days.
- Field work and Preliminary Report: 15 working days
- Final Report: 8 working days

The consultant cannot have participated in the programme preparation, formulation, and/or implementation and should not have a conflict of interest with programme related activities.

¹⁹⁵ Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Rohingya crisis), Burundi, CAR, Colombia, DRC, Haiti, Iraq, Jordan (Syria crisis), Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, PNG, Solomon Islands (multi-country) Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen

Competencies

Corporate Competencies:

- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability
- Highest standards of integrity, discretion and loyalty
- Accountability
- Creative Problem Solving
- Effective Communication
- Inclusive Collaboration
- Stakeholder Engagement

Functional Competencies:

- Excellent knowledge of principles and methods of evaluation, particularly in the context of international development
- Demonstrated grasp and understanding of gender issues, in general, and preferably in the UN system
- Strong analytical skills, including ability to rapidly analyze and integrate diverse information with a discerning sense for quality of data
- Ability to work with multidisciplinary and multicultural teams
- Creativity, innovation and initiative
- Result oriented
- Ability of facilitation

Required Skills and Experience

Education:

- Master's degree or equivalent in social sciences, human rights, gender/women's studies, international development, or a related field is required

Experience:

- At least 10 years of experience in gender programming, monitoring and/or evaluation in the UN and/or international development.
- Experience in gender sensitive evaluation.
- Experience in reviewing a multi-partner trust fund preferred.

Language:

- Full proficiency in English (written and spoken). French is an asset

Annex I

MTR OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The key objectives of this MTR exercise will be to evaluate the extent to which the WPHF contributed to the Fund's ability to effectively support civil society organizations in crisis settings. The consultant will give

attention to the following:

Mandate and Set up of the Fund

- Review the set-up of the Fund, its structure
- Review the role of the different entities, level of ownership, and their comparative advantage
- Review the fee structure
- Review the ability of the fund to deliver on its 3 main functions
 - **Breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance** by investing in enhancing women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment across all phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum.
 - **Addressing structural funding gaps for women’s participation** in key phases of the crisis, peace and security, and development continuum by improving the timeliness, predictability and flexibility of international assistance.
 - **Improving policy coherence and coordination** by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies across all actors: multi-lateral and bilateral entities, national governments’ women’s machineries; and local civil society organizations.

Progress Towards Results

- Review the theory of change and results framework
- Review impact and progress made to date in the WPHF supported countries
- Assess the catalytic nature of the Fund and its influence on policy making at the national and international levels.
- Include a case study on the impact reached by the Fund in Burundi¹⁹⁶

Governance structure

- Review overall effectiveness of the 2-tier governance structure. Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the role of Secretariat and of MPTFO as Administrative Agent
- Review the role of Management Entities at the Country level.
- Review any delays in programme start-up and implementation, identify the causes, and examine if they have been resolved.

Finance

- Does the Fund have the appropriate financial resources to implement on its mandate?
- Do the Secretariat, the Administrative Agent and the Management Entities have appropriate resources to deliver on their respective role.
- Are funds disbursed in a timely manner?
- Are the decisions regarding the projects to be funded properly informed?

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Has the Fund enabled and/or leveraged strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders at global regional and country levels?
- Has the Fund succeeded in engaging in innovative partnerships to raise awareness and funds for WPHF?
- What is the level of ownership shown by the different stakeholders involved in the Fund?

¹⁹⁶ Another country will be considered should the travel conditions to Burundi not be met.

Communications:

- Review internal communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of programme results?
- Review external communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the Fund's progress and intended impact?

Conclusions & Recommendations:

The MTR consultant will include a section of the report setting out the MTR's evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings. Recommendations (not more than 10) should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary.

MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful.

The MTR will adhere to the principles established in [Evaluation Policies of UN Women](#) and the UN Evaluation Group's [Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#). These should include but are not limited to independence, impartiality, transparency, ethics, partnerships, credibility and utility. Mixed methods, both qualitative and quantitative, should be used to collect data and gather evidence.

The MTR consultant will review all relevant sources of information (listed below) and any other materials considered useful for this evidence-based review. The MTR consultant is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach ensuring close engagement with all key stakeholders.

The final MTR report should describe the MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

List of Documents to be reviewed by the MTR consultant:

- Terms of Reference of WPHF
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Operations Manual
- Funding Board minutes
- Annual reports
- Country allocation proposals and projects supported at country level
- Minutes of National Steering Committee meetings
-

List of main stakeholders to be interviewed

Funding Board members, Secretariat, MPTFO, NSC members at country level, Management Entities for CSOs at country level, representatives from grantees' organizations, beneficiaries, donors.

MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the WPHF Secretariat. The head of the Secretariat will be responsible for liaising with the MTR consultant to provide all relevant documents and set up stakeholder interviews. The WPHF's Funding Board will provide an oversight role of the work undertaken by the consultant

ANNEX 2.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

<https://www.unwomen.org//media/headquarters/attachments/sections/executive%20board/2017/second%20regular%20session%202017/unw-2017-6-strategic%20plan-en-rev%2001.pdf?la=en&vs=2744>

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (including Goal 5 and 16)

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>

The Global Study on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325. Preventing Conflict Transforming Justice, Securing Peace, UN Women 2015 <https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/5724aba34.pdf>

United Nations (1995). Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: Fourth World Conference on Women.

United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) CEDAW/C/GC/3 Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women General recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. 1 November 2013.

UN Guidance Documents for Evaluations

Executive Board of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2012.) Evaluation policy of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. <https://undocs.org/en/UNW/2012/12>

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System November 2013.

UN Women Independent Evaluation Office, How to Manage Gender-Responsive Evaluation Handbook, 2015. <https://gest.unu.edu/static/files/unwomen-evaluationhandbook-web-final.pdf>

UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Norms and Standards for Evaluation (2017).

Guidance Document UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Integrating Human rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations. August 2014 https://www.dmeformpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/082714_IntegratingHumanRights_UNEG.pdf

UNEG (United Nations Evaluation Group) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, Foundation Document, March 2008 <http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines>.

UN Security Council Resolutions:

United Nations, Security Council Resolution 1325. S/RES/1325 (2000).

United Nations, Security Council Resolution 2242 S/RES/2242 (2015)

United Nations, Security Council Resolution 2467 S/RES/2467(2019)

[https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467\(2019\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2467(2019))

Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)-documents and those received from the WPHF Secretariat:

http://mptf.undp.org/document/search?fund=GAI00&document_areas=fund,project&go=true

Annex Consolidated Results Framework 2018.pdf

Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) Colombia August 2016-July 2019

Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) Jordan January 2017-December 2019

GAI Annual Consolidated Report 2016.pdf

Global Acceleration Instrument GAI00_2016_

GAI 2016 Consolidated Narrative Framework and Financial Report Final.pdf

GAI 2-Pager March20,2017.pdf

GAI 2-Pager June 2016.pdf

GAI -Secretariat Annual Report 2016.pdf

GAI ME Function_PRODROC_Jordan_May 2017_GATEWAY.pdf

GAI -Secretariat Annual Report 2016.pdf

Project Description _Transm-Burundi GAI_GATEWAY.pdf

GAI- Operations Manual Secretariat final lay out.pdf

GAI 2-Pager June 2016.pdf

ME PRODROC _Pacific Islands May 2017_GATEWAY.pdf

MOU UNFPA UNW UNDP MPFTO for GATEWAY -Redacted.pdf

Note on GAI – Colombia MPTF transfer.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) 2018 Annual Report

Women’s _Peace _& _Humanitarian _TFGAI00_2018_

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) 2018 Annual Report Colombia -2018.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) 2018 Annual Report-Burundi.docx (French)

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)Annual Secretariat Report -2018.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Jordan -2018 pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Pacific-2018 pdf

WPHF Country Allocation Proposal Mali November 2018-October 2021

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Iraq-2018. pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)Annual Consolidated Report 2017.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Country Allocation Proposal Iraq (April 2018-March 2020)

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Country Allocation Proposal Mali (November 2018-October 2021)

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

Women’s P&H TF_GAI00_2017_SUOF.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Secretariat Report 2017.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Colombia.2017.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Jordan 2017.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Annual Report Burundi 2017.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Project Document 2018.pdf

Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Terms of Reference(updated May 2019), Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, A United Nations and Civil Society Partnership

Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) Operations Manual (updated May 2019), Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, A United Nations and Civil Society Partnership

Minutes of Steering Committee Meetings

Iraq National Steering Committee, Minutes of Meeting, July 2019

Jordan Country level Steering Committee, Minutes of Meetings ,March & August 17, 2017 & 25 September 2018

Fiji Multi Country Office GAI Steering Committee Meeting January 12 , 2016

Other Websites

<https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/dcdndep/47069197.pdf>

http://mptf.undp.org/document/search?fund=GAI00&document_areas=fund,project&go=true

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/global-norms-and-standards>

http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/facts-and-figures#_Financing

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/37412/st15086-en18.pdf>

<http://wphfund.org>

https://www.unodc.org/documents/SDGs/UNODC_Handbook_on_Results_Based_Management.pdf

<https://www.un.org/en/spotlight-initiative/assets/pdf/spotlight.tor.08.pdf>

ANNEX 3.

List of Stakeholders Interviewed
WPHF Midterm Review August -December 2019

Body	Names	Title	Contact	Location
WPHF Secretariat	Ghita el Khyari	Head of the Secretariat	Ghita.khyari@unwomen.org	Paris
	Corinne Graper	WPHF Private Sector Consultant (1 day per week)	Corinne.graper@unwomen.org	USA
	Matthew Rullo	Communications Advocacy and Knowledge management Analyst	Matthew.rullo@unwomen.org	New York
	Julia Doublait	International Consultant	julia.doublait@unwomen.org	Nairobi
UNW Peace and Security Team	Paivi Kannisto	UN Women, Chief of Peace & Security Section,	paivi.kannisto@unwomen.org anabelle.lugo@unwomen.org	New York
	Shaza Suleiman	UN Peacebuilding Support Office, Peace & Security Program Specialist	shaza.suleiman@un.org	New York
UN MPTF (UNDP)	Eva Saenz	Fund Portfolio Manager	eva.saenz@undp.org	New York
	Sean Chen	Fund Portfolio Associate	Sean.chen@undp.org	New York
Country Offices (UNW)	Jennet Kem	UNW Rep	Jennet.kem@unwomen.org	Burundi
	Arlette Mvondo	Policy Specialist	Arlette.mvondo@unwomen.org	Burundi
	Egide Niyongabo	Project Coordinator	egide.niyongabo@unwomen.org	Burundi
	Ramillo Rudaragi	Programme Specialist	ramillo.rudaragi@unwomen.org	Burundi
	Jacqueline Connor	UNDP Programme Coordinator	jacqueline.oconnor@one.un.org	Burundi
	Esther Loeffen Lander van Ommen	Embassy of the Netherlands in Burundi Deputy Head of Mission First Secretary SRHR	ej.loeffen@minibuzza.nl am-van.ommen@minibuzza.nl	Burundi

	Merijn Noppers	Second Secretary Political Affairs and Rule of Law	merijn.noppers@minibuzza.nl	
	Wafaa Al-Nuaimi	Prog Analyst	Wafaa.nuaimi@unwomen.org	Iraq
	Ziad Sheikh	UNW Rep	Ziad.sheikh@unwomen.org	Jordan
	Anoud Majali		anoud.majali@unwomen.org	Jordan
	Eman Al-Hourani	Prog Analyst	Eman.hourani@unwomen.org	Jordan
	Tamar Tavartkiladze	Project Management Specialist	Tamar.tavartkiladze@unwomen.org	Jordan
	Lucio Severo	Prog Specialist	Lucio.severo@unwomen.org	Colombia
	Subhashni Raj	Programme Analyst—Gender and Participation in Humanitarian Adm.	Subhashni.raj@unwomen.org	Pacific Islands UN Women Multi Country Office (Fiji)
Funding Board	Maja Vitas Majstorovic	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), Gender Coordinator	m.vitas@gppac.net Skype: majavitas.gppac	Netherlands
	France Bognon	International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN) Program Manager	france.bognon@icanpeacework.org	Washington DC
	Eilish Rooney	Transitional Justice Institute, Ulster University (TJI), Senior Lecturer	e.rooney@ulster.ac.uk	Northern Ireland, UK
	Asha Hans	Women Enabled International, Board Member	ashahans10@gmail.com	Washington DC
	Katrin Fischer	Austria	Katrin.Fischer@ada.gv.at	New York New York
	Carly Volkes	Deputy Director of Global Affairs	Carly.Volkes@international.gc.ca	Canada
	Iris Loonen		iris.loonen@minbuza.nl	Netherlands
	Anneke Zwetsloot		anneke.zwetsloot@minbuza.nl	

	Marita Sørheim-Rensvik	Special Envoy Women, Peace and Security	Marita.Sorheim-Rensvik@mfa.no	Norway
	Diego Antoni	UNDP, Policy Specialist on Gender, Governance and Crisis Prevention	diego.antoni@undp.org	New York
Former Funding Board CSO Members	Mavic Cabrera Balleza	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), CEO	mavic@gnwp.org	New York
	Nahla Valji Senior Gender Adviser	Executive Office of the Secretary-General	valji@un.org	New York
	Sandra Kraushaar Yunei Kim Eleanor Flowers	Government of Australia Acting Director, Gender and Multilateral Section; Policy Officer WPS.	Sandra.Kraushaar@dfat.gov.au Yunei.Kim@dfat.gov.au Eleanor.flowers@dfat.gov.au	Australia
	Peter Riddelsdell Tasneem Akthar	Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser, Commonwealth Unit and Multilateral Delivery Unit UK Government	peter.riddelsdell@fco.gsi.gov.uk tasneem.akhtar@fco.gov.uk	UK
	Erin Kenny	Senior Advisor & Head of Technical Unit, Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate Violence Against Women & Girls	erin.kenny@un.org	New York

List of WPHF Partners by Country

Below is the list of the 56 WPHF partners as of 31 December 2018.

Burundi

1. ABAZIMYAMURIRO BAZIRA IMBIBE (ABI-Burundi)
2. BURUNDI LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM (BLTP)
3. DUSHIREHAMWE
4. ASSOCIATION DES GUIDES DU BURUNDI (AGB)
5. AFRABU (Association des Femmes Rapatriées du Burundi)
6. APFB (Association pour la promotion de la Fille Burundaise)
7. Fontaine Isoko.
8. FVS-AMADE (Famille pour Vaincre le Sida-Association Mondiale des Amis de l'Enfance)
9. Saemaul Undong Burundi/Twese Hamwe Birashoboka

Colombia

10. Asociación Campesina del Valle del Río ACVC
11. Asociación JUNPRO
12. Asociación Municipal de Mujeres (ASOM)
13. Corporación 8 de marzo. Mujeres y hombres por la igualdad
14. Corporación de Apoyo a Comunidades Populares (CODACOP)
15. Corporación de Mujeres Ecofeministas (COMUNITAR)
16. Corporación para el Desarrollo Social, Tecnológico y Económico de Colombia (CORPDESARROLLO)
17. Corporación Vamos Mujer
18. Fundación Surcos de Vida ONG - Regional Nariño
19. Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad - LIMPAL
20. Organización Femenina Popular (OFP)
21. Red de Mujeres Chaparralunas por la Paz
22. Red Nacional de Mujeres
23. Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres

Jordan

24. Arab Renaissance for Democracy Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD-Legal Aid)
25. Arab Women Organization
26. the Arab Network for Civic Education (ANHRE)
27. ACTED.
28. Association of Family and Childhood Protection Society of Irbid (FCPS)
29. Cambridge Reproductive Health Consultants (CRHC)
30. Mayadin

31. Try Center
32. Jordan Forum for Business and Professional Women (JFBPW)
33. Jordan National Forum for Women (JNFW)

Pacific Islands

34. Oxfam Solomon Islands.
35. Samoa Red Cross Society
36. Save the children Vanuatu
37. CARE Vanuatu
38. Medical Services Pacific (MSP)
39. femLINKpacific
40. Solomon Islands National Protection Committee
41. Centre for Women's Empowerment Belau
42. ADRA Fiji

Iraq

43. Baghdad women's Association
44. Alliance 1325
45. Bustan Association for Children & Adults Protection (Women and Children Protection Department)
46. The Iraqi Al-Firdaws Society
47. The Sport Spirit Organization
48. Orchard Foundation for Human Appeal OFHA
49. Iraq minorities Council
50. Awan Organization for awareness and capability development
51. Iraqi women journalists' forum
52. Sawa organization for human rights
53. Sewan Women's Empowerment Organization
54. Um Alyateem for Development Foundation
55. Voice for Older People and Family
56. Bishkoreen NGO for Women and Child Care

Source: WPHF Annual Report January -December 2018