Supporting Civil Society and Women’s Rights Organizations to End Violence against Women and Girls in Protracted, Complex and Overlapping Crises

A Scoping Study Commissioned by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
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Cover photo description and credit: Local caravan campaign to end sexual harassment against women in the workplace. Joy Jovi Jabo Mercy Owuor/SIHA Network (South Sudan)

About the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is the only global grant-making mechanism dedicated to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. Managed by UN Women on behalf of the United Nations system since its establishment in 1996 by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 50/166, the UN Trust Fund has awarded $215 million to 646 initiatives in 140 countries and territories. In 2022, the UN Trust Fund managed a grants portfolio of 186 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 70 countries and territories across five regions, with grants totalling $87 million. Grant recipients are primarily civil society organizations (CSOs). Since 2018 (cycle 20), the UN Trust Fund has been funding only CSO projects. In 2022, the majority (62 per cent) of these CSOs were women’s rights organizations.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Accountability to Affected Populations</td>
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<td>CBPFs</td>
<td>Country-Based Pooled Funds</td>
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<td>CBOs</td>
<td>Community based organizations</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organization</td>
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<td>EU</td>
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<td>FTS</td>
<td>Financial Tracking System</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<td>GBViE</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence in Emergencies</td>
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<td>GRG</td>
<td>IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action</td>
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<td>HDP</td>
<td>Humanitarian-Development-Peace</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-agency Standing Committee</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced Person</td>
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<td>IMC</td>
<td>International Medical Corps</td>
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<td>INGO</td>
<td>International non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NNGO</td>
<td>National non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>OECD DAC</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<td>OCHA</td>
<td>Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<td>PSEA</td>
<td>Prevention Sexual Exploitation and Abuse</td>
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<td>RGA</td>
<td>Rapid Gender Analysis</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>RRP</td>
<td>Regional Refugee Response Plan</td>
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<td>RC/HC</td>
<td>Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator</td>
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<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>UHF</td>
<td>Ukraine Humanitarian Fund</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UNODC</td>
<td>United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime</td>
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<td>UNVTF</td>
<td>United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking</td>
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<td>VAWG</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls</td>
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<td>WAVE</td>
<td>Women Against Violence Europe</td>
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<td>WLOs</td>
<td>Women-Led Organizations</td>
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<td>WPF</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WPWF</td>
<td>Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund</td>
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<td>WROs</td>
<td>Women's Rights Organizations</td>
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INTRODUCTION

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (UN Trust Fund) is managed by UN Women on behalf of the UN system. It is the only global grant-making mechanism dedicated to eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). In its 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, the UN Trust Fund aims to enable more civil society organizations (CSOs) and women rights organizations (WROs) to implement sustainable initiatives to end VAWG through principled, demand-driven grant giving, coupled with programmatic and organizational support.

In a context of increasingly complex and intersecting forms of crises, whose compounded and cross-border impacts on VAWG are still unfolding, supporting CSOs/WROs throughout the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus becomes more critical than ever. This document summarizes the findings of a study commissioned by the UN Trust Fund to explore how humanitarian action operates in increasingly overlapping and complex crises and how this, in turn, intersects with VAWG. The scoping study focused in particular on how humanitarian policy and coordination mechanisms, as well as existing and potential funding streams from humanitarian pooled funds and bilateral donors, support the localization agenda and, more specifically, on how CSOs/WROs are supported and resourced in responding to VAWG in crisis settings.

The results of these scoping and case studies will inform the design of the UN Trust Fund’s next call for proposals in November 2022.
CONTEXT

Today’s crises are increasingly long-lasting, recurring, complex and interdependent.¹ In 2021, 235 million people were estimated to need humanitarian assistance and protection in contexts where displacement and vulnerability are fuelled by conflict, climate change, disasters or health emergencies.² One quarter of the global population lives in conflict-affected countries and as of May 2022 a record 100 million people had been forcibly displaced.³ In 2020, 95% of all conflict displacements occurred in countries vulnerable or highly vulnerable to climate change.⁴ Disasters and health emergencies further deepen the humanitarian needs already present in other conflict situations.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted global inequalities whereby lower-income countries or specific population groups were and continue to be disproportionately affected. It is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic pushed 97 million more people into poverty during 2020 and 2021.⁵ Among other impacts, COVID-19 and its related restrictions drastically increased food insecurity, disrupted livelihoods and supply chains, caused a significant spike in incidences of gender-based violence (GBV), forced the closure of schools and safe spaces and disrupted essential services, including protection services.⁶ These effects were particularly grave for people living in settings affected by humanitarian crises prior to and during the pandemic where COVID-19 added to a spectrum of crises already affecting the health, livelihoods and security of vulnerable populations.⁷

COVID-19 not only exposed the lack of preparedness of countries to respond to and deal with existing, ongoing and already prevalent human rights violations, it also revealed that progress on ending VAWG is fragile and, in some cases, regressing.⁸ The pandemic intensified VAWG⁹ while limiting access to services for survivors.¹⁰ An early impact assessment of COVID-19 among UN Trust Fund grantees in

⁶ Ibid.
⁷ Ibid.
⁸ UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
April 2020 revealed soaring rates of VAWG globally, confirmed by a second analysis published in September 2020. This rise in violence has taken many forms and for certain populations, like refugees and migrants, who are not reached by government schemes the challenges are even greater. UN Trust Fund partners also reported an increase in resorting to negative coping mechanisms like early and forced marriage.

As the crises caused by the pandemic evolved, the UN Trust Fund employed its human and financial resources to promptly adapt and respond to the rapidly changing circumstances. This has required receptiveness, flexibility and a strong relationship with grantees, including a thorough understanding of their beneficiaries’ changing needs.11

1.1. INTERSECTING, OVERLAPPING AND COMPLEX CRISES

Addressing intersecting crises will represent one of the largest humanitarian challenges in the years to come.12 Given the context of intersecting, overlapping and complex crises, humanitarian operations can last for 10 or 20 years,13 requiring additional, long-term, sustained opportunities for resilience, survival and recovery of affected populations. The provision of short-term, lifesaving services is becoming less sufficient and it is crucial that the humanitarian community addresses such issues in a more strategic manner.

THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT-PEACE (HDP) NEXUS

The HDP nexus is the term used to capture the interlinkages between the humanitarian, development and peace actions.14 It specifically refers to attempts to work together to more effectively meet peoples’ needs, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities, and move toward sustainable peace. It calls for humanitarian as well as development and peace actors “to better coordinate their work in order to more effectively promote the transformation of crises and conflicts into sustainable peace”.15 It also involves changes in financing (such as moving towards multi-year funding, less-earmarked assistance, flexible funding and simplification of financing mechanisms).16

11 UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2021-2025.
13 https://gho.unocha.org/delivering-better/operationalizing-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus-through-basic-social
The underlying premise of working on ending VAWG with an HDP nexus approach is that by meeting immediate needs during humanitarian crises at the same time as ensuring longer term investments that address the systemic causes of conflict and vulnerability – such as poverty, inequalities and a lack of functioning accountability systems – there is a better chance of reducing the impact of cyclical or recurrent shocks and stresses and supporting the peace that is essential for development to be sustainable.17

RISKS AMONG THE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE RECIPIENT COUNTRIES

Forty three Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) recipient countries are categorized as high or very high risk according to the INFORM risk index18 of the Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre. At the time of writing, Ukraine ranked 43rd and Moldova, with medium risk, ranked 102 out of 191 countries listed in the INFORM risk index. However, it should be noted that risk classification is based on figures from April 2022 and this may significantly change in the near future.

It is becoming clear that the impacts of the war in Ukraine, combined with other ongoing crises and the effects of climate change, are intensifying pre-existing crises and trends and increasing the vulnerability of most countries, with less capacity to cope with shocks. In June 2022, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) issued a rapid assessment focusing on the impact of the conflict in Ukraine on the humanitarian situation in the Middle East and North Africa region. The assessment found that the region continues to face multiple and complex crises with the livelihood and food security sectors being the most affected. The cascading risks of the war in Ukraine are also creating shocks to long-standing global peace and security arrangements across Eurasia,19 and severely impacting the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.20

18 The overall INFORM risk index identifies countries at risk from humanitarian crises and disasters that could overwhelm national response capacity. It is made up of three dimensions - hazards and exposure (including natural and human), vulnerability and lack of coping capacity.
1.2. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CRISIS SETTINGS

VAWG is underreported in gender data and the lack of trend data makes it particularly difficult to monitor how increasingly complex, longer, overlapping and intersecting crises are affecting women and girls. However, it is clear that women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by humanitarian crises around the world and that existing gender inequalities are exacerbated during and after a crisis.

Humanitarian crises disrupt family and social networks, change the roles played by different genders and break down protection structures. In crisis settings, 70% of women experience GBV compared with 35% worldwide.

Intimate partner violence showed an alarming increase during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, at the same time as service provision was compromised. Conflict, climate change, displacement, poverty, food insecurity, urbanization and digitalization exacerbated existing inequalities and created new ones, contributing to an increase in GBV, including harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Furthermore, as crises are becoming increasingly protracted, the distinction between traditional humanitarian and development actions and actors are often less clear. Preparedness, response and recovery efforts require increased collaboration among humanitarian, development and peace actors, working jointly to reduce growing gender inequalities. This will demand the strengthening of the resilience of locally owned GBV systems, supporting CSOs/WROs in their fight against GBV and empowering women and girls in all their diversities as stakeholders and agents of change.

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23 UN Women, Brief on COVID-19 and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, 2020
26 Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility and UNFPA, “GBV AoR Strategy 2021-2025.”
SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY AND WOMEN’S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CRISIS SETTINGS

2.1. THE GRAND BARGAIN AND THE LOCALIZATION AGENDA

The Grand Bargain is an agreement between more than 50 of the largest donors and aid providers worldwide to, among other things, increase multi-year funding, harmonize reporting requirements, improve transparency, reduce management costs and increase joint needs assessments. Signatories committed to support multi-year funding and investments in the institutional capacities of local and national humanitarian actors and to provide at least 25% of humanitarian funding – as directly as possible – to local and national responders.

Among other priorities, the various actors have committed to “promote operational capacity and institution building initiatives targeting women-led organizations [WLOs]”. This includes collaborating to convene women’s forums at country and regional levels and capacity building initiatives to address barriers to the inclusion and participation of identified WLOs/WROs in decision making and leadership in humanitarian coordination structures.

In spite of the Grand Bargain commitments, humanitarian action is still not sufficiently localized. WLO/WROs and community groups shoulder much of the crisis response in local communities, yet funding to local women’s organizations is significantly lacking and too often they are also left out from humanitarian decision-making platforms and have limited access to humanitarian and other sources of funding. Not only are women often excluded from funding, but they are also often omitted altogether from humanitarian planning processes.

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27 UN Women is amongst the signatories of the Grand Bargain. For more details see: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/grand-bargain-signatories
2.2 SUPPORTING CSOS/WROS TO ADDRESS VAWG IN CRISIS SETTINGS

A UN Trust Fund assessment conducted in 2020 recognized CSOs and WROs as first responders and essential service providers. It recommended providing them with the needed support and recognized the role of women’s economic empowerment in global recovery and VAWG prevention as well as the need to include CSOs and WROs in national response plans and support women’s movements. Yet, all too often, WROs/WLOs are not in positions of direct authority or influence in humanitarian decision-making, nor are they supported to collaborate with the decision-makers and leaders who are.32

As observed in the scoping study, although international donor practices may articulate strategic priorities with regard to supporting and resourcing local WROs/WLOs or addressing gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE), there is limited available data that consistently tracks funding and support to local WROs/WLOs. This is evidence of uneven progress on grand bargain commitments and localization and limited accountability on the part of international donors and humanitarian partners.

The activist nature of many CSOs, WROs and WLOs may compromise the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence and their engagement in humanitarian work may therefore be questioned by humanitarian stakeholders. It is key that CSOs are supported to facilitate access and acceptance, allowing them to carry out their work in a protected space. Humanitarian principles should not, however, be manipulated to justify constraints on women CSOs’ access to and influence on humanitarian decision-making, coordination, prioritization, programming and resource mobilization. In contexts where such constraints may exist, the UN Trust Fund can play a key role in supporting national/locally owned coordination and collaboration platforms for local women’s CSOs, fostering principled partnerships with larger organizations that can influence humanitarian work.

32 UN Women. Humanitarian Strategy 2022-2025
Humanitarian aid, grounded in international humanitarian law, is specifically aimed at addressing symptoms or consequences of crisis by, for example, saving lives or alleviating human suffering. Development aid is expected to tackle the underlying drivers of poverty, conflict and crisis and aims to be sustainable, with a longer term perspective. However, in the decade 2010–19, more than half of humanitarian assistance (59%) went to countries in receipt of high levels of humanitarian assistance for 10 or more years. In response to the growing longer-term needs, global humanitarian assistance has increased in absolute terms, surpassing the US$ 25 billion threshold in 2019. In spite of this, global humanitarian needs remain unmet and only about 60% of humanitarian appeals have been financed since 2010.

This scoping study analysed the average project duration of existing humanitarian pooled funding mechanisms, most of which fund projects for 12 months or less. However, most of today’s humanitarian financing goes to protracted situations and the OECD DAC has provided donors with tools to help them implement multi-year humanitarian funding to help make humanitarian aid more cost-efficient and effective.

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34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Pooled funds are multi-donor humanitarian financing mechanisms aiming to provide a flexible and response source of financing for emergencies. Pooled funding mechanisms, often managed by a fund manager or Secretariat. OCHA manages two important kinds of humanitarian pooled funds, the Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPFs) and the global Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which are both fast and flexible financing instruments that support emergency response operations in key, strategic ways. For more information see CBPF – CERF complementarity. Lessons Learned and Good Practices, May 2021.
38 See Humanitarian funding mechanisms summary table
39 Milante and Sipri, “Chronic Crisis Financing? Fifty Years of Humanitarian Aid And Future Prospects.”
The study mapped the key stakeholders to analyse the linkages between complex and overlapping crises and how these intersect with VAWG. Based on this, three different categories of stakeholders were explored:

- **Policy and coordination mechanisms**, with a particular focus on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and its coordination and programmatic systems relevant to ending VAWG and the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.

- **Pooled funding mechanisms**, looking at the intersections of those supporting humanitarian action and those funding efforts to end GBV including VAWG.

- **Bilateral and other multilateral donors**, exploring those currently contributing to the UN Trust Fund and those that could potentially have interest given their priorities/interests in humanitarian response and/or GBV in crisis settings.

Research for this study suggests that, while there is donor appetite to prioritize GBV in crisis settings and most bilateral donors are signatories to the Grand Bargain, access to funding for local WROs and WLOs and their engagement in humanitarian responses remains limited. Few donors and funding mechanisms directly fund and track resources for local organizations. None of the existing pooled humanitarian funding mechanisms analysed in this study has been specifically designed to strengthen the capacities of WROs/WLOs to operate in complex and intersecting crises to address their impacts on VAWG.

Most humanitarian funding mechanisms are short-term in nature, not responding to the current protracted, longer term complex humanitarian needs. The fact that the UN Trust Fund provides long-term, flexible and core funding to CSOs and WROs, makes it uniquely positioned to support CSOs and WROs/WLOs working in protracted crises.

The Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) has been providing both programmatic and institutional core funding to WLOs/WROs to develop capacities, procure equipment for better GBV case management, supporting mental health for their own staff and others. Ending VAWG falls under the WPHF outcome area to protect women and girls’ human rights but it is not an explicit outcome area as such under the WPHF. It is worth noting, however, that when the WPHF has a call for proposals under other outcome areas VAWG is normally mainstreamed as part of the proposals.

Sexual and gender-based violence in public and private spaces has been identified as an area of concern for women and girls under the last Call For Proposals for the Ukraine Regional Response of the WPHF. However, according to the description of services/results, GBV, including conflict-related sexual violence, is to be addressed under information/communication materials and campaigns to be organized around various topics; provision of specialized GBV services or targeted services for GBV survivors are not among the prioritized/suggested services to be supported.

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41 It should be noted that at the level of the IASC and the humanitarian community, programmes to address and eliminate VAWG mainly fall under the GBV AoR, under the Protection Cluster.
42 [https://wphfund.org/our-mission/](https://wphfund.org/our-mission/)
43 The WPHF has five outcome areas: (1) Support women’s participation in decision-making processes and responses related to conflict prevention, (2) Increase women’s engagement and leadership in humanitarian action, (3) Enhance women’s representation and leadership in formal and informal peace negotiations, (4) Protect women and girls’ human rights, and (5) Promote women’s involvement in economic recovery of their communities. For more details see [https://wphfund.org/our-mission/](https://wphfund.org/our-mission/).
44 Extracted from interview to Sophie Giscard D’estaing, Project Coordinator at the WPHF, conducted on 25 August 2022.
45 There are social services, childcare and healthcare services, and opportunities of the internal displacement
In 2020, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) introduced a US$ 25 million special allocation from its rapid response window to specifically support GBV programming. Under this special allocation, UNFPA was granted US$ 17 million and UN Women US$ 8 million.\textsuperscript{46} CERF requested that at least 30% of the funding passed through to WLOs working on GBV, representing an innovative and motivational step in prioritizing local organizations as UN partners in their submissions through country level allocations.

In the case of Ukraine, nearly 70% of the humanitarian funding received against the Flash Appeal has come from the USA (US$ 1.1 billion), the European Commission (US$ 303 million), Japan (US$ 118.5 million), Germany (US$ 92.6 million) and Canada (US$ 87.1 million).\textsuperscript{47} Both the USA and Canada have GBV/ending VAWG among their core priorities and Canada also prioritizes support to CSOs.

There is, therefore, space for the UN Trust Fund to further explore opportunities for increased funding, collaboration and complementarity with existing and potential donors and humanitarian funding mechanisms to help WLOs/WROs overcome barriers and become key actors in mitigating, preventing and responding to VAWG in crisis settings.

\textsuperscript{46} See OCHA Support to Gender and Gender-Based Violence Programming: \textit{Rapid Review of Recent Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Allocations Targeting GBV Prevention and Response in Humanitarian Action, 2021}

\textsuperscript{47} \url{https://reports.unocha.org/en/country/ukraine/card/322ccRiHTz/}
THE UN TRUST FUND’S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE AND ADDED VALUE FOR ADDRESSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS IN CRISIS SETTINGS

The UN Trust Fund is uniquely positioned to support and resource WROs/WLOs in their efforts for a feminist localization agenda and to sustain services to address GBV/VAWG. With its longstanding experience of working with CSOs and WROs to end VAWG, the UN Trust Fund can play a pivotal role among stakeholders to navigate across the HDP nexus and scale up efforts to empower CSOs/WROs operating in complex, protracted crises.

4.1 LONG-STANDING EXPERIENCE AND ROBUST OUTREACH CAPACITY ON ENDING VAWG

The UN Trust Fund has, since 1996, been a key player for transformational change to end VAWG worldwide. It has been crucial for the frontline work of CSOs/WROs in contexts of multiplied threats and overlapping crises and its longstanding relationship with CSOs/WROs critically positions it to push forward a feminist localization agenda, supporting and resourcing movement building among CSOs and WROs/WLOs to end VAWG across the HDP nexus.

In 2016, the UN Trust Fund established a special funding window of grant making focusing on eliminating VAWG in humanitarian crisis contexts. For four funding cycles, it has managed a special funding window focusing on refugee and forcibly displaced women and girls in the context of humanitarian crises and in fragile settings. It has supported 18 civil society-led projects under this portfolio for a combined total of US$ 7.2 million, primarily working on community prevention and response to VAWG, including through providing coordinated and multisectoral services to women and girl survivors or at risk of violence, such as psychosocial and legal aid.48

48 UN Trust Fund Internal Review, 2022.
Through its special window, the UN Trust Fund has contributed to global investments in ending VAWG in humanitarian settings, which continue to be underfunded. It has also helped to further bridge the humanitarian and development divide and offered a tool for localization by supporting projects that are not only implemented by but also conceptualized and designed by local organizations.49

In addition, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and amid an increase in demand for specialist support services provided by grantees for women and girl survivors of violence, the UN Trust Fund employed its resources to promptly adapt and respond to the rapidly changing circumstances. It rolled out a contingency budget line and allowed flexibility in adjusting budgets for all grantees. Also, in collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative of the United Nations and European Union, additional budget was provided to support grantees’ institutional strengthening and COVID-19 response.50

Examples from diverse UN Trust Fund grantees adapting activities and sustaining vital support services for women and girls in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

The grantee Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe (LCDZ) opened a toll-free line to provide online services and psychological first aid to survivors who found themselves cut-off from in-person communication with service providers during the COVID-19 lockdown. The external evaluation team found that the toll-free line was instrumental in ensuring continuous communication between LCDZ and women and girl survivors and those at risk during and after the COVID-19 pandemic and will be instrumental during other crises, as it is critical in providing timely and quality services in real-time.

Grantee Club Eney in Ukraine, provided transport for women to drug treatment centres, increased online advocacy and awareness raising on domestic violence in lockdown, conducted sessions online for the initiative Women Initiating New Goals of Safety (WINGS), led training and support to social workers via phone and in small groups, and extended its network with WROs.

In Nepal, grantee Raksha and its partner Sampark, strengthened their work to help women survivors of human trafficking to access credit and start their own small businesses, conducting training of trainers and cooperative management sessions through online platforms during the pandemic.

49 UN Trust Fund Internal Review, 2022.
50 The UNTF 2021-2025 strategy builds on lessons to ensure flexible and core funding for CSOs/WROS and recognizes this as critical for organizational resilience.
Prompt response and adaptability by the UN Trust Fund also required receptiveness, flexibility and a strong relationship with grantees which includes a thorough understanding of their respective changing needs and circumstances and those of the rights holders they serve. The pandemic underscored the importance of flexible and core funding as a way to invest in grantees’ organizational resilience to disruptive events, accompanied by programmatic and operational adaptations to rapidly changing contexts and overlapping crises.

In 2020 alone, as the world was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Trust Fund managed a grants portfolio of 150 projects aimed at preventing and addressing VAWG in 71 countries and territories. In 2021, with millions of people affected by multiple and overlapping crises – including the COVID-19 pandemic and the long-term consequences of natural and human-made disasters – the UN Trust Fund scaled up its response. It managed a grants portfolio of 157 projects with grants totalling US$ 74.7 million. Grant recipients were primarily CSOs, the majority of which (59%) were WROs, and reached almost 42 million people, including over 22 million women and girls across five regions.

Although not explicit to intersecting crises or emergencies, a key lesson reflected in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is the need to further strengthen collaboration, joint advocacy, collective action and partnership with key stakeholders, including the UN system, women’s funds and organizations, as well as UN Member States, other UN Women’s funds and initiatives to end VAWG. Based on the review exercise, this lesson learned may also be applied to the special focus on protracted crises.

### 4.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO AND ALIGNMENT WITH UN WOMEN CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND SYSTEMS

As much as the UN Trust Fund is an inter-agency grant-making mechanism, it is managed by UN Women and it contributes to the entity’s corporate policies and strategic positioning.

#### UN WOMEN STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025

The UN Trust Fund is aligned with UN Women’s Strategic Plan 2022-2025, primarily Impact Area 3 on Ending Violence Against Women. However, it also contributes to Impact Area 4 on Women, Peace and Security, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction, particularly with regards to Outcome 4: Women’s Equitable Access to Services, Goods and Resources.

#### UN WOMEN HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE STRATEGY 2022-2025

The UN Trust Fund is also aligned with and contributes to the two-pronged approach of UN Women’s Humanitarian Response Strategy. On one hand, it has a potential significant impact on strengthening accountability on gender commitments in the coordination and implementation of UN-led humanitarian and refugee responses. On the

51 This is evidenced in the learnings documented in the UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report and guided by the UN Trust Fund strategy for 2021-2025.

52 Indicators: 0.4.d. Number of women accessing information, goods, resources and/or services through UN-Women-supported platforms and programmes in humanitarian and development settings; and 0.4.c. Number of women’s organizations with increased capacities to deliver and/or monitor the quality of services, resources and goods for women in humanitarian and development settings.
other, the UN Trust Fund plays a pivotal role in supporting the delivery of services on ending VAWG across the HPD nexus continuum.

At the time of writing, UN Women was taking steps towards the final approval of its corporate Humanitarian Response Strategy 2022-2025, standardized programming models for crisis settings, Crisis Response Policy and updated Fast Track Procedures, which can be leveraged for the UN Trust Fund’s crisis response.

### UN WOMEN STRATEGY FOR ENDING VAWG ACROSS THE HDP NEXUS

At the time of writing this paper, the UN Women Strategy for Ending VAWG across the HDP nexus was in its final approval stages. This aims to catalyse an explicit focus on women’s and girls’ needs, rights, priorities, agency and leadership throughout all phases of the HDP nexus, giving specific support to women’s organizations to lead in relevant policy and decision making. The UN Trust Fund is fully aligned and can bring substantive contributions to its strategic objectives on leadership and agency, preventing and mitigating VAWG and bolstering comprehensive services and by generating learning and evidence.

### 4.3 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION WITH KEY HUMANITARIAN STAKEHOLDERS AND ADHERANCE TO HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES AND COMMITMENTS

The UN Trust Fund funds demand-driven, contextually relevant projects that are key to sustainable impact, localization and ownership. Projects are therefore very diverse across a number of metrics – their geographic spread, the range of VAWG issues covered, sectors of interventions, the variety of community groups or rights holders engaged and the strategies adopted.53

Previous calls for proposals provide a clear focus with attention to **intersectionality and reaching persons most marginalized and at risk in humanitarian settings**. This is consistently reflected in the terms of the target rights holders or focus of interventions in the projects of grantees. On the other hand, however, it is difficult to assess what strategies were implemented by grantees and to what extent grantees were able to influence policies and existing humanitarian preparedness and response efforts to address VAWG in crises.

The desk review and interviews of the scoping study provided limited evidence of intentional coordination and collaboration with key humanitarian stakeholders, compliance with humanitarian principles and fitting in the humanitarian architecture in countries where projects were being implemented.

One of the challenges is that the lack of a clearly articulated humanitarian strategy or framework, including common indicators makes it difficult to consistently gather evidence from the work of UN Trust Fund grantees addressing VAWG in emergencies.

A key lesson reflected in the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is the need for further strengthening collaboration, joint advocacy, collective action and partnership with key stakeholders. Based on the review exercise, this lesson learned may be applied to the special focus on protracted crisis too.

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53 As reported in the independent Meta-Analysis 2020.
The UN Trust Fund moves beyond capacity building by creating opportunities to promote cross-sharing of knowledge and experiences and learning among partners and grantees. Partners and grantees are a unique source of invaluable practitioner-based knowledge and learning and the UN Trust Fund is positioned to facilitate vital exchange of knowledge, peer support and collaboration to end VAWG across the HDP nexus and, more particularly, bring learnings from complex crises.

Investments in training and developing the organizational resilience capacities of WROs is crucial to strengthen their pivotal role in navigating across the HDP nexus. Furthermore, as the UN Trust Fund aims to scale up its work in protracted crises to address GBV/VAWG by providing longer-term, comprehensive and lifesaving services, it responds to existing gaps in complex contexts where growing longer-term needs require sustained interventions.

The UN Trust Fund’s lengthy review and approval process and operational limitations on agile disbursement of funds do not allow it to operate as an acute emergency response mechanism. Nevertheless, it has a demonstrated trajectory in supporting projects that sit in the HDP nexus in crisis-affected often protracted contexts, such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, State of Palestine, Serbia, South Sudan and Yemen.54

In its 25th annual grant-giving cycle (2021), the UN Trust Fund introduced more flexible and core support for the CSOs/WROs, paying increased attention to self- and collective care, contingency funding and increased core funding.55 This has helped foster the organizational resilience of CSOs/WROs and allowed for innovation and quick adaptations in rapidly changing contexts. Based on learnings and success stories from recent experience, the UN Trust Fund is now in a strategic position to plan and intentionally weave these approaches into its programmatic and operational know how and share these with a broad base of partners and stakeholders.

The UN Trust Fund brings added value to humanitarian action through the provision of flexible multi-year support to CSOs, bringing an intersectional approach in preventing and responding to VAWG. Unlike other funding mechanisms, the UN Trust Fund supports CSOs/WROs to build organizational capacities through long-term investments, which are crucial to enable them to navigate the HDP nexus and/or to act in rapidly changing, protracted, long-term crisis contexts.

Its unique position to support and resource WROs/WLOs in their efforts for a feminist localization agenda and to sustain services to address GBV/VAWG gives the UN Trust Fund a distinctive advantage as it responds to humanitarian funding gaps with regard to capacity strengthening, leadership and empowerment of local CSOs, WROs and WLOs.

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54 See UN Trust Fund Snapshot of funded projects.
55 UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report.
ALIGNMENT WITH THE GRAND BARGAIN

None of the most utilized humanitarian funding mechanisms\(^{56}\) have been specifically designed to strengthen the capacities of WROs/WLOs to operate in complex and intersecting crises to address their impacts on VAWG and most have a duration of up to one year and are restricted to immediate life-saving needs. Upscaling the UN Trust Fund’s work in protracted crises will, therefore, enable donors to explicitly fund and track resources for local CSOs, specially WROs/WLOs, in compliance with their Grand Bargain commitments. Furthermore, the amounts granted by the UN Trust Fund and duration of projects allow for a unique window of opportunity to empower CSOs and provide sustained essential services to end VAWG during protracted crises. Through its experience, mandate, mission and vision, the UN Trust Fund is critically positioned to collaborate with the humanitarian donor community to bridge the funding gaps and track resources for local CSOs, specially WROs/WLOs.

The UN Trust Fund is fully aligned the Grand Bargain’s Commitments on Localization 1, 2 and 6 by:

1. Increasing and supporting multi-year investment in the institutional capacities of CSOs, including WROs, as local and national responders especially in fragile contexts and where communities are vulnerable to armed conflicts, disasters and the effects of climate change.
2. Removing and reducing barriers that prevent organizations and donors from partnering with local and national organizations by providing direct funding to WLO/WROs grantees.
6. Facilitating, increasing and improving assistance delivered by CSOs, including WLOs/WROs, as local and national responders.

Flexible and core support for the CSOs/WROs, paying increased attention to self- and collective care, contingency funding and increased core funding, contributes to building CSOs/WROs organizational resilience and allows for quick adaptations along the HDP nexus in rapidly changing contexts.\(^{57}\)

\(^{56}\) See Humanitarian funding mechanisms summary table

\(^{57}\) UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report.
Examples from diverse UN Trust Fund grantees using flexible funds to invest in self-care of staff and capacity strengthening\(^{58}\)

In Mexico, grantee Infancia Común invested in training to foster a learning and listening organizational culture. The CSO explicitly recommended that more donors include self-care/core funding in their future calls for proposals.

In Nigeria, the grantee Centre for Women Studies and Intervention implemented trauma management training, conducted emotional intelligence workshops and established a counselling hotline for women and girls.

In Argentina, Fundación Andhes and its partner CLADEM, adapted their work during the COVID-19 pandemic, creating virtual spaces for regular updates for women beneficiaries and staff, strengthening access to services and ensuring that information about support services reached those in need.

Capacity development for grantees is a key part of the UN Trust Fund’s vision set out in its Strategic Plan 2021-2025\(^{59}\) and will help address the barriers faced by WLOs/WROs in accessing humanitarian funding and participating meaningfully in humanitarian coordination, programming and decision making. The UN Trust Fund has also led various mutual capacity development activities, through thematic webinars\(^{60}\) in addition to joint learning and knowledge management initiatives.\(^{61}\) The UN Trust Fund’s Strategic Plan also includes building the preparedness capacities of CSOs/WROs through more core and flexible funding, a contingency budget line, flexibility for rapid adaptations and building organizational resilience.

What is not explicit, however, is how grantees’ capacity to respond during emergencies or engage in humanitarian coordination was supported and resourced through the UN Trust Fund or how grantees are supported with regard to familiarity and compliance with humanitarian principles and commitments. In line with the localization agenda, the UN Trust Fund is in a position to become a key player in supporting, resourcing and developing the capacities of CSOs/WROs, contributing towards their recognition, leadership and participation in ending VAWG in complex and intersecting crises.

\(^{58}\) Source: UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report.
\(^{59}\) UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report.
\(^{60}\) In 2021, topics covered included: data collection, monitoring, ethics, safety and reporting. Courses also covered PSEA, Fraud awareness and project, financial management.
\(^{61}\) In 2018, for example, the UN Trust Fund supported the first two cohorts of grantees under the Refugee/IDP window, through a knowledge sharing and training event, introducing the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (with a special focus on the cross-cutting issue of GBV). For details see Progress Report.
RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 FOR THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- The UN Trust Fund should consider further mainstreaming its approach in support of the organizational resilience and sustainability of women CSOs in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex environment. This approach is crucial for enhanced preparedness, to ensure sustained transformational change and facilitate quick adaptation and recovery before, during and after crises or conflicts.

- In addition to mainstreaming preparedness, the UN Trust Fund should build on achievements from the first year of implementation of its Strategic Plan 2021-2025 with a focus on EVAW risk mitigation, prevention and response in countries and communities affected by complex, intersecting, overlapping and protracted crises. Emerging humanitarian challenges require investments in developing local capacities and ensure that, wherever possible, CSOs and WROs/WLOs are an integral part of crisis prevention, response and recovery in line with the localisation agenda.

5.2 TO BETTER SUPPORT CSOS/WROS TO OPERATE IN CRISIS SETTINGS TO END VAWG

The UN Trust Fund should consider the following actions:

- Invest in support to women's CSOs to learn how the humanitarian spectrum is changing, what their role is/can be, where they bring their added value and learn from what the CSOs are doing.

- Create, support and/or provide spaces for opportunities to meaningfully participate and influence humanitarian decision making coordination and programming.

- Provide training opportunities to WROs/WLOs working in crisis settings so they are equipped to meaningfully participate in humanitarian planning processes and mechanisms in national and sub-national decision-making mechanisms/structures and engage in strategic partnerships.

- Ensure service delivery projects are well coordinated at the level of the GBV sub-cluster/sector and included in the referral pathways.
• Support WROs/WLOs' humanitarian leadership through training and invest in WROs/WLOs’ capacity to engage with humanitarian stakeholders, including donors.

• Include capacity development and partnership building with local women's CSOs, beyond mere subcontracting, for any international non-governmental organization (INGO) grantees.

• When designing capacity development interventions and trainings, consider innovative and online modalities that will allow for the participation of CSOs, WLOs and WROs in hard to reach and remote areas through locally accessible and safe guidance resources and training tools.

• Ensure organizations have integrated the risks, protection of the data, mitigation strategies for staff and women and girls to be safe in proposals for projects in crisis affected countries/contexts.

• Flexibility is crucial: allow projects to adapt if during implementation contexts change. This will require a reliable risk analysis which should ideally be reviewed on a regular basis.

• As much as possible align proposals with Flash Appeal and GBV AoR priorities in crisis contexts/countries and include areas of support in projects to create space for CSOs/WOs to influence humanitarian prioritization, programming and funding to end VAWG.

• Ensure that activities do no harm and are conflict sensitive.62

• Adopt an intersectional approach to designing interventions to end VAWG in humanitarian and crisis contexts. Recognizing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and addressing them in such contexts is key to responding to the humanitarian needs of women and girls most at risk of exclusion and being left behind.

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MAPPING POTENTIAL UN TRUST FUND STAKEHOLDERS

6.1 INGOs

INGOs often have stronger technical and operational capacities to develop proposals, ensure compliance, accountability and transparency systems are in place, upscale programmes and projects, adapt to rapidly changing environments and have the capacity to ensure compliance with humanitarian commitments, standards and guidance. This is particularly relevant for humanitarian INGOs that have been present in the affected country/community or that have strong capacities in working on GBV in humanitarian settings.

When selecting INGOs, it will be important to prioritize those that have experience of programming to end VAWG and of working in partnership with local CSOs/WLOs/WROs and feminist movements, offering reciprocal collaboration. They should demonstrate a clear intention to engage with local partners and support their capacity strengthening on humanitarian coordination and/or programming, and adopt an advisory, backstopping role once the capacity of local partners has been strengthened. This may be achieved by supporting the establishment of consortia that would allow for increased decision making, control and ownership from CSOs, WROs/WLOs, contributing to their empowerment and ensuring programmes are embedded more effectively and sustainably in the local context.

OTHER ELEMENTS TO CONSIDER:

- If INGO proposals include the establishment of a partnership with national NGOs, local CSOs WLOs/WROs and feminist movements, it will be important to ensure allocation of sufficient funding for dignified salaries and the recruitment of qualified staff in line with demand, as well as sufficient budget for trainings to build the capacity of service providers and project personnel.

- As much as possible, INGOs should explicitly consider hiring staff, particularly women, from the affected community for service delivery projects.63

63 This will contribute to build resilience and empower affected women and their families, mitigate VAWG risks, reduce their vulnerability and their exposure to VAWG.
• Projects should have clear community feedback mechanisms in which women from the project communities participate. All grantees should have systems in place for Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and Prevention from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and trained personnel who have been reference checked against PSEA and GBV.

• If women and feminist organizations from the affected communities are not direct implementing partners, it will be important that the project include mechanisms to engage and consult them in defining strategy and operational plans and in coordinating and processing funding proposals.

It is key that, when supporting INGOs, national structures and contextual dynamics are factored in and that INGOs are sensitive to the potential risks that representatives of local and national organizations might face in taking part in humanitarian action. INGOs and international humanitarian actors should therefore seek to accompany and support national and local efforts, rather than impose new structures, focusing on the promotion of civic space and most importantly, the protection of civil society actors.64

6.2 NATIONAL NGOS AND CSOS

National NGOs and CSOs are often front-line responders in crises, know the culture, the context, the language and the applicable national legislation. However, they may not have the necessary gender expertise or capacity to work on VAWG risk mitigation, prevention and response. Furthermore, national NGOs may not have the capacity to provide services in hard to reach and remote areas.

When partnering with national NGOs and CSOs, it will be important that a set of minimum criteria is in place to ensure sufficient gender capacities and knowledge are in place prior to engaging in any VAWG-related action. National NGOs and CSOs should ideally be women led or have a mandate to work on women’s human rights or GBV. Ideally, national NGOs and CSOs should either have specialized knowledge and expertise of working on women’s human rights and prevention and/or elimination of VAWG in humanitarian contexts, or partner with local women’s organizations that have the requisite expertise. Larger organizations should demonstrate the ability and plans to partner and build capacities of the local women’s groups and organizations.65

National NGOs and CSOs with expertise on work on VAWG risk mitigation, prevention and response may not have the necessary capacities to apply such programmes in times of crisis, applying the GBVIE Minimum Standards, ensuring coordination and meeting the necessary requirements to access humanitarian funding. Under such circumstances, the UN Trust Fund should consider national NGOs and CSOs that work to foster alliances among local partners representing women and girls from affected communities for a gender-transformative localization agenda at national and local levels.

64 This is also in line with Grand Bargain Commitment on Localisation #3: Support and complement national coordination mechanisms where they exist and include local and national responders in international coordination mechanisms as appropriate and in keeping with humanitarian principles.  
65 Adapted from UNTF 2018 Call for Proposals.
6.3 LOCAL WROS AND WLOS

WROs/WLOs are often best placed to mobilize change, identify solutions and respond to crises in their communities, as women’s leadership is key in promoting transformative change, resilience and social cohesion in humanitarian settings. However, WROs are generally “smaller than mainstream organizations and have fewer existing networks and less influence with international actors.” They also often have less authority and access to funding mechanisms at the national level.

Funding to local women’s organizations is significantly lacking and too often they are also left out from humanitarian decision-making platforms and have limited access to humanitarian and other sources of funding. Donor funding often omits WLOs and WROs due to lack of direct, targeted local funding opportunities and institutional priorities and women are also often omitted altogether from humanitarian planning processes.

When selecting grantees, the UN Trust Fund should prioritize local WROs and WLOs in line with learnings reflected in its 2021 Annual Report, which documents various examples that clearly articulate how grantees, particularly WLO and WROs, sustained vital support services for women and girls in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing emerging challenges and adapting their activities for the prevention and response to VAWG.

6.4 SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS AND NETWORKS THAT DO NOT QUALIFY AS GRANTEES

While some of women organizations, associations and movements – for example those that are “self-organized that are not registered and those that do not identify as NGOs” – may not fully meet the eligibility criteria to receive a UN Trust Fund grant, they are often first responders. They can also bring essential knowledge on the needs of women and girls affected by the crisis and the specific risks they face, are best positioned to know the challenges and local coping mechanisms and are often in a position to bridge the existing humanitarian architecture in country with the communities.

The UN Trust Fund can leverage its strategic alliance building capacities to create networks and foster collaboration among INGOs, NGOs, CSOs, women’s organizations and non-formal women and feminist networks to come together, join efforts, amplify their voices and influence humanitarian coordination, decision making and programming to end VAWG in crises.

67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
73 While the report is focused on the response to the Covid-19 response, the approach may be applied to other types of crises, including protracted, complex and intersecting crises.
74 Five of the total of twenty one common indicators were focused on grantee adaptations linked to the pandemic.
75 Extracted from draft internal document pending approval.
ANNEX I – INFORMATION SOURCES

DOCUMENTS AND RESOURCES REVIEWED


## OTHER RESOURCES REVIEWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Resource Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adaptable and of the Spotlight Initiative: Strengthening the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus to end VAWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Country Based Pooled Funds Guidelines Web Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Denmark’s strategy for development cooperation, ‘The World We Share’, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) Management Plan, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ECHO Humanitarian Implementation Plan (HIP) Emergency Toolbox, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>GBV AoR, Strategy 2021-2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Global Fund for Women (Web Page, Strategy and 2021 Annual Report)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>GBV AoR, Overview of Gender-Based Violence Situation in Somalia, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>IASC Guidance on Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Norway’s Humanitarian Strategy: An effective and integrated approach, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>OCHA, Global Humanitarian Overview, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>ODI, Gender, Power and Principles in Humanitarian Action, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>OECD, Draft DAC Recommendation on Enabling Civil Society in Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance, 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Snapshot of UN Trust Fund projects funded (Cycle 2020-2022)</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Spotlight Initiative, Rising to the Challenge: Rising Impact Report, 2020-2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Strategy for Sweden’s humanitarian aid provided through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) 2021–2025</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>UN Women &amp; UNFPA, Funding for Gender Equality and The Empowerment of Women and Girls in Humanitarian Programming, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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23. UN Women, Analysis for New Grant Making Policy, 2019
24. UN Women, Draft Guidance Note on Partnering with Women’s Organisations
27. UN Women, Strategic Plan 2021-2025
28. UNHCR, Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2020
30. UNOV / UNODC, Call for Proposals Guidelines for grant applicants. Sixth Cycle of the UNVTF Small Grants Programme - Sub-grant programme two, 2022
31. UN Trust Fund 2016 Call for Proposals Humanitarian Window
32. UN Trust Fund 2017 Call for Proposals with two windows: IDP and refugee window and a disabilities window
33. UN Trust Fund 2017 Sample Options Paper
34. UN Trust Fund 2018 Call for Proposals
35. UN Trust Fund 2021 Annual Report
36. UN Trust Fund Grant Giving One Pager
37. UN Trust Fund Grant Giving Procedure Handbook
38. UN Trust Fund Internal Memo on Integration of UN Trust Fund Results within the IRRF
39. UN Trust Fund Internal Review, 2022
40. UN Trust Fund Presentation for Multilateral Donor Consultation
41. UN Trust Fund Sample Call for Proposals Process and Timeline
42. UN Trust Fund Six months of global pandemic: COVID-19 and the Impact on Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) Working to End Violence Against Women and Girls, 2020
43. UN Trust Fund Snapshot of funded projects (Cycles 20, 21 and 22)
44. UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2015-2020
45. UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2021-2025
46. WPHF Ukraine Call for Proposals
ANNEX II – STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND FUNDING LANDSCAPE

[This Annex summarizes key funding mechanisms active in the humanitarian funding landscape setting out a comparative analysis with the UN Trust Fund’s activities in the field. As will be seen, the UN Trust Fund’s three-year funding for projects and its focus on WRO/WLOs corresponds particularly closely to the aim of movement building of feminist movements and building resilience and sustainable change towards eliminating VAWG and advancing gender equality.]

HUMANITARIAN POOLED FUNDING AND OTHER RELEVANT FUNDING MECHANISMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Mechanisms</th>
<th>Crisis focus</th>
<th>Funding streams</th>
<th>Responding to VAWG</th>
<th>CSOs (generic)</th>
<th>WRO / WLOs</th>
<th>Time for review / approval</th>
<th>Project duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UN Trust Fund</td>
<td>Partial through special windows</td>
<td>EVAW</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7 - 9 months</td>
<td>3 years</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Humanitarian clusters/sectors</td>
<td>GBV is amongst life-saving criteria</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
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<td>Country Based Pooled Funds</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Humanitarian clusters/sectors</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>12 months</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Fund for Women</td>
<td>Partial through specific windows</td>
<td>Feminist crisis response</td>
<td>Yes, while the focus is not limited to VAWG</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>6 months - 2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spotlight Initiative</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>EVAW</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Up to 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPHF</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Women empowerment for crisis response and lasting peace</td>
<td>Yes, while the focus is not limited to VAWG</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Normal CFP: 4 months</td>
<td>Maximum 24 months (varies)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Emergency track: 1-2 months from CFP until project starts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Engagement in Humanitarian Clusters/Sectors</td>
<td>Protection / GBV AoR</td>
<td>NGOs registered in a Member State of the EU</td>
<td>Not specifically</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Humanitarian clusters/sectors</td>
<td>Protection / GBV AoR</td>
<td>Not specifically</td>
<td>ASAP</td>
<td>12 months</td>
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<td>ELRHA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Research and innovation - GBV</td>
<td>Partial through specific CFP for GBV in humanitarian settings</td>
<td>Not specifically</td>
<td>Varies (7 months for current window)</td>
<td>Varies (max. 18 months for current window)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNODC (UNVTF)</td>
<td>Partial through specific windows on emergency aid grants Human trafficking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not specifically</td>
<td>5 months</td>
<td>12-24 months</td>
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</table>

**POLICY AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS**

**Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)**

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) was created by United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 in 1991 and is the longest-standing and highest-level humanitarian coordination forum of the United Nations system. The IASC advocates for common humanitarian principles and makes strategic, policy and operational decisions with a direct bearing on humanitarian operations on the ground.

**IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action (GRG)**

Since December 2006, the IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action (Gender Reference Group/Gender RG/GRG) has supported the integration of gender equality and women’s empowerment in the humanitarian action system coordinated by the IASC. At the time of writing this scoping study, the GRG was co-chaired by UN Women and ActionAid. The GRG is in the process of introducing a common definition of women’s and/or girls’ organizations to be used by the IASC and humanitarian system.

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**GBV Area of Responsibility (AoR)**

The GBV AoR is part of the humanitarian architecture under the Protection Cluster. It works to bring humanitarian stakeholders together “to improve the effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian response for the prevention, risk mitigation and response to all forms of gender-based violence”. The GBV AoR has a Localisation Task Team, whose research has shown relevant gaps remaining with regards to the localization of GBV in the humanitarian sector, particularly in relation to partnerships, participation in coordination groups, capacity building, engaging WLOs, and advocacy.

**Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies**

The Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies is a global initiative of governments and donors, international organizations and NGOs. It was launched in 2013 “to secure the transformational change that ensures priority attention to the needs and rights of women and girls and GBV survivors in humanitarian action”, and UN Women is among the 98 members.

**HUMANITARIAN POOL FUNDING AND OTHER RELEVANT FUNDING MECHANISMS**

**Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)**

The CERF is a UN standby fund for timely, effective and reliable humanitarian assistance for victims of natural disasters, complex emergencies and time-limited responses, with a duration of three to six months, to deteriorating situations in protracted emergencies. Only UN agencies can apply. While NGOs cannot directly request CERF funds, they often serve as implementing partners for CERF-funded projects. In January 2019, the Emergency Relief Coordinator identified support for women and girls, including tackling GBV and women’s empowerment, as one of the four priority areas that are often underfunded and lack appropriate consideration and visibility when funding is allocated to humanitarian action.

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77 The Protection Cluster has the following Areas of Responsibility: Child Protection (led by UNICEF), Gender-Based Violence (led by UNFPA), Housing, Land and Property (led by NRC), Mine Action (led by UNMAS).


79 For TORs visit: [https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/TOR%20GBV%20AoR%20Task%20Team%20%20on%20Localisation%20%2007%2912%2018%20%2028%201%2029.pdf](https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2019-07/TOR%20GBV%20AoR%20Task%20Team%20%20on%20Localisation%20%2007%2912%2018%20%2028%201%2029.pdf)


81 [https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/who-we-are](https://www.calltoactiongbv.com/who-we-are)

82 The Humanitarian funding mechanisms summary table offers a summary of the key findings of the review of the pooled funding mechanisms analysed for the purpose of this study.

Country Based Pooled Funds (CBPF)

CBPF are pooled, unearmarked funds from donors to support humanitarian efforts. Managed by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) under the leadership of the Humanitarian Coordinator, and in close consultation with the humanitarian community, they incentivize wider inclusion of humanitarian partners in coordination mechanisms. CBPF represent the largest source of direct funding for national and local actors. Primary recipients are UN agencies, national and international NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies.84

Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

The WPHF focuses on promoting socio-economic recovery, leadership and political participation of women and young women forcibly displaced (e.g. refugees, internally displaced people, asylum seekers) in crisis and humanitarian contexts. In the 2022 call for proposals, WPHF accepted applications of both (and/or) institutional/core funding and programmatic funding.

Spotlight Initiative

The Spotlight Initiative is a UN global initiative launched with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union. It represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Spotlight Initiative is responding to all forms of violence against women and girls, with a particular focus on domestic and family violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, femicide, trafficking in human beings and sexual and economic exploitation. A learning document on the SHINE platform85 captures learnings from Spotlight Initiative (see document Adaptability of the Spotlight Initiative: Strengthening the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus to end VAWG) with a focus on its contributions around COVID-19 response, weather-related disasters and climate change and conflict and post-conflict contexts. Civil society is represented at every phase of Spotlight Initiative programming, from design and implementation, to monitoring, decision-making and governance.86

The UN Trust Fund and the WPHF allocated US$ 36.7 million of Spotlight Initiative funding to address VAWG in the context of COVID-19.87 In March 2022, the UN Trust Fund UN Trust Fund and the Spotlight Initiative co-hosted a special event, “Resiliency to Crises: Lessons from Civil Society Organizations in the Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls”.

84 While the expected start date is set for the fourth quarter of 2021, at the time of writing this scoping study, no progress was reflected towards this planned action.
85 The SHINE platform has been created and managed by UN Trust Fund.
Global Fund for Women

Global Fund for Women’s primary goal is to get resources to organizations led by women, girls and trans people; support organizations led by historically marginalized groups who are working to build strong, connected movements for gender equality and human rights; and provide resources that strengthen the agency, participation, and power of local organizations working directly in their communities. The majority of its funding (79%) is multi-year, providing longer-term support allows groups to plan ahead and stay agile.  

ELRHA

Elrha is a global charity that works in partnership with humanitarian organizations, researchers, innovators and the private sector. Elrha is not specifically focused on VAWG or GBV, although GBV is among its focus areas. Elrha conducts research on the gaps in GBV programming to identify areas where innovation and research can have an impact. In 2020, under its Humanitarian Innovation Fund, Elrha opened a window on Innovative Responses to Intimate Partner Violence in Humanitarian Settings. Eligibility criteria may differ from one particular call to another. It regularly funds NGOs and CSOs from the affected countries/territories where the action is to be implemented.

United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking (UNVTF)

The UNVTF is managed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The fund was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2010 to Combat Trafficking in Persons and aims to provide essential humanitarian, legal and financial aid to victims of trafficking. Although not a humanitarian funding mechanism, the UNVTF has a fast-track, emergency aid window under its Small Grants Programme, awarding multi-year of up to US$ 60,000 to global CSOs. In its 2022 call for proposals, the UNVTF has prioritized women and girls from conflict areas of Eastern Europe affected by displacement.

88 https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/who-we-are/
89 Ibid.
90 See UNOV / UNODC, Call for Proposals Guidelines for grant applicants, Sixth Cycle of the UNVTF Small Grants Programme - Sub-grant programme two, 2022.