

# Evaluation of the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) 2019-2023

## FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

30 July 2024

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## Acronyms

CSO	Civil society organization
CO	Country Office
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EQ	Evaluation question
EU	European Union
GAI	Global acceleration instrument
GBV	Gender-based violence
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
LNOB	Leave no one behind
ME	Managing entity
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MTR	Mid-term review
NAP	National Action Plan
NSC	National Steering Committees
OECD-DAC Assistance Committee	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
RCO	Resident Coordinator’s Office
RRP	Refugee Response Plan
RRW	Rapid Response Window
SGDs	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WEE	Women’s economic empowerment
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WPHF	Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPS	Women, Peace, and Security
WRO	Women’s Rights Organizations

## Executive Summary

This executive summary provides a summarized version of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of this evaluation. For fully details, readers should reference the main report.

### INTRODUCTION

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.

To address the financing gaps and create greater synergies between different sources of finance to meet the needs of women across the humanitarian-development-peace divide, the "Women, Peace and Security Financing Discussion Group (FDG)" was established in June 2014 as a unique multi-stakeholder space for elaborating strategies for dedicated and scaled-up financing in support of the women, peace and security agenda. Recognizing the urgent need to prioritize action, the FDG proposed the creation of the United Nations Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (previously called the Global Acceleration Instrument on women, peace and security – WPS and humanitarian action. - HA).

Created in 2016, WPHF is a flexible localization financing mechanism that aims to re-energize action and stimulate a significant increase in financing for women's participation, leadership, and rights in humanitarian response and peace and security settings. WPHF works to address the unique needs and amplify the expert voices of frontline women civil society leaders of all ages and diversities, leveraging their added value and unlocking their power to reach the most marginalized communities and effectively break the silos between the world's most pressing peace and security, humanitarian, development and human rights challenges.<sup>1</sup>

WPHF 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. UN Women hosts the Secretariat of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

### PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The **overall purpose** of this independent external evaluation is to help inform WPHF's current and future support to women's rights organizations in crisis and conflict contexts, as well as help to improve its overall efficiency across its funding windows. The evaluation is intended to identify good practices as well as areas of improvement that can be explored to accelerate the Fund's results.

The evaluation covered the period between 2019 (after the MTR) until the end of 2023.

### METHODOLOGY

Given that WPHF is intrinsically aimed at contributing to peaceful and gender-equal societies, the evaluation approach was founded upon feminist principles, a formative approach, and a utility focus.

The evaluation was framed around five key evaluation questions, covering the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, and being:

- To what extent has WPHF remained relevant in the evolving context of women's peace and security since 2016?
- To what degree does WPHF maintain coherence with other interventions globally and at country level, including coherence and coordination with other stakeholders and donors?
- To what extent has WPHF been efficient as a pooled fund for local women's rights organizations?
- To what extent has the implementation of initiatives and processes across WPHF funding windows been effective?
- To what degree have results to date of grants shown progress towards the six outcomes of the Fund and what is the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://wphfund.org/our-mission/>

expected sustainability, vis à vis the overarching goal of the Fund?

The evaluation team relied on a mixed methods approach of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, to complement one another and be applied across all components of the evaluation matrix.

Data collected for this evaluation was comprised of the review of **63 documents**, interviewing **161 key informants** across global and country levels, and **14 respondents** who responded to the online survey.

The final evaluation methodology included **three country visits** to Colombia, Moldova and Uganda and a further **five remote desk studies** of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lebanon, Philippines, Syria, and Ukraine.

## FINDINGS

**Relevance:** The Fund has been, remains, and is continually increasing in, relevance to the global context. This relevance is both in terms of what assistance the Fund provides and in terms of how it is provided within the global humanitarian, peace and development architecture. WPHF remains extremely well-aligned to Resolution 1325 and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, it exemplifies the localization agenda as part of the Grand Bargain commitments. Indeed, in this respect, the Fund is not only aligned with, but is ahead of the existing normative framework. The Fund is often limited geographically by funds earmarked through donor choice rather than allocation of unearmarked funds decided by WPHF Funding board members but despite this, the Fund exhibits flexibility, a responsive evolution relative to contexts, and timeliness of response, both globally and within countries.

All *three functions* of the Fund (breaking silos, addressing structural funding gaps, and improving policy coherence) remain relevant, but not all equally. Further there is insufficient clarity of the cause-and-effect logic relationship between the functions: i.e. by addressing structural funding gaps, silos are broken, and policy coherence is improved.

All *six outcomes* remain relevant to the needs of WROs. However, the evaluation finds that outcomes are not all on the same level, in terms of relevance, and there is both some overlap and a degree of obstructive siloing. The listed, summative presentation of the outcomes one by one may hinder a more integrated and holistic approach. Specifically, respondents find that Outcome 1 (creating an enabling environment) is more transversal and contributes to all other outcomes.

**Coherence:** While the Fund is not always recognized as an entity apart from UN Women, it demonstrates several unique, and explicitly feminist principles of coherence and clarity, although this is not necessarily consistently understood across all stakeholders. WPHF is not considered comparable with any other existing fund, and it is the uniqueness, and the feminist niche of the Fund, that provides such concrete complementarity to the overall UN eco-system. Being a feminist fund, focused on localization in the HDP nexus space is its niche but this is not necessarily consistently leveraged.

The Fund demonstrates exemplary communications and consistent and genuine efforts to ensure ownership at all levels and this is commended by all stakeholders, at all levels.

However, the Fund has not yet fully positioned itself as a multi-agency Fund, and Fund-supported projects are, at country level, often considered to be UN Women programming. Strategic partnerships have been well leveraged at global level but less well leveraged for continued support at country level.

**Efficiency:** The WPHF is as efficient as a UN funding mechanism can be, given generally strict compliance and risk-averse processes within the UN system. There are strong examples of effective speed of response to new emergencies as they arise, and the Covid-19 window was a strong example of the institutional flexibility for a new and unprecedented global crisis. However, while the existing governance structure of the Fund allows the Secretariat to make quick decisions, completely trusted and supported by the

board, there are still many operational challenges and bottlenecks that limit efficiency.

The WPHF has been successful in increasingly mobilizing resources from governments, although much of this remains geographically or thematically earmarked, and has also made progress in mobilizing funds from the private sector. In terms of resource mobilisation, the Fund grown year on year, with USD 48.5 million mobilised last year, the highest year yet. However, there is limited evidence of increased resource mobilization at the country level.

**Effectiveness:** Overall, the effectiveness of the Fund is considered good, operating as it does within the restrictions of the UN system, and being viewed by many as an example of the best of the UN. The governance structure of the Fund is considered clear, respectful and inclusive, engendering transparent and participatory decision-making. The biggest challenge is working within the restrictive UN systems of UN Women as the managing entity.

The WPHF has been effective in achieving its overall functions, hindered only by the limited funding and challenges with UN systems, procedures, processes, and bureaucracy. However, progress against different functions is *measured* in different ways. Function 2 can be easily quantitatively measured in terms of the funds received by WRO through this Fund and potentially in the future how many of these WROs go on to access other funds.

WPHF has been demonstrably effective at increasing visibility of WROs in WPS-HA spaces, with consistently solid and robust examples across multiple countries.

Institutional funding and global learning and coalition building are key catalysing factors that contribute to the achievement of the outcomes and ultimate goal of the Fund.

**Effectiveness and Sustainability:** There are clear and demonstrable results at country level against outcomes, with challenges mainly being about attribution of results to specific outcomes rather than a more holistic approach, and in terms of metrics and reporting structures. There is a general sense among all stakeholders of the catalytic impact

of the Fund longer-term, although measuring this is difficult.

Overall good progress is reported on the outcome areas, despite the challenges highlighted above. While there is no direct concrete evidence from this evaluation of the sustainability of results – and the question is, of course, how this could be measured? - there is a general sense among all stakeholders of the catalytic impact of the Fund longer-term, in terms of the results highlighted above and the increasing inclusion of women in humanitarian and peace processes.

## CONCLUSIONS

**Conclusion 1.** The WPHF is extremely relevant to the global context, coherent with other mechanisms, and most importantly, fills a gap that no other mechanism can reach. This niche of the Fund is critical, although there is not consistent understanding of the specifically feminist niche across all stakeholders. However, overall, in terms of filling a gap, the continuation and expansion of the Fund is critical.

**Conclusion 2.** The relationship between the WPHF and UN Women has both immense benefits and some challenges. This relationship is currently not viewed as the genuinely symbiotic bond that it could be, with some lack of clarity at both global and country levels and from both sides about the benefits of the relationship.

**Conclusion 3.** Governance structures of the Fund are feminist, respectful, inclusive, and highly effective. However, like most other UN entities, the Fund highlights challenges of the bureaucratic and risk-adverse overall processes of the UN ecosystem. Although this causes some issues for the Fund, it can manoeuvre in a flexible manner to allow the purpose of the Fund to be achieved. The Fund itself is the antithesis of what UN systems have become, which is funding large, well-established organizations with a proven track record which adhere to the UN's stringent compliance procedures.

**Conclusion 4.** Effectiveness of the Fund's contributions to the WPS agenda is demonstrable. However, the lack of clarity



around the logic and interlinkages of the functions, and the siloing of the outcome areas hinders the narrative of positive and demonstrable results.

**Conclusion 5.** The Fund is facing a gap in assessing and demonstrating sustainability of results, sustainability of WROs, and catalytic actions at country level.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Relevance

*Recommendation 1. WPHF should develop a clear strategy to reframe the identity of the Fund and refocus the Fund entirely from a perspective grounded in feminist principles.*

The uniqueness of the Fund is its foundation of feminist principles. Therefore, the Fund should review all aspects, including Functions and Objectives, and all documentation, to ensure that feminist principles apply in every statement, process, and operation, even where WPHF is strategically shaping its message based on audience and context. Examples include (a) defining and promoting, where relevant, the notion of “feminist peace” – linking to a longer-term sustainability and building of social cohesion, rather than simply an absence of conflict, and (b) ensuring all feminist principles are reinforced and clarified in all operational guidance, even where the actual word “feminist” is not explicitly articulated.

*Recommendation 2. [Strategic] While the WPHF has recently been reviewed, refined, and revised based on the findings of the 2019 MTR, the logic between Functions and Outcomes should be reviewed.*

The WPHF is hindered by a lack of consistent understanding and agreement about the logic between the Functions, between the Outcomes, and connecting the Outcomes to the Functions. A review of this logic and clear dissemination of it to all levels of WPHF would be useful. Examples include (a) functions not existing at the same level in terms of cause and

effect; (b) not sufficient clarity on how the outcomes interlink.

### Coherence

*Recommendation 3. WPHF should consider the promotion and visibility of the Fund at global and country levels of the WPHF vis à vis UN Women and the Fund as a multi-partner entity which works across the UN system.*

WPHF should develop a clear and final strategy for branding as a Multi-Agency Fund to include practical changes, such as a change of email address, reinforcing the independence of WPHF within the UN system while also recognizing the normative alignment with UN Women. Examples of components of this strategy include: (a) advocating with other UN agencies to be more visible as stakeholders in WPHF at country and global level; (b) recognizing the work undertaken at country level by UN Women COs; (c) advocating within UN Women regarding the level of risk necessary within systems for WPHF to achieve its purpose, and (d) developing a position to present paper, together with UN Women, on clarification of the relationship between WPHF and UN Women.

### Efficiency

*Recommendation 4. WPHF should review and invest in a more comprehensive and qualitative set of MEL metrics, indicators and reporting systems.*

While metrics are impressive, a refocus on a narrative that really tells the story of impact, while rationalizing administrative burden of reporting, could be useful. WPHF should revise the MEL framework and indicators, and, wherever possible, move towards outcome and/or impact indicators and strengthen qualitative indicators more than quantitative indicators.<sup>2</sup>

The qualitative reporting gives much more compelling and powerful impact information, and the numbers can be confusing, and / or considered negligible within the wider context

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<sup>2</sup> This is already being considered by WPHF.



of humanitarian and peace funding structures, and / or lacking in meaningful significance.

Examples of specific activities for reviewing the MEL framework and strategy include: (a) establishing an ongoing community of practice among managing entities to promote continuous exchange and learning; (b) considering revised reporting templates, for annual WPHF country reporting, including less free-flowing narrative; (c) introducing an annual update for WROs who received institutional funding for up to 5 years after the funding was received; (d) maximizing use of data for feedback loop into programming, not just reporting, as much as is possible; and (e) making the purpose of reporting, and how reports are utilized clear to everyone working on WPHF projects.

### **Effectiveness**

*Recommendation 5. WPHF should develop an operational plan and commitment for investing in quality, under an umbrella feminist funding strategy.*

For its longer-term continuation, the WPHF funding strategy could evolve to ensure that investing in quality is a paramount principle, including both length and amount of support provide to a country.

Examples include: (a) an explicit statement on how long support to a country will be provided, with a minimum window (for example, 3 years) regardless of change in circumstances; (b) reviewing the minimum funding level again, to ensure that support is impactful; and (c) a feminist funding strategy, to continually map, and subsequently target, those donor governments who are moving towards feminist foreign policies, and particularly for unearmarked funds.

*Recommendation 6. WPHF should review develop a standing operating procedure (SOP) with options for accelerating timelines for decision-making processes.*

At the country level, a review of the mechanisms for implementation of WPHF projects is required to streamline the process and maximize efficiencies. Examples include (a) a "cheat sheet" of pros and cons of

government involvement in NSCs, against which countries can make an informed decision; and (b) a "no-delay clause" – i.e. rules to ensure that the NSC must convene within four weeks of the shortlisting submission to the ME and RCO and, if not possible, how decisions can be taken via email with X% of votes.

*Recommendation 7. WPHF should conceptualize and develop operational guidance for LNOB, as it applies to the Fund.*

This should include: (a) developing a position paper on the meaning, implications of and outreach to drive a LNOB approach from a feminist perspective; (b) further focus on the smallest and most disadvantaged women's organizations: develop, unpack existing strategies and good practices to facilitate this; and (c) a statement on LNOB for CSOs and for advocacy for the Fund with other UN agencies.

### **Effectiveness and sustainability**

*Recommendation 8. WPHF should develop a "Bridging the Gap" strategy, to address the challenge in sustainability highlighted in the findings and conclusions sections.*

One of the hindering factors to WPHF contributions to the WPS agenda resulting in sustainable changes is that WROs receiving funding from WPHF do not necessarily go on to receive sustained funding from other sources: Sustainability covers an array of factors but continued funding from other UN agencies and INGOs to WROs at the level that WPHF provides support is critical for continued voice of WROs in humanitarian and peace spaces.

Examples of components of this strategy include: (a) a plan for advocacy to 1–3 specific UN agencies to fund WROs "pre-approved" by WPHF; (b) metrics to track not just 1st access to UN funds, but for WROs who have received WPHF funds, whether they have accessed other UN funding for up to five years afterwards; (c) consideration of different social accelerator models for WROs to achieve the level required for receiving UN funds; and development of a strategy for a significant programme of support for country level CSO resource mobilization.

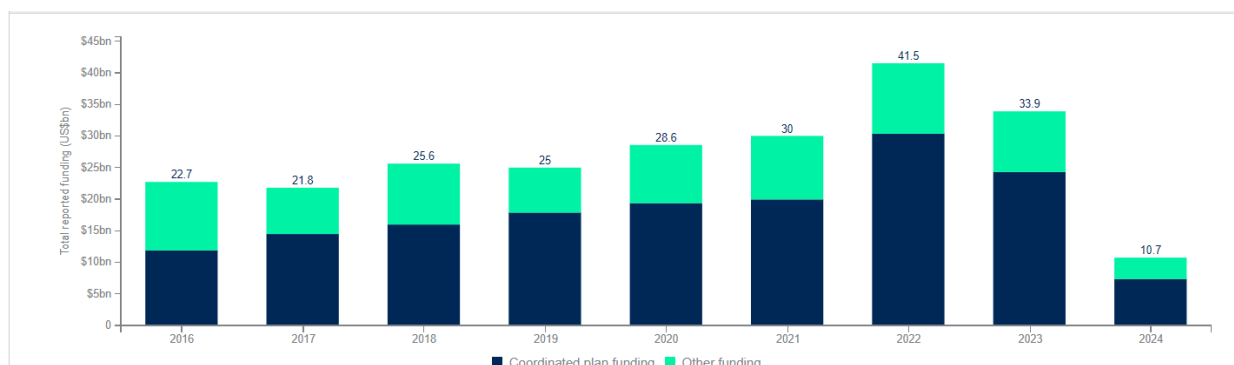
# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Context

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. There is also increasing recognition that placing women’s agency at the centre of the transition from crisis to sustainable development offers enormous potential for leveraging transformative change: Women’s meaningful participation in peace and security increases by 50 per cent the likelihood that peace will be sustained.<sup>3</sup> Yet, despite the benefits that investing in women can bring, the contribution of women to prevention, humanitarian response and peace consolidation continues to be undervalued, under-utilized and under-resourced. A growing body of research has demonstrated the striking gap between policy commitments for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and financial resources allocated to achieve them.

Similarly, humanitarian finance is coming under maximum pressure. An increase in the number of armed conflicts, coupled with growing food insecurity and the global climate crisis, are among the factors contributing to the highest numbers of people requiring humanitarian assistance and protection in decades. The UN OCHA Global Humanitarian Overview published in December 2021 estimated a total of 274 million people will require humanitarian assistance and protection across 63 countries in 2022, rising by 39 million compared with the previous year.<sup>4</sup> The latest information from the OCHA Financial Tracking System (FTS) shows that while needs remain high, the record 2022 levels of humanitarian funding were not sustained in 2023.<sup>5</sup>

Figure 1: Total funding reported to and processed by FTS per year- inside and outside coordinated plans



Over the past decade, 1.7 billion people have been affected by extreme weather and climate-related disasters like hurricanes, cyclones and droughts. These disasters continue to drive more and more families into severe levels of hunger.<sup>6</sup> A total of 389 climate-related disasters were recorded in 2020, resulting in the deaths of 15,080 people, affecting 98.4 million others and inflicting \$171.3 billion in economic damage. The climate emergency is a threat multiplier, contributing not only to more

<sup>3</sup> Advisory Group of Experts on UN Peacebuilding Architecture Review (2015).

<sup>4</sup> Global Humanitarian Overview 2022: <https://gho.unocha.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://fts.unocha.org/home/2024/donors/view>

<sup>6</sup> Worst Climate Disasters of 2023 and Their Effects on Global Hunger: <https://www.wfpusa.org/articles/worst-climate-disasters-of-2023-and-their-effects-on-global-hunger/>

frequent and intense climate-related disasters but also conflict, driving displacement and making life harder for those already forced to flee.<sup>7</sup>

The collapse of natural ecosystems is also fuelling food insecurity and economic, human rights and societal challenges. The 2024 Global Report on Food Crises (a joint, consensus-based analysis by 16 partner organizations), estimated over 281.6M people are facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 59 countries/territories, with 44 countries with major food crisis and 36 with protracted crisis, of which 12 experienced notable deteriorations since 2022 due to conflict/insecurity, weather extremes or economic shocks, or a combination of these shocks.<sup>8</sup> According to World Food Programme (WFP) estimates, 345.2 million people are projected to be food insecure in 2023 — more than double the number in 2020. But food insecurity is not gender neutral and neither are its impacts: in 2021, there were 150 million more women than men who were food insecure worldwide, a vast increase from the 18 million gender gap in 2018.<sup>9</sup>

Different reports evidence the increased backlash against women's rights and shrinking civic space, as a worrying trend that risks bringing backwards the efforts of the international community and women in many crisis and conflict and post-conflict countries. According to the *2023 Report of the Secretary General on Women and peace and security*,<sup>10</sup> misogyny is a common thread in the rise of authoritarianism and in the spread of conflict and violent extremism. In this difficult context, the number of women and girls living in conflict affected countries reached 614 million in 2022, 50 per cent higher than the number in 2017.

*The state of women human rights defenders report (2023)*<sup>11</sup> reveals a concerning rise in threats and harassment, with 75% reporting such incidents and many with their families also targeted. In some cases, the threats even come from the activists' family members, as many as 51% reporting this in sub-Saharan Africa. In South Asia over 30% of the respondents indicated having faced attempts on their lives.

The current trend contributes to a shrinking civic space, exacerbating the scarcity of funding for women's rights and LGBTQI+ rights activism. It even fosters competition rather than collaboration among activists, hindering coalitions, collaboration, and synergies. This also shows the importance of investing in local WROs in turbulent times to sustain and build on gains, but also for more just, equitable and inclusive peace and humanitarian response.

Despite all the evidence and warnings, humanitarian, peace and security and development assistance continue to operate gender-blind (without taking into account the different implications for women and men and the impact on gender inequalities) and in silos (not implementing the triple nexus). As the risks associated with violence and conflict become increasingly more complex, interconnected and co-variable, working in silos not only no longer makes sense in terms of programme efficiency, but is also likely to negatively impact on women's exclusion and discrimination.

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<sup>7</sup> Humanitarian Action Must Adapt to Climate Change Realities:

<https://2022.gho.unocha.org/trends/humanitarian-action-must-adapt-climate-change-realities/#footnote-paragraph-5-1>

<sup>8</sup> 2024 Global Report on Food Crisis: <https://www.fsinplatform.org/report/global-report-food-crises-2024/#download>

<sup>9</sup> <https://wphfund.org/2023/06/13/global-wphf-launches-first-ever-global-funding-appeal-supporting-women-working-at-the-forefront-of-the-fight-against-famine/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4024756?ln=en&v=pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://kvinnatillkvinna.org/publications/the-state-of-women-human-rights-defenders-2023/>

## 1.2 Background of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

To address the financing gaps and create greater synergies between different sources of finance to meet the needs of women across the humanitarian-development-peace divide, the "Women, Peace and Security Financing Discussion Group (FDG) 14" was established in June 2014 as a unique multi-stakeholder space for elaborating strategies for dedicated and scaled-up financing in support of the women, peace and security agenda. Recognizing the urgent need to prioritize action, the FDG proposed the creation of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

Created in 2016, the WPHF is a flexible localization financing mechanism that aims to re-energize action and stimulate a significant increase in financing for women's participation, leadership, and rights in humanitarian response and peace and security settings. WPHF works to address the unique needs and amplify the expert voices of frontline women civil society leaders of all ages and diversities, leveraging their added value and unlocking their power to reach the most marginalized communities and effectively break the silos between the world's most pressing peace and security, humanitarian, development and human rights challenges.<sup>12</sup> WPHF 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.

UN Women hosts the Secretariat of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. The WPHF Secretariat provides support to the Funding Board, mobilizes resources from Governments, companies, foundations and individuals, designs funding windows and mechanisms, provides day-to-day support to Country Offices implementing WPHF programmes, advocates to amplify women CSO's and peacebuilders/WHRDs voices at the global level, and ensures timely and quality monitoring and reporting.

The WPHF supports interventions designed and led by local women-led and women's rights organizations (WROs) to prevent conflict, protect women and girls, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities, through its 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.<sup>13</sup>

During the period of the evaluation different global windows were established as a way of responding to different needs and opportunities for WROs and peacebuilders:

- **Covid 19 Emergency Response Window:** Established in April 2020, it channelled urgently needed programmatic and institutional funding to local women's organizations working at the forefront of pandemic response in crises settings around the world.
- **Rapid Response Window on Women's Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements:** Established in September 2020 to support women peacebuilders and women's rights organizations to enhance women's meaningful participation or influence formal peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://wphfund.org/our-mission/>

<sup>13</sup> Funding Board Meeting PPT, December 6, 2023.

- **Window for Women Human Right Defenders:** Established in 2022 to contribute to the protection and participation of WHRDs from/working in crisis and conflict affected countries who work for the promotion of human rights and inclusive peace.

The Secretariat has mobilized **USD 175.4 million** as of December 31, 2023, since the launch of the Fund in 2016, and **USD 45.8 million in 2023** from 18 government donors and private funding; in 2023 there was an increase of USD 2 million from the previous year, including USD 960,231 mobilized through private sector engagement. The distribution of allocated funds by region is 30.9% for Africa, followed by Asia & the Pacific with 21.4%, Arab States with 19.3%, Europe & Central Asia (16.4%) and Latin America and the Caribbean with 12.0%.

By December 2023, over 1,200 CSOs have been supported in 44 countries and a total of 5 million people were directly served between 2016 and 2023, 74% of were adult women and girls.<sup>14</sup>

The Secretariat has been overseeing a portfolio of over 700 projects in 44 countries selected in accordance with the Fund’s ToRs and Operations Manual. Cumulatively (since 2016), WPHF has received 15,570 proposals through 85 calls across all its Windows from 56 countries in 8 languages.<sup>15</sup>

Table 1: Total number of proposals received per funding window 2016-2023

2016-2023	CfPs launched	Proposals Received	Longlisted/ Evaluated	Shortlisted
WPHF Regular Cycle	74	6,242	3,749	1,489
Rapid Response Window	6	1,283	292	122
Window on WHRDs	4	3,272	1,510	1,461
COVID-19 ERW <sup>11</sup>	1	4,773	3,123	854
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>15,570</b>	<b>8,674</b>	<b>3,926</b>

The Secretariat’s mandate is also to ensure the achievement of the WPHF’s theory of change through policy support, a strong culture of accountability and transparency and results-based management, reporting and evaluation. The Secretariat manages the Global Learning Hub (L-HUB) aimed at building the capacities of WPHF partners and allow for peer exchange between organizations and countries. The Secretariat also designs and implements innovative communications strategies and partnerships with companies, foundations, and high net worth individuals to raise funds and awareness on WPS-HA issues.<sup>16</sup>

The Fund has demonstrated its capacity to respond to emerging trends and crisis. The COVID19 Emergency Response Window is a key example. It was designed, approved by the Board, launched and active very fast. It was huge and enabled the WPHF to start implementing institutional funding. Another important example are the funding appeals and emergency track that was established to respond faster to crisis (starting with the war in Ukraine).

On more recent examples, in 2023 it launched the Global Funding Appeal Supporting Women’s Organizations Leading Local Responses to Climate Change to support women in decision-making processes and responses related to the prevention of climate-related conflicts and injustice.<sup>17</sup> Also in 2023, the Fund launched its latest funding appeal to mobilize urgently needed financing for local

<sup>14</sup> WPHF Dashboard (as of December 31, 2023) and WPHF Annual Report 2023

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> <https://wphfund.org/2023/11/29/global-wphf-launches-new-global-funding-appeal-supporting-womens-organizations-leading-local-responses-to-climate-change/>

women's organizations leading the fight against hunger and food insecurity in fragile settings around the world. This was initiated with call for Proposals in Ethiopia and South Sudan.<sup>18</sup>

Annually WPHF launches a CSO survey to take stock of the WPS-HA context and the space for local women's organizations and it is used to advocate for more local support to women's organizations in crisis settings. In 2023 the Fund launched its fourth Annual Global CSO Survey with previous and active WPHF partner organizations and their implementing partners. The results highlight that 66.7% of women's rights organizations feel that their WPHF organization is at risk due to lack of programmatic or institutional funding, and another 85.4% notes that security situation over the past year has significantly impacted their organization's abilities to effectively carry out their mandate in promoting gender equality.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.3 Purpose of the evaluation

The **overall purpose** of this independent external evaluation is to help inform WPHF's current and future support to women's rights organizations in crisis and conflict contexts, as well as help to improve its overall efficiency across its funding windows. The evaluation is intended to identify good practices as well as areas of improvement that can be explored to accelerate the Fund's results.

The **specific objectives** of the evaluation are:

- To assess the ongoing **relevancy** of the WPHF in the evolving context of women's peace and security in crisis and context settings.
- To determine the level of **coherence** of WPHF with other interventions globally and in country, including external coherence and coordination with other stakeholders and donors.
- To determine how **efficient** the WPHF has been as a pooled fund for local women's rights organization and advocating for increased financing for civil society organizations working in WPS.
- To assess how **effective** the implementation of initiatives in crisis and conflict settings for women's participation across the WPHF.
- To identify **key results** for WPHF.
- To assess the potential **sustainability** and the existing strategies for sustainability of interventions.
- To provide concrete **recommendations** for across each funding window and processes for improvement and learning moving forward.

### 1.4 Scope of the evaluation

The scope of the evaluation focused on the three currently operating funding windows:

1. Regular Funding Cycle.
2. Rapid Response Window on Women's Participation in Peace Processes and the Implementation of Peace Agreements (RRW).
3. Window for Women Human Rights Defenders.

It also captured experiences and lessons learnt from the implementation of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Window (ERW) and information related to the Global Learning Hub (L-HUB) The evaluation covered the period between 2019 (after the MTR) until the end of 2023.

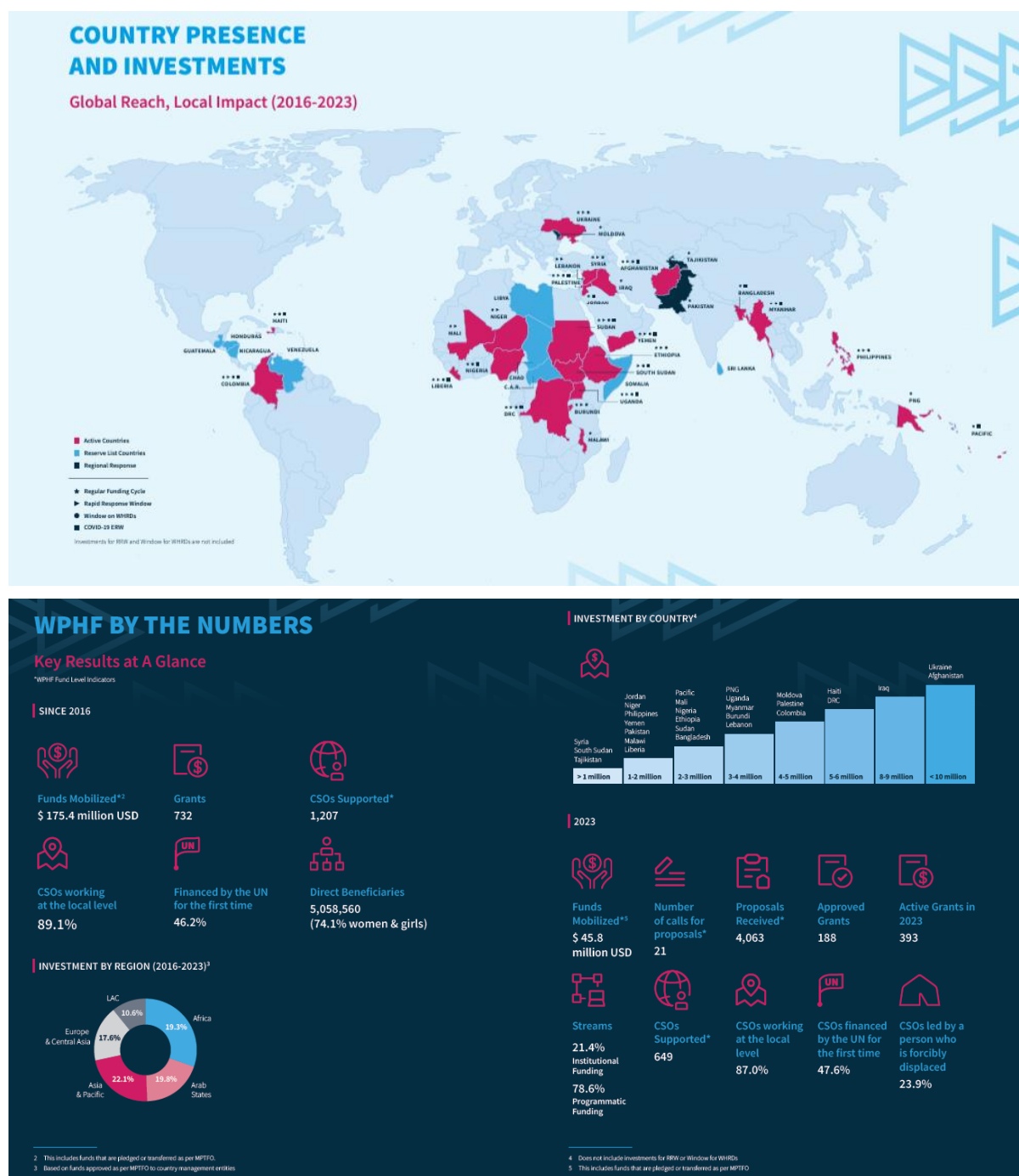
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<sup>18</sup> <https://wphfund.org/2023/06/13/global-wphf-launches-first-ever-global-funding-appeal-supporting-women-working-at-the-forefront-of-the-fight-against-famine/>

<sup>19</sup> Global CSO Survey Brief (2023).



Figure 2: WPHF Country Presence and Investments 2016-2023



(Source WPHF Annual Report, 2023)

As a global evaluation, it covered the 34 active countries where the WPHF has presence. As part of the methodology, in-person missions were undertaken in Colombia, Moldova and Uganda, with complementary remote interviews conducted with the Democratic Republic of Congo,<sup>20</sup> Lebanon, the Philippines, Syria and Ukraine. While the evaluation takes into account the results achieved through grant making, it does not seek to evaluate CSO partners directly or their results. Particular interest in

<sup>20</sup> The Democratic Republic of Congo was originally envisaged as an in-person visit. However, due to the uncertain security situation in the Country, during the inception phase it was agreed that data gathering would be conducted remotely.



terms of evaluation utility relates to recommendations for strengthening fund governance, financing structure, and secretariat functions.

Specifically, the evaluation focused on:

- The overall Fund **governance** structure and processes, including Board functions and membership, National Steering Committee functions and membership and decision-making responsibilities at global and country/regional levels.
- The **financing** structure of the Fund, including the design and added value of respective funding windows.
- The **transformative changes** and impact resulting or boosted with the support provided through the WPHF grants, and the capacity of the Fund to effectively implement intersectional approaches.
- The overall **WPHF Secretariat functions** including Board support, resource mobilization from public and private sources, monitoring and evaluation and reporting, advocacy and partnerships, learning, knowledge management and communications.

## 1.5 Audience for the evaluation

The main stakeholder groups for this evaluation are WPHF Secretariat, WPHF Board, Donors and Member States, INGO partners and targeted UN Women as the host of the Secretariat of the Fund, and management entities (including UNFPA).

Secondary users include potential donors, other UN agencies implementing similar programmes and interventions, auditors and other funds for civil society organizations.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Overall evaluation approach

Overall, this evaluation was designed to provide the WPHF (primarily the Secretariat at the global level and the Funding Board) with credible and evidence-based information regarding the ongoing relevance and coherence of the WPHF; the effectiveness and efficiency of the Fund; and the potential sustainability of interventions to date.

Given that the WPHF is intrinsically aimed at contributing to peaceful and gender-equal societies, the evaluation approach was founded upon feminist principles, a formative approach, and a utility focus.

- **Feminist and Participatory Principles:** the evaluation recognized that women led organizations are legitimate actors who understand their own context, and that participation in processes of dialogue and action is a form of respect, recognition and empowerment. Based on these principles, the evaluation involved different groups of women as key informants, including leaders of grantee CSOs, to gather their perspectives, identify key power-related dynamics, jointly reflect on their achievements and challenges, and to reinforce their learning and organizational strengthening. The evaluation process aimed to support the agency and the empowerment of women's rights/led organisations, to ultimately contribute to transformational change for gender equality and women's rights. Further dimensions of how the evaluation has actioned feminist principles are explained in the subsequent sections, particularly under the ethical considerations.
- **Formative Approach:** the evaluation was a forward-looking and learning-orientated exercise.
- **Utility Focus:** the evaluation provides practical findings as well as pragmatic, implementable, targeted and impactful recommendations based on robust and evidence-based findings and conclusions presented to, and discussed, with members of the WPHF Secretariat.

Data collection, analysis and triangulation were conducted around the specific purpose of the WPHF evaluation of being based on feminist principles, having a formative approach, and being utility-focused.

### 2.2 Evaluation framework and data collection methods

The development of a coherent and robust evaluation approach was based on the **evaluation matrix**, that followed the OECD-DAC criteria and included evaluation questions and associated sub-questions, assumptions,<sup>21</sup> indicators, and sources of information (see annex I for the evaluation matrix).

The table below presents the five evaluation questions (EQs), covering the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. These evaluation criteria were drawn from the evaluation Terms of Reference, and then selected during the inception period to address the specific objectives of the evaluation.

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<sup>21</sup> Assumptions are statements to be tested within each question.

Table 2: Evaluation Questions

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions
<b>Relevance</b>	EQ1. To what extent has the WPHF remained relevant in the evolving context of women’s peace and security since 2016?
<b>Coherence</b>	EQ2. To what degree does WPHF maintain coherence with other interventions globally and at country level, including coherence and coordination with other stakeholders and donors?
<b>Efficiency</b>	EQ3. To what extent has the WPHF been efficient as a pooled fund for local women’s rights organizations?
<b>Effectiveness of the Fund</b>	EQ4. To what extent has the implementation of initiatives and processes across WPHF funding windows been effective?
<b>Effectiveness and sustainability programmatic</b>	EQ5. To what degree have results to date of grants shown progress towards the six outcomes of the Fund and what is the expected sustainability, vis à vis the overarching goal of the Fund?

Following the evaluation questions, a set of sub-evaluation questions were elaborated, and data collection tools developed, to ensure consistency of data collected across different countries, contexts, and through different data collection methods.

The evaluation team relied on a **mixed methods approach** of both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods, to complement one another and be applied across all components of the evaluation matrix.

Below is a summary of the sources of information and relevant data collection methods and tools used to triangulate findings against each evaluation sub-question.



**Document Review:** An in-depth document review was conducted at global portfolio level and for each of the in person and remote focus country examples. The documents to be reviewed and the list of informants to be interviewed were provided by the WPHF, either at Secretariat level or at Management Entity level, based on the evaluation’s data requirements and inputs.

The review encompassed WPHF **63 documents**, of which 38 to inform the portfolio and organisational analysis, and 25 to support the focus country examples. The documents reviewed included the WPHF Operations Manual, key Secretariat documents, Board presentations, Secretariat and Window Unit reports, WPHF global and country reports up to 2023, past mid-term review, annual surveys to CSOs, UN Secretary General annual reports on WPS, and other related documentations (the full list of reviewed documents is available as Annex IV).

Evidence from documents was extracted based on providing data to answer the evaluation questions and sub-questions as presented in the evaluation matrix. Data were recorded in a consistent manner across the members of the evaluation team using an evidence database. Qualitative data were treated through text coding and realist synthesis; quantitative data e.g. financial data and data from the annual surveys to the partnering CSOs were analysed through descriptive statistics to identify trends, averages, ratios etc.



**Semi-Structured Key Informant Interviews:** A total of **161 key informant interviews were conducted**. Key informants at global level and focus countries, both in-person and remote, were identified by the WPHF and selected based on their key knowledge relevant to the evaluation. At the country level, informants from different stakeholder groups (especially

grantee CSOs) were also identified by the Management Entities' WPHF focal points based on their ability to contribute to the evaluation given its objectives, and other criteria such as receiving institutional or programmatic support from the WPHF; participating (or not) in the WPHF-Spotlight Initiative partnership; and, having different level of geographical coverage (i.e. national, sub-national, local).

**At the global level, 26 key informants** from the WPHF Funding Board, Global Technical Secretariat, MPTFO (Administrative Agent), partnering INGOs at global level and donor governments, were consulted through semi-structured interviews to inform all levels of evidence (see Annex III for a list of all key informants interviewed).

**At the country level, 135 key informants**, of which 44 UN Women personnel from Management Entities, 76 CSO representatives from the focus countries and other 15 amongst representatives of networks and other UN agencies, participated in individual or group interviews. Discussions with CSO partners and other stakeholders allowed the evaluators to get insights into the opinions and perspectives of the WROs supported through the Fund, in line with the evaluation's feminist principles-based approach.

Differently to what was envisaged at the inception phase, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were not conducted, but rather a focus on individual or group interviews as a more appropriate method.

To ensure that interview questions were appropriate to the different stakeholders, all interviews were based on protocols and questionnaires tailored to the specific stakeholder group. Interviews were conducted in person in Colombia, Moldova, and Uganda, and remotely for DRC, Lebanon, Philippines, Syria, and Ukraine, through the support of secure on-line platforms such as Zoom or MS Teams.



**Online Survey:** An online perception survey was administered to WPHF Country-level Management Entities' staff on selected sub-questions of the evaluation matrix, to inform the portfolio and organisational analyses (levels 1 and 2 of the analysis). The survey was developed in English and French and rolled out using the MS Forms platform.

**14 respondents** provided their feedback using Likert scales and through open-ended questions that allowed them to provide more articulated feedback and recommendations for improvement. Given the low response rate (50%), survey results were treated as indicative only, and as a basis to triangulate data from other data collection methods.



**Country visits: Three in-country visits** were conducted in Colombia, Moldova and Uganda.<sup>22</sup> In-country visits allowed evaluators to gather observations related to CSO partner interventions, as well as to observe local dynamics between stakeholders. Visits were planned in collaboration with WPHF and the country ME, over a five-day period to conduct data collection and provide a preliminary analysis of the emerging evidence to be discussed with the WPHF country team and thus to facilitate rigorous and inclusive sense-making of the data.

## 2.3 Brief context and focus of WPHF in selected evaluation countries

Going deeper into the portfolios of grants in sampled countries, focus countries (in-person and remote) provided illustrative evidence and concrete examples to inform the evaluation questions regarding how WPHF grant making interacts with a range of different contexts and reaches organizations in their diversity through both institutional and programmatic funding.

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<sup>22</sup> The Democratic Republic of Congo was originally included amongst the in-country visits. However, due to the uncertain security situation, during the inception period it was agreed to conduct interviews remotely.

- In **Colombia**, WPHF is financing partners to enable women's meaningful participation and accelerate the implementation of the gender provisions of the country's Peace Agreement, while enhancing the livelihood opportunities and political participation of Venezuelan women refugees.
- Since the start of the hostilities in Ukraine, around 1 million people fleeing the war have entered **Moldova**. WPHF financing is channelling programmatic and institutional support to local women's rights and women-led CSOs to sustain their critical operations on the front lines, provide urgent humanitarian aid to women refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), and to protect women and girls against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).
- In **Uganda** conflicts are triggered by the confluence of multiple, complex and interrelated factors, impacting refugees, socio-economic and demographic concerns, conflicts over natural resources, climate change and environmental stressors and **disasters**, transnational threats, organized criminal activities, cultural disputes, transitional justice, violent extremism, political and electoral related conflicts, and border disputes. WPHF works to ensure women's meaningful participation in and enjoyment of peace and security in Uganda, by financing grassroots women's organizations working on conflict prevention and to end sexual and gender-based violence against women and promote human rights and gender equality in peace and security contexts.
- In the context of a worrying resurgence of political violence and armed conflict, where displacement has continued to exacerbate food insecurity, the WPHF in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** is channelling urgently needed financing to grassroots women's organizations working to end violence against women and promote human rights and gender equality in peace and security contexts.
- WPHF is channelling rapid financing to local civil society organizations in **Lebanon** to strengthen their capacities and enhance women's participation in response, recovery, and peacebuilding processes in the wake of Beirut's August 2020 port explosion, and currently, on decentralising its response.
- WPHF is strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations in the **Philippines** working at the forefront of peace, security and humanitarian action — promoting women's meaningful participation in conflict prevention and response, and supporting them in the registration process as legal entities in the country
- WPHF is channelling funding to local civil society organizations and women activists across **Ukraine** to provide critical humanitarian assistance to women refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs), advance their leadership in conflict resolution, enhance their participation in humanitarian planning and response and economic recovery efforts, and protect war-affected women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

## 2.4 Triangulation and Validation of Evidence

Throughout the evaluation, data collected from both primary and secondary sources were recorded systematically in an **evidence database** (a Microsoft Excel-based document), articulated around the evaluation questions and sub-questions. Evidence databases were used for each data set to collate, code and analyse the available data.<sup>23</sup> The value of utilising the evidence database for collating evidence was that it provided a rigorous and consistent approach to data recording and data analysis.

While the basis for the data analysis was the evaluation matrix and the questions and indicators provided within this, questions were also analyzed at the following three levels, with different emphasis of levels placed on different questions.

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<sup>23</sup> Nine evidence databases (i.e. evidence matrixes) were developed: one for the 'global' portfolio and organizational levels, and one for each focus country being in person (three) or remote (five).

1. **Portfolio analysis** provided a high-level overview of grants made under the four funding windows (with a specific focus on the regular funding cycle window and the previous Covid-19 emergency response window).
2. **Focus countries** provided a deep dive for three countries to which evaluation team members travelled (Colombia, Moldova, and Uganda) and a less deep but still robust overview of five more countries through remote interviews (the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon, Philippines, Syria, and Ukraine).
3. **Organizational analysis** focused on the governance arrangements and structures of the Fund and looked at the efficacy and efficiency of the processes, procedures, and systems within the WPHF to seek evidence of what is working well, and where improvements might be made, with the aim of generating concrete recommendations for the future of the WPHF.

Emerging evidence from each database were parsed and entered into **evidence tables** to facilitate the analysis of themes across the full datasets, and then used to synthesise findings for the evaluation report. The team finalized the analysis of the data by extracting the main themes, findings and lessons from the data by evaluation sub-question. Throughout the data analysis process, **triangulation** of data ensured validity and reliability of findings. This was also supported by the use of standardised data collection tools, and compliance with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) standards. The strength of each finding was colour coded as green, amber or red<sup>24</sup> and determined based on triangulation, quantitative comparability and complementarity.

## 2.5 Ethical considerations

The evaluation ensured compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation, and the four ethical principles<sup>25</sup>

- Integrity
- Accountability
- Respect
- Beneficence.

As per feminist principles, this evaluation was gender and human rights responsive both in terms of process and content, through the findings, conclusions and recommendations. It also aimed for an intersectional approach, addressing women's diversity and structural inequalities, to assess the WPHF relevancy, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

Key ethical guidelines in the evaluation were:

1. **Do no harm principle:** was the overarching guiding principle in the evaluation. The design of the data collection tools was guided by feminist principles to ensure they were context, gender, and culturally appropriate to minimise risks to, and burdens on, key informants, particularly women representatives of the WROs supported through the Fund. Respect was accorded to differences in cultures, local customs, sex and gender roles etc. during the data collection, and their potential implications considered throughout the data analysis and reporting.

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<sup>24</sup> Green meaning good quality of evidence from an adequate number of reliable sources plus source and/or method triangulation; amber meaning a mix of good quality evidence and weaker evidence or evidence gaps; and red meaning weak evidence and/or major evidence gaps making triangulation impossible.

<sup>25</sup> *Evaluation Matters. Making Feminist Evaluation Practical. 2018*; UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation (2020), available on the page: <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2866>

2. **Informed consent:** any person invited to participate in the data collection activity was informed of when, how and why data were collected and used. Key informants' participation was based on verbal voluntary consent: no one was forced to take part in any data collection activity, and everyone had the right to withdraw from the evaluation process at any time (including refusal to respond to questions, right to leave the data collection activity, right to ask not to use already collected data).
3. **Confidentiality and privacy:** all key informants were granted confidentiality of the information they provided (i.e. information cannot be traced to its source as data aggregation by stakeholder group was employed). Key informants also had the right to have their name not included in the key informants list in the evaluation report; anonymity was granted in the survey. In-person interviews were held in settings where the participants felt comfortable; the timing of online interviews were agreed in advance to ensure the interviewees' right to control the circumstances of sharing. Only questions necessary for the evaluation were asked.
4. **Sensitivity to power dynamics:** being aware that the evaluation process and findings can be significantly influenced by power dynamics, the evaluators aimed to ensure that data collection and analysis were sensitive to the interplay between them and the evaluation participants. The evaluators approached all participants with respect and humility, acknowledging their expertise in their own experiences and valuing their contributions to the evaluation. Power dynamics were also considered when analysing data provided by different kind of stakeholders.

## 2.6 Limitations and mitigation measures

As with any evaluation, some limitations were experienced. However, these limitations did not significantly affect the quality of the data and the strength of the analysis.

Given the wide temporal and geographical scope of the evaluation, the evaluation resources and design did not allow to inform the evaluation through illustrative evidence that show the full breath of the work and results achieved by the WPHF in all countries, especially in emergency settings. Although the evaluation team also drew from sources of information at global level (both key informants and documents, such as the WPHF Annual Reports), concrete examples that illustrate the evaluation findings mainly come from the eight in-person and remote focus countries. This is because most data from the sampled countries could be triangulated amongst different sources of information, while information on other countries could not always be triangulated. The report provides a categorisation of findings by strength of evidence, based on rigorous triangulation of data, that indicates those findings that can be considered more universal for WPHF against those which might be more context specific.

Another limitation was that, while a country visit was envisioned for DRC, this was not possible due to the security situation. Instead, a remote set of interviews were conducted, which anyway allowed the evaluation team to collect data from WPHF Management Entities staff.



## 3. Findings

The below findings are organized by Evaluation Questions.

### 3.1 Relevance

#### To what extent has the WPHF remained relevant in the evolving context of women's peace and security since 2016?

**OVERALL RELEVANCE FINDING 1. The Fund has been, remains, and is continually increasing in, relevance to the global context. This relevance is both in terms of what assistance the Fund provides and in terms of how it is provided within the global humanitarian, peace and development architecture. Good Evidence.**

Overall, the WPHF is considered to be highly relevant to the gaps that currently exist across the humanitarian-development-peace spheres of international architecture. This was a finding established within the 2019 Mid-Term Review<sup>26</sup> and that is reconfirmed and verified within this evaluation. The WPHF is aligned with multiple international frameworks (see specific finding below for more information) and is also increasingly relevant to multiple national donor government priorities and commitments. The WPHF is seen to be relevant by all stakeholder groups, particularly women's rights organizations (WRO) themselves, as well as governments, other UN agencies, donors, and civil society more broadly.<sup>27</sup>

The relevance of the WPHF has increased in the context of new and protracted crisis, human rights violations, climate change and the pandemic, which highlight the critical importance of high levels of female political participation and policy change beyond simply narrowing the funding gap.<sup>28</sup>

Respondents to this evaluation's survey<sup>29</sup> reported the Fund to be relevant to their specific contexts. Different rationales for the relevance were given, including:

- Its adoption of a unified approach that spans humanitarian, peace, security and development efforts, laying down the groundwork for strategies that are both cohesive and enduring.
- Its support of women-led CSOs amidst limited funding for peacebuilding on the one hand and increasing human rights violations against women and girls on the other hand.
- Its contribution to building of CSOs' capacities based on consideration of their need for institutional development.<sup>30</sup>

The Fund has specific relevance with unique added value to the UN eco-system. A significant aspect of this is the feminist principles and approaches of the Fund although, as explored further below, this has not been fully leveraged to explicitly position the Fund within this niche.

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<sup>26</sup> WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020.

<sup>27</sup> WPHF global and country level KIIs; other global KIIs; other country level KIIs.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> The survey was sent to 29 focal points across managing entities and 14 responses were received. 10 respondents answered this question.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

**Finding 1.1. All three functions of the Fund (breaking silos, addressing structural funding gaps, and improving policy coherence) remain relevant, but not all equally. Further there is insufficient clarity of the cause-and-effect logic relationship between the functions: i.e. by addressing structural funding gaps, silos are broken, and policy coherence is improved. Good Evidence.**

All three functions (breaking silos between the humanitarian, peace and development spheres; addressing structural funding gaps for local WRO; and, improving policy coherence) are each relevant in their own way to the work that the Fund undertakes, to the continuing relevancy and applicability of Resolution 1325 as it is articulated, and to the changing complexities of crisis and diversities of population on the ground.<sup>31</sup> Each of the functions has strengths and challenges as related to the relevancy of the fund.

There are multiple examples of the first function, based on the funding provided to WROs as per the second function (see findings under EQ4); all funding automatically exemplifies the second function, which is the heart of the WPHF; and there are more limited examples of the third function. In terms of relevancy, therefore, there is a question as to how widely the Fund should spread its support given limited resources, and what is the single most important value-add of the Fund. Ultimately, the Fund's relevance is clear as a grant mechanism, but currently less so as a programme and policy driving mechanism., although this is beginning to change, with WPHF participating in an increasing number of policy and programmatic forums.<sup>32</sup> That said, the Fund has arguably expanded beyond the strict definitions of a Fund and has become more programmatically-orientated in terms of the programme support and programme coordination from the Secretariat.<sup>33</sup>

It is noted that in the project document, only the first two functions are referenced in terms of the background to why the WPHF was established, although all three functions are then confirmed in the structure of the Fund.<sup>34</sup>

Overall, at the **global level**:

**Breaking silos:** The Fund is not positioned as a development fund, but a lot of the work (for example, women's economic empowerment, which the Fund supports in multiple countries)<sup>35</sup> can be considered development orientated.

**Addressing structural funding gaps:** this is the most important function according to many respondents to this evaluation. The WPHF is the only mechanism through which small WROs can receive direct funding from the UN system. It is not only relevant in terms of this function, but also **the only UN Fund** addressing this immense gap and is the only UN entity able to genuinely claim work towards the localization agenda at the most grass-roots level. The institutional funding has only served to increase this relevancy, addressing yet a further gap.<sup>36</sup>

In the context of a persistent absence of women in negotiations and peace building decision-making, it is important to recognise that narrowing the financial gap is essential but is also a means to an end. The transformational purpose is to enable women's political participation and the implementation of their solutions to crisis, prevention and peacebuilding. In addition to this, the transformational change is also increasing opportunities for the inclusion of the smallest local organizations, given their deep

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<sup>31</sup> Resolution 1325 of 2000 highlights the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. It calls for the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

<sup>32</sup> WPHF KIIs.

<sup>33</sup> WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020, Multiple WPHF and other global government, civil society, and Un agency KIIs, WPHF. Project Document. 2021-2024. 2021.

<sup>34</sup> WPHF. Project Document. 2021-2024. 2021.

<sup>35</sup> Multiple WPHF and other global government, civil society, and Un agency KIIs.

<sup>36</sup> Multiple WPHF KIIs

contextual understanding, and connections to local networks, to influence national and local level policies.

Direct flexible funding to women organizations is one of the best ways to enable meaningful, inclusive support but the ultimate purpose needs to ensure a higher-level, impact-oriented strategic approach recognizing that addressing structural funding gaps is a means to an end, not the end itself, meaning that the goal of addressing structural funding gaps is indeed to allow women organizations to meaningfully engage and lead in peace and humanitarian arenas.<sup>37</sup>

**Improving policy coherence** does not feature so highly in the work of the Fund. There is certainly advocacy around the structural funding gaps at country and global levels, such as through WPHF annual reports, (thereby providing a link to the 2<sup>nd</sup> function) but both this 3<sup>rd</sup> function and the 2<sup>nd</sup> function appear to be essentially serving the first function.<sup>38</sup>

At the **country level**, there are examples of all three functions, although more consistently strong examples of the first two functions. This includes clear examples of how a focus on Function 2 contributes to supporting Function 1.<sup>39</sup>

**Breaking Silos:** In **Colombia**, there are linkages of the WPHF work to UN Women's own WPS programmatic actions, with strong orientation towards supporting national government priorities and development frameworks, as well as embedding the WPHF in the UN Women territorial strategy. This has ensured WPHF projects have contributed to a breaking the silos as UN Women's programmes are doing, working across the HDP nexus.<sup>40</sup>

In **the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, most of the selected projects focus on women's economic empowerment in post-conflict and fragile situations, as well as legal, judicial and psychological support to victims of SGBV. Another key element of WPHF's support in DRC is the promotion of the effective participation of women in peacebuilding mechanisms conducted at the local and national level.<sup>41</sup>

In **Moldova**, working across the nexus has been a critical component of the refugee response, with a particular emphasis on women's economic empowerment (WEE) so the Fund is very aligned with this.<sup>42</sup>

In **Uganda**, there is significant relevance and contribution to the triple nexus, in a context where issues of humanitarian crises, peace, security, and development are all interlinked and the only sensible way to address these issues is to do so holistically.<sup>43</sup>

**Addressing Structural Funding Gaps:** In **all countries** that participated in this evaluation, the Fund has strongly supported the participation of WROs. Evaluation respondents perceived this as being a the most critical function of, and mechanism for, the Fund's work. Further, in some countries, strategies have been developed via partnerships with larger, more experienced organizations and institutional

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<sup>37</sup> WPHF global and country level KIIs; other global KIIs; other country level KIIs.

<sup>38</sup> The history of the Fund, when it was the Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) which had more of a focus on government and policy work, is noted.

<sup>39</sup> The below country examples are provided based on primary data collected in the focus countries for this evaluation. The evaluation team notes that WPHF annual reports provide multiple examples of activities noted here across many countries, but these examples in annual reports have not been triangulated by the evaluation team in the same manner as within the focus countries. Thus, all country level examples are used to illustrate the findings.

<sup>40</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, other UN Colombia KII, Colombia FGDs, Colombia PPT presentation.

<sup>41</sup> WPHF DRC Annual Reports, UNW DRC KIIs, DRC CSO partners.

<sup>42</sup> UNW Moldova KIIs, other UN agency Moldova KIIs.

<sup>43</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs, WRO in Uganda KIIs.

strengthening to specifically provide access to smaller local organizations and so to ensure that their access to funding opportunities is increased in the future.<sup>44</sup>

**Improving Policy Coherence:** While there are fewer consistent examples of this, there are some, specifically related to processes such as National Action Plans (NAPs) on women, peace and security. For example, in the **Philippines** there is strong evidence, that is explicit in terms of policy coherence, for the WPHF contribution to NAP.<sup>45</sup>

Findings from the survey also indicate that the strongest level of relevance of WPHF functions was addressing structural funding gaps for women's participation in key phases across the HPD nexus. The other two functions, i.e. breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance, and improving policy coherence and coordination by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies, followed.<sup>46</sup> This is consistent with qualitative evidence, with addressing structural funding gaps being considered the most important function that in turn contributes to the other two functions.

**Finding 1.2. All six outcomes remain relevant but differently, according to the context and needs of WROs. However, the evaluation finds that there is both some overlap and a degree of obstructive siloing. The listed, summative presentation of the outcomes one by one may hinder a more integrated and holistic approach. Specifically, respondents find that Outcome 1 (creating an enabling environment) is more transversal and contributes to all other outcomes. Mixed Evidence.**<sup>47</sup>

The six outcome areas are relevant, and all contribute to the goal of contributing to equal and peaceful societies. They are broad enough to respond to different donors, allow evolutions over time and contextual adaptations, and embrace different topics. The Fund has evolved over the years, specifically considering the relevance of new windows where necessary under specific outcome areas. For example, the Rapid Response Window for the implementation of peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements (RRW) was opened in 2020 specifically under Outcome 4 and then in 2022, the Window for Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) opened under Outcome 5.

Survey respondents were asked to rank Outcomes in order of priority. Notwithstanding the fact that countries select their priority outcomes, based on their context and needs, from the survey, Outcome 5, protection of women and girls, scored the highest average value in terms of relevance, followed by Outcome 3, humanitarian and crisis response, and Outcome 1, enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments. The other three outcomes (Outcome 6, Outcome 2, and Outcome 4, were considered less relevant by survey respondents. This is at odds with the number of approved grants per outcome, where Outcome 6 is in fact the highest, followed by Outcome 5, and then outcome. As per the latest available dashboard of WPHF achievements, Outcome 6 is the most funded outcome area.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Country level UNW, WPFH, other UN agency and other stakeholder KIIs.

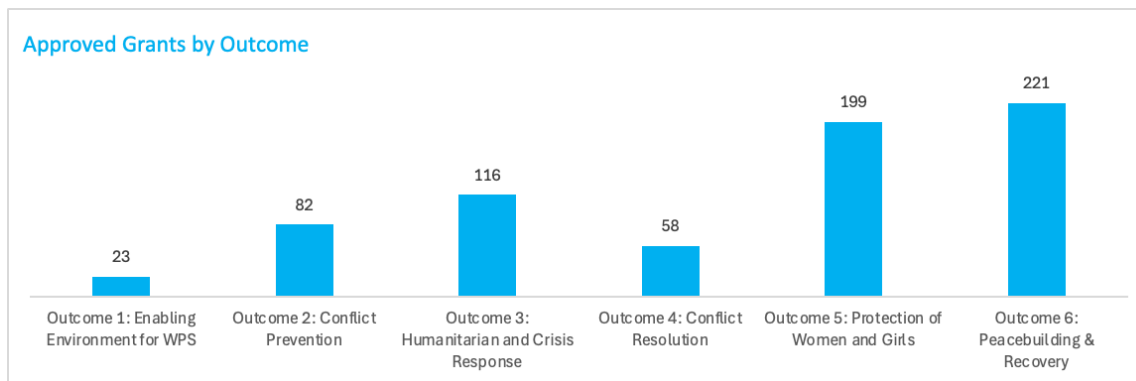
<sup>45</sup> WPHF Philippines KIIs.

<sup>46</sup> Evaluation survey.

<sup>47</sup> While there is significant data to consider for Outcomes, the limited country review (8 countries) makes it more difficult to understand the multiple Outcome areas, compared to, for example, understanding the broader function areas. Hence, this finding is categorised as medium strength.

<sup>48</sup> Data provided by WPHF.

Figure 3: Approved grants by each of the six outcome areas as of December 2023



Outcome 6 is, viewed at country level by respondents to this evaluation, to be, arguably, more of a development outcome than either a peace or humanitarian outcome as the name of WPHF suggests.<sup>49</sup> although it clearly links to both a general and a feminist understanding of “peace”, with the feminist definition being less about the absence of organized conflict and more about longer-term social cohesion and community well-being.

Some of the Outcomes are easier to monitor and measure than others. Therefore, for some outcomes, for example, participation in peacebuilding, while the relevance of the outcome is intuitively logical, because it is difficult to measure the changes or impact it is thus difficult to pragmatically gauge the relevance. Strategically addressing prevention and long-term peace building is relevant to needs. Specific topics, like supporting WHRDs in protracted crisis, need further attention, and others, like sexual violence require further in-depth discussions. New initiatives referenced by respondents,<sup>50</sup> such as the funding related to climate and food security responds to expressed women needs. Also, important to define is how new topics like cyber security and digital violence, are going to be addressed and how cross-cutting issues such as these will be meaningfully mainstreamed across the outcomes.<sup>51, 52</sup>

Below there are examples of the six different outcomes, highlighting relevance of outcome areas based on implementation of each area across different country contexts.

**Outcome 1: Enabling Environment for WPS.** WPHF in the **Philippines** works across Outcomes 1 and 2 (enabling environment and conflict prevention) which are the most relevant to the context.<sup>53</sup> In **Syria**, Outcome area 1 is relevant, with priority given to women empowerment and creating enabling environment for peacebuilding (framed under Outcome 1 but could equally be Outcome 6).<sup>54</sup> In **Uganda**, Outcome 1 is considered under the WPHF support to continuous institutional capacity building (management skills, technical support, office equipment, transport).<sup>55</sup>

**Outcome 2: Conflict Prevention.** In the **Philippines**, the work under creating an enabling environment (Outcome 1) then links to the conflict prevention piece (Outcome 2).<sup>56</sup> In **Uganda**, Outcome 2 provides an umbrella for conflict prevention at the local, community level: interventions to prevent GBV (which

<sup>49</sup> Multiple country level UNW, UNFPA, other UN agency and WRO KIIs.

<sup>50</sup> These initiatives are outside of the timeframe of this evaluation, but their design was within the timeframe and respondents at global and country levels referenced these initiatives as examples of continued relevance of the Fund.

<sup>51</sup> Global WPHF and other stakeholder KIIs.

<sup>52</sup> This is included in the Strategic Plan 2023-2025.

<sup>53</sup> 2022 and 2023 Philippines annual report.

<sup>54</sup> UNFPA Syria KIIs.

<sup>55</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs, WRO Uganda KIIs.

<sup>56</sup> UNW Philippines KIIs.

could fall under Outcome 5), land dispute, economic empowerment of women and other vulnerable persons.<sup>57</sup>

**Outcome 3: Humanitarian and Crisis Response:** In the **DRC**, the Fund's strategic prioritisation towards Outcome 3, humanitarian response (as well as towards Outcome 5 and Outcome 6) has been aligned with the national context, where humanitarian crisis and armed conflicts are intrinsically linked to and the foundational cause of, internal displacement, loss of arable land, and destruction of basic infrastructure. In the **DRC**, UNW requested the WPHF to integrate also Outcome 1 to reinforce the capacity of WROs in terms of leadership and internal governance, as a transversal outcome.<sup>58</sup> In **Ukraine**, in the context of full-scale and nation-wide conflict, Outcome 3 is a priority, however, the Fund also seeks to ensure a nexus approach in terms of implementing a long-term strategy that bridges humanitarian response with longer term recovery and sustainable development. In fact, Outcome 5 (protection of women and girls) and Outcome 6 (peacebuilding and recovery) feature more strongly in the Ukraine context.<sup>59</sup>

**Outcome 4: Conflict Resolution.** Outcome 4 has the lowest number of approved grants<sup>60</sup> and the lowest response score in the survey, with regard to the relevance of the Outcome area. Colombia is the only country included within this evaluation that has some activity under Outcome 4, including work on conflict-related GBV and resolution. All grants and direct support initiatives under the Rapid Response Window fall under Outcome 4.

**Outcome 5: Protection of Women and Girls.** This is the second largest outcome both in terms of number of grants and in terms of allocations. In the **DRC**, in **Syria**, in **Uganda**, in **Ukraine**, amongst others, Outcome 5 is considered critical to a feminist, women-orientated Fund.<sup>61</sup> Gender-based violence (GBV), and other forms of hostility, discrimination, violence and brutality remain pervasive in conflict and fragile settings. Indeed, respondents in Ukraine report protection funds are in high demand, more so than peacebuilding and recovery.<sup>62</sup> However, from a feminist perspective, a lot of the support provided under other Outcome areas, such as economic empowerment under Outcome 6, are protective measures for women and girls in crisis contexts. Further, the Fund established the Women's Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) Window specifically to fill a gap under this Outcome area as well as to provide safety nets and advocacy opportunities for individual WHRDs. (see Finding below for further information).

**Outcome 6: Peacebuilding and Recovery.** Outcome 6 is a significant outcome, with links to all the other outcomes, but also perhaps the principal core of the Fund. It is the second largest outcome in both the number of grants and allocations. Supporting women in peacebuilding and recovery – through creating an enabling environment (Outcome 1), conflict prevention and resolution at local community and national levels (Outcomes 2 and 4), within humanitarian crisis contexts (Outcome 3), while providing a protective environment for women and girls that allows engagement in peacebuilding and recovery (Outcome 5). However, as referenced above, this links closely to resilience-building and longer-lasting, sustainable (and respectful, feminist) development. This Outcome is operationalized across **various contexts** (Colombia, DRC, Lebanon, Ukraine) by focusing on peacebuilding, including organizational strengthening, and women's political participation and economic empowerment.<sup>63</sup> For example, in Colombia, the WPHF is focused on peacebuilding, including organizational strengthening, women political participation and economic empowerment.

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<sup>57</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs, WRO Uganda KIIs.

<sup>58</sup> WPHF DRC Annual Reports, UNW DRC KIIs, CSOs/grantee DRC KIIs

<sup>59</sup> UNW Ukraine KII, Ukraine WPFH Annual Report 2023

<sup>60</sup> Data from WPHF Dashboard, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024.

<sup>61</sup> Multiple country level UNW, UNFPA, other UN agency and WRO KIIs.

<sup>62</sup> UNW Ukraine KII, Ukraine WPFH Annual Report 2023

<sup>63</sup> Multiple country level UNW, UNFPA, other UN agency and WRO KIIs.

Displacement and migration are at the centre, as well as conflict-related gender violence (related to Outcome 5) and the need for economic recovery. All outcomes are covered aside from Outcome 2.<sup>64</sup>

One specific issue arising from **Lebanon**, echoing the reflections at the beginning of this Finding, is that the definitions and scope of the different Outcomes are not very clear and may be also confusing for the applying organizations. The focus in Lebanon has been on Outcome 6 and in 2023 they also included protection, but with an explicit focus on those not targeted by the multiple existing protection initiatives. Political participation is perceived as an area that should deserve particular, separate attention.<sup>65</sup>

**Finding 1.3. The WPHF remains extremely well-aligned to Resolution 1325 and to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, it exemplifies the localization agenda as part of the Grand Bargain commitments. Indeed, in this respect, the Fund is not only aligned with, but is ahead of the existing normative framework. Good Evidence.**

The WPHF in its entirety remains entirely relevant to Resolution 1325. Its funding supports women-led solutions to peace, security and humanitarian crisis and it has, since its establishment, gone from strength to strength regarding bringing local women-led voices into humanitarian response and peace spheres, through each of the three functions.<sup>66</sup>

At the country level, Resolution 1325 and associated National Action Plans (NAPs) for women, peace and security, and its linkages to the SDGs, remain the critical anchor for the Fund's work. For example, in **Moldova**, the Fund has responded as relevant to the context while still aligning with the ethos of 1325. There is a clear evolution of humanitarian crises in the country, against which the principles of 1325 remain relevant even if the wording of 1325 does not fully align with the evolving articulation of crises. Moldova is thus referenced not as a humanitarian crisis but as a refugee crisis, with a large and sudden influx of refugees into a stable MIC, managed under a UNHCR-led Refugee Response Plan (RRP) rather than a Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Yet overall, the Fund has increased the participation of local WRO in peacebuilding work, as per the purpose and goal of 1325.<sup>67</sup> In the **Philippines**, the Fund significantly contributes to the national WPS frameworks, particularly the National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security (NAPWPS) and the Regional Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security (RAPWPS).<sup>68</sup> In **Ukraine**, the Fund remains relevant to and aligned with Resolution 1325 (including the NAP), and is increasingly supporting projects focusing on sustainability and the SDGs despite the war context.<sup>69</sup>

In **Colombia**, Resolution 1325 is recognized as the normative mandate for women's participation in peace building and Security Sector Reform. The SDGs are the broad development umbrella for all UN work in Colombia and specifically UN Women addresses "catalytic SDG acceleration", which includes women in politics and women leadership, as well as women economic empowerment. WPHF projects are implemented under this.<sup>70</sup> In the **DRC**, the initiatives funded by the WPHF contribute to the pillars 2, 3 and 4 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation National Action Plan for the implementation of the UNSC resolution 1325 for the period 2020-2023, adopted by the DRC Council of Ministers in 2020.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, WPHF Colombia PPT presentation.

<sup>65</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs, 2022 and 2023 WPHF Lebanon Annual Reports

<sup>66</sup> Global KIIs, WPHF PRODOC and Annual Reports

<sup>67</sup> UNW Moldova KIIs, other UN agency Moldova KIIs.

<sup>68</sup> 2022 and 2023 Philippines annual report.

<sup>69</sup> 2023 Ukraine Annual Report

<sup>70</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, Colombia FGDs, Colombia PPT presentation.

<sup>71</sup> 2020 DRC Annual Report, UNW DRC KIIs

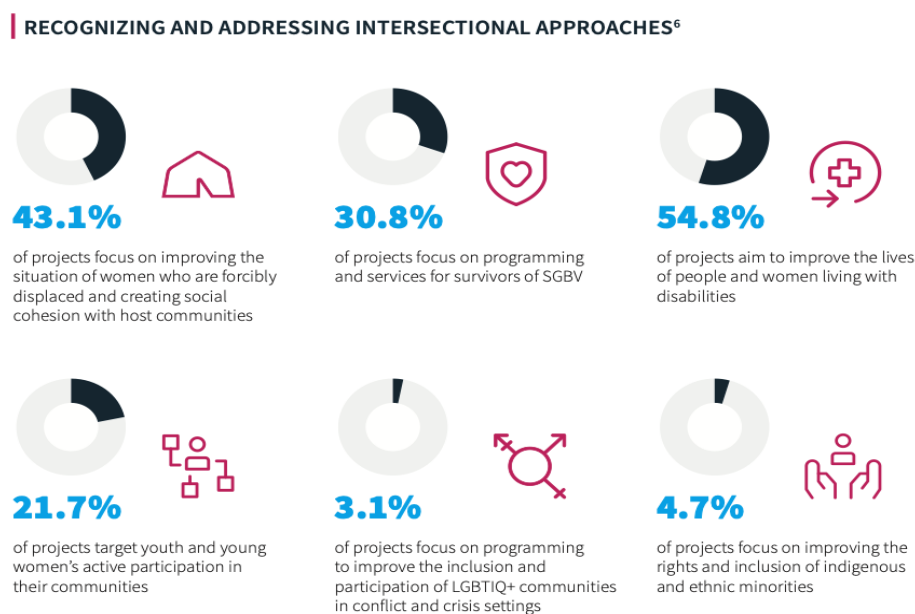


Further, the Fund is one of few UN mechanisms that claim true adherence to the localization agenda with 89% of CSOs working at the local and sub-national levels. Other mechanisms, such as the Peacebuilding Fund,<sup>72</sup> or the OHCHR-managed UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF),<sup>73</sup> do exist, but WPHF is unique in its purpose and scale. The Fund’s primary objective, and the most striking of the three functions as a pure function in itself, is providing financing to local civil society organizations: in this case, focusing on women-led civil society organizations.<sup>74</sup>

In relation to the localization agenda of the Grand Bargain commitments,<sup>75</sup> **all country** engagement within this evaluation highlights the importance of “localization” and a transformational, impact-oriented approach.<sup>76</sup>

For the leave no one behind (LNOB) agenda<sup>77</sup> of the Grand Bargain and WPS commitments, the Fund has internalized and institutionalized monitoring and tracking of leave no one behind principles and group as well as having language on LNOB in the call for proposals for WROs and in criteria for evaluation of proposals, to ensure integration of LNOB in applications.

Figure 4: Leave no one behind tracking



<sup>6</sup> Based on 393 active grants under the Regular Funding Cycle, RRW and COVID-19 ERW in 2023.

(Source: WPHF. Annual Report. 2023)

<sup>72</sup> <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/fund>

<sup>73</sup> <https://www.un.org/democracymfund/about-undef>

<sup>74</sup> Multiple WPHF and other KIIs across all countries.

<sup>75</sup> <https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org>

<sup>76</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, Colombia FGDs, Colombia PPT presentation

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[https://agendaforhumanity.org/system/files/asr/2019/Dec/AfH%20Synthesis%20Report%202019\\_Chapter%203.pdf](https://agendaforhumanity.org/system/files/asr/2019/Dec/AfH%20Synthesis%20Report%202019_Chapter%203.pdf)

In addition to this, the Fund increasingly aligns with national donor priorities and commitments. Multiple countries have and are moving in this direction<sup>78</sup> and thus ensuring greater visibility of the Fund, and how much it can complement and align with commitments of donors could be valuable.<sup>79</sup>

**Finding 1.4. It is understood that the Fund is limited geographically by funds earmarked through donor choice rather than Fund choice: however, the Fund exhibits flexibility, a responsive evolution relative to contexts, and timeliness of response, both globally and within countries. Mixed Evidence.<sup>80</sup>**

The Fund is aiming to be as flexible and responsive as it is possible for a UN mechanism to be. The Operations Manual highlights that, to respond to a limited number of sudden onset emergencies, the WPHF will build a reserve to enable the WPHF Funding Board to make a country allocation of at least \$2 million within a maximum of 5 working days. Criteria includes: Countries must be on the OECD list of fragile states or facing a specific peace and security or humanitarian situation; The nexus between fragility and the peace, security and humanitarian situation must be established; Geographic balance in the selected countries; Balance in the different situations experienced by the countries (prevention, conflict, post-conflict, humanitarian); Countries must be on the OECD list of fragile states or facing a specific peace and security or humanitarian situation.<sup>81</sup>

In terms of eligibility, the Fund is constantly evolving, based on CSO feedback and relevance of contexts for the Fund. For example, the Covid-19 emergency response window was created because of a survey to WROs asking how best the WPHF could support them in this context. The WHRD window opened as a response to the 2021 Taliban take-over in Kabul, although of course now has much broader geographical scope. Also in 2020, the Rapid Response Window opened, as a response to visible needs under Outcome 4.<sup>82</sup>

A core evolution was the inclusion of institutional funding in 2020 during the COVID-19 emergency response window, which was the first time a UN agency provided core funding to support the continuity and sustainability of local CSOs. Indeed, even the Regular Funding Window has evolved, adding an initiative focusing on the needs and leadership of forcibly displaced women in crisis and conflict settings, and adding calls for food security initiatives in 2023, and then, more recently, for climate security initiatives in 2024,<sup>83</sup> confirming that the Fund is becoming ever-more holistic in terms of what affects women and what affects peace, and what areas women could become more involved in. This highlights a constant review of eligibility criteria and continuous maturation of the Fund, aligned with the needs on the ground.<sup>84</sup>

Therefore, the geographical scope and eligibility criteria for the various windows remains relevant at the global level – with focus country examples also highlighting a continued relevance of coverage at the more localized level, and a flexibility to revise projects and reprogramme funds as the context demands.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> [https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Brief-Feminist-foreign-policies-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/Brief-Feminist-foreign-policies-en_0.pdf)

<sup>79</sup> WPHF and government KIIs.

<sup>80</sup> This finding is reliant on the focus country examples for evidencing flexibility at the localized level, and while the examples from the 8 countries are robust, the evaluation cannot claim with certainty this flexibility exists across the Fund's geographical scope.

<sup>81</sup> WPHF. Operations Manual. 2023.

<sup>82</sup> Global WPHF KIIs and document review.

<sup>83</sup> These initiatives are outside the temporal scope of the evaluation in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of these initiatives, but the considerations of adding them occurred during the period being evaluated and hence these initiatives are referenced as evidence of continued attempts to evolve.

<sup>84</sup> Global WPHF KIIs and document review.

<sup>85</sup> Multiple KIIs at global and country levels.

In **Lebanon**, the Fund enabled a rapid response to the Beirut blast and then also enabled to move to a wider, more decentralized response outside Beirut. When elections did not take place, the fund also enabled modifying activities and reallocating funding.<sup>86</sup> In **Syria**, there was a quick response by the Fund to the 2023 earthquake and flexibility in addressing context specific challenges.<sup>87</sup>

For **Ukraine and Moldova**, there was a unique regional call opened to respond to both the conflict in Ukraine and the associated refugee crisis in Moldova. In Ukraine, respondents report that the Fund reacted rapidly and was very supportive in relation to the changing scenario in 2023 in comparison to other funds.<sup>88</sup> For Moldova, there is no question as to the relevance of including Moldova when the Ukraine conflict started, but there is now a question of relevance and effectiveness for the continuation of the Fund in Moldova, which has been suspended for 2024. The Ukraine window originally included Moldova due to the high numbers of refugees. However, those numbers have reduced significantly and those refugees remaining in Moldova are well supported. The 2024 call for proposals has not included any funding allocation for Moldova. This raises questions of sustainability and questions around geographical targeting and length of support.<sup>89</sup>

In the **DRC**, the Fund remains flexible to adjust to the changing needs of an evolving context such as that of DRC. For instance, in North Kivu the funded initiatives address outcome 5; however, given the recent change in the security situation in the province, the WPHF has allowed CSO partners to adjust the projects to adapt them to the current context.

Outside of the countries included in this evaluation, WPHF has supported emergency calls from other countries, such as Haiti, Ethiopia, and a second regional response to crisis across Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Pakistan.<sup>90</sup>

## 3.2 Coherence

To what degree does WPHF maintain coherence with other interventions globally and at country level, including coherence and coordination with other stakeholders and donors?

**OVERALL COHERENCE FINDING 2. While the Fund is not always recognized as an entity apart from UN Women, it demonstrates several unique, and explicitly feminist principles of coherence and clarity, although this is not necessarily consistently understood across all stakeholders. WPHF is not considered comparable with any other existing fund, and it is the uniqueness, and the feminist niche of the Fund, that provides such concrete complementarity to the overall UN eco-system. Good Evidence**

Overall respondents across countries and at global level reported that WPHF is a unique fund with a unique niche, contributing a particular added value to the UN eco-system. However, in some countries WPHF is viewed by stakeholders as a UN Women project (see Finding 2.2, below for more in-depth analysis).<sup>91</sup>

Survey respondents to the open question reported that the WPHF is both coherent and complementary to the interventions conducted with other partners and donors and coordinated with other funding mechanisms. However, areas for improvement, according to survey respondents,

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<sup>86</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs, Lebanon NGO/CSO FGD, 2022 and 2023 Lebanon Annual Reports.

<sup>87</sup> UNFPA Syria KIIs.

<sup>88</sup> UNW Ukraine KIIs.

<sup>89</sup> UNW Moldova KIIs.

<sup>90</sup> WPHF global KIIs and document review.

<sup>91</sup> Multiple WPHF, other UN agency, and WRO KIIs across multiple countries.

include both alignment with the country office strategy (meaning primarily the UN Women country office strategy, which would reinforce WPHF as a UN Women initiative) and improved linkages with other ongoing interventions, which is supported by the more detailed findings, below.

**Finding 2.1. The WPHF is recognized as a unique Fund, not comparable with any other existing fund and thus highly complementary to the UN eco-system across the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus. Being a feminist fund, focused on localization in the HDP nexus space is its niche but this is not necessarily consistently leveraged. Good Evidence.**

There are multiple strands to the question of whether WPHF is complementary, and / or aligned with other global initiatives and standards around the WPS agenda.

Firstly, (and as highlighted above under EQ1), at a strategic level, the Fund was established to be complementary to other mechanisms, for example, supporting the implementation of the National Action Plan on WPS in coordination with the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).<sup>92</sup> The WPHF is entirely aligned with 1325 and its associated commitments across the globe. It is well-aligned with Grand Bargain commitments on localization, and (again, as highlighted in EQ1) it is increasingly aligned with a move towards feminist policies, particularly in the global North.<sup>93</sup>

At the global level, the uniqueness of the Fund given its focus on women and WROs - particularly small, local organizations – results in a high complementarity potential with other UN and international interventions working in the areas of humanitarian response and peace and security.

However, there is some lack of external communications about how the Fund works, and what different windows, streams, and initiatives exist under the Fund, which hampers the understanding of different stakeholders of complementarity across other UN systems.<sup>94</sup>

While there are different areas of work occurring with different UN agencies, this is a bit more ad hoc.<sup>95</sup> Internally, the Fund has worked hard to align with other frameworks, particularly, for example, with integrating both UNHCR language around displacement and overall leave no one behind categories into the monitoring system (see above, Finding 3).<sup>96</sup>

At the country level, there are two primary sub-findings. The first is that the Fund is considered to be unique, niche, and not comparable with any other mechanism, and thus highly complementary to other mechanisms. In **all countries** participating in this evaluation, WPHF is recognized as a unique Fund at the country level, not comparable with any other existing fund and thus highly complementary to the other funds.<sup>97</sup>

The second sub-finding is that WPHF is well-aligned at country level with other global initiatives such as the Spotlight Initiative, and country specific mechanisms. For example, in the **DRC**, the WPHF was well-aligned with the EU-funded Spotlight Initiative. Compared to other mechanisms and initiatives available, the WPHF works specifically on the linkages between peace, security and women, while other initiatives focus only on women. There is thus complementarity with other mechanisms as the WPHF targets specifically small WROs that address the needs at the grass-roots level.<sup>98</sup>

In **Lebanon**, the Fund is complementary to the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund, managed by OCHA and other agency led funds. This complementarity is based on the fact that the rules of the Lebanon

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<sup>92</sup> WPHF. Project Document. 2021-2024. 2021.

<sup>93</sup> Multiple documentation and global KIIs.

<sup>94</sup> Multiple KIIs at global and country levels and WPHF. Project Document. 2021-2024. 2021.

<sup>95</sup> Multiple global WPHF KIIs

<sup>96</sup> Global WPHF KIIs.

<sup>97</sup> Multiple country level WPHF and other KIIs.

<sup>98</sup> WPHF-Spotlight DRC Annual Reports, UNW DRC KII, CSOs DRC KII.

Humanitarian Fund are too difficult and the WPHF has a certain flexibility, despite having to follow UNW guidelines and requirements, and targets small WROs.<sup>99</sup> In **Moldova**, at the country level, the WPHF is extremely well-aligned with the focus on women's economic empowerment and promoting resilience within the Regional Refugee Plan, and is thus complementary to that Plan.<sup>100, 101</sup>

The third, final, and potentially most critical sub-finding is that institutional funding, now mainstreamed throughout the regular funding cycle, is not only complementary to all UN Women and other programmatic funding streams, but is unique and considered vital: "Institutional funding [is] so important, everyone invests in problems not in capacities."<sup>102</sup> In **all countries**, the combined approach of both institutional and programmatic funds is highly valued in its relevance and uniqueness.<sup>103</sup>

Survey respondents rated the level of coherence of the WPHF with other global initiatives and standards around WPS-HA in their country 6.1/7 on average.

**Finding 2.2. The Fund has not yet fully positioned itself as a multi-agency Fund, and Fund-supported projects are, at country level, often considered to be UN Women programming. Strategic partnerships have been well leveraged at global level but less well leveraged for continued support at country level. Good Evidence.**

The WPHF is a multi-agency fund, but in many countries and in many respects, it is perceived as a UN Women programme. UN Women of course hosts the Secretariat and is the managing entity at country level in most countries.<sup>104</sup> UN Women therefore provides systems and structures within which the Fund operates. In many countries, the work of the Fund is the most visible UN Women work in the humanitarian and peace spheres, and at both country and global levels the Fund contributes to the humanitarian credibility and reputation of UN Women in a manner that goes beyond current UN Women programmatic and operational humanitarian capacity (notwithstanding UN Women's entry into the IASC in 2022). There are, therefore, positive benefits for UN Women in hosting the Fund.<sup>105</sup>

However, there are numerous challenges for the WPHF in terms of the systems and processes within UN Women – see Finding below. Therefore, WPHF has begun to directly use Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) to do transfers (rather than transfers going through UN Women or UNFPA) for the WHRD window, given the obstacles within UN Women compliance requirements.<sup>106</sup>

While formally the roles and task distribution of UN Women and the WPHF are established in a very detailed and clear manner,<sup>107</sup> the interdependency leads to a lack of clarity in relation to roles, ownership, contribution and expectations, negatively influencing a stronger positioning as a multi-agency Fund.<sup>108</sup> At **the country level**, this becomes very visible.

For example, in **Colombia and Moldova**, the Fund is not recognized as a multi-agency Fund.<sup>109</sup> In Colombia, for some stakeholders, even the distinction of it as a separate fund is not that clear. Close

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<sup>99</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs.

<sup>100</sup> UNW Moldova KIIs and other UN agency Moldova KIIs.

<sup>101</sup> <https://www.unhcr.org/md/en/17813-regional-refugee-response-plan-january-december-2023.html>

<sup>102</sup> UN country-level KII,

<sup>103</sup> Multiple WPHF, other UN agency, and WRO KIIs across multiple countries.

<sup>104</sup> Currently, Syria is the only country where UN Women is not the managing entity.

<sup>105</sup> Multiple WPHF and other KIIs at global and country levels.

<sup>106</sup> Global WPHF KIIs.

<sup>107</sup> See the WPHF Operations Manual.

<sup>108</sup> Global WPHF KIIs.

<sup>109</sup> Colombia is a unique situation, where there is a specific Colombia MPTF which WPHF is under, and this limits the WPHF processes and multi-agency participation. However, beyond this, as in Moldova too, for many stakeholders WPHF is not considered distinct, in any way, from UN Women programming,

relationships are built with UN Women, particularly at territorial level, and while formal distinctions are made (e.g. logo), the fund is perceived and mainly experienced as part of UN Women. Even internally, the “independent identity” of the Fund, its ownership and the role of UN Women are not clear, and tensions in this regard at global level are seen by stakeholders as negatively influencing clarity at national/local level.<sup>110</sup> The definition of “what is a Fund”, vis-a-vis UN mandate and nature, is one of the important issues to be clarified, according to UN Women and other UN stakeholders.<sup>111</sup> In Moldova, the Fund is not well-known as a multi-agency fund, even by other UN agencies. It is very much associated with being a UN Women programme. Other UN agencies are somewhat aware that they may be part of the Fund as a multi-partner trust Fund (MPTF) but pragmatically WPHF is seen as a UN Women programme in Moldova. In fact, respondents in Moldova reported their regional offices being confused about the Fund and not understanding it as an MPTF.<sup>112</sup>

Further, there is a strong sense within Moldova UN Women Country Office, echoed across other countries, that UN Women should get the credit for managing the Fund, given the administrative, operational, programmatic and strategic responsibilities put on the Country Office to manage the Fund (see Finding below for more information).<sup>113</sup>

But the importance of these perceptions is that there is a risk to the Fund being seen as a UN Women programme only, whereby the benefits linked to being seen as a truly multi-agency fund and taking advantage of the different opportunities afforded through different UN agencies, is missing.<sup>114</sup>

Further, there is a clear sense that the Fund is in practice nimbler and more flexible – with examples including the Fund's immediate response to protection WHRD in Afghanistan after the Taliban fell, when other UN agencies were much more constrained in what they could do – and for this to continue, the Fund does need to be branded as a separate and independent entity “floating” within the UN system – a “small insect within the UN ecosystem”<sup>115</sup> – but not tied to normal UN bureaucracies by being seen as inherent part of one particular UN agency. This observation underlines that the Fund has not achieved the right positioning so far.<sup>116</sup>

Regarding leveraging strategic partnerships, the Fund has done this well at the global level. The 2019 MTR found that “Diverse and innovative partnerships have been established. Stakeholder interviews highlight that the Secretariat has led exceptional and effective initiatives in identifying partners, building and strengthening strategic partnerships and alliances, as well as diversifying through diverse traditional and non-traditional stakeholders.”<sup>117</sup> The Fund has partnerships across a range of governments and civil society actors at both global and country level, and demonstrably seeks to bring them into decision-making processes (see next Finding). There is more limited evidence of private sector or academia partnerships across different levels to contribute to the Fund.<sup>118</sup>

At the country level, in many contexts, the National Steering Committees (NSC), particularly with a strong Chaired Resident Coordinator (RC) can play an important part in strategic partnerships. This holds true across all countries that participated in the evaluation, with specific examples being: In the **DRC**, the Fund has been able to leverage on strategic partnerships with other stakeholders thanks to the involvement of the Resident Coordinator into the National Steering Committee. However, the respondents report that WPHF could consider integrating joint initiatives into its windows, so WPHF

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<sup>110</sup> Multiple WPHF and other KIIs at global and country levels.

<sup>111</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs and other UN agency Colombia KIIs.

<sup>112</sup> Other UN agency Moldova KIIs.

<sup>113</sup> Multiple UNW KIIs at country level.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> WPHF KII.

<sup>116</sup> Evidence from multiple WPHF and other KIIs at global and country levels.

<sup>117</sup> WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020.

<sup>118</sup> Multiple KIIs at global and country levels and WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020.

projects being integrated with other appropriate projects or initiatives, in order to support the issues of peace, security and humanitarian also at the national level.<sup>119</sup> In **Uganda**, respondents report that the presence of the RCO in the NSC brings all the UN system together, but the collaboration and engagement with other agencies could be strengthened. So, for example the EU is part of the Uganda NSC, as well as a leading Spotlight Initiative partner which is considered beneficial.<sup>120</sup> However, beyond the NSC, respondents report that there is limited evidence of sustainable strategic partnership building at the country level as they would like to see, for longer-term benefit and impact.

**Finding 2.3. The Fund demonstrates exemplary communication across various audiences and consistent and genuine efforts to ensure ownership at all levels and this is commended by all stakeholders, at all levels. Good Evidence.**

There is a significant level of ownership seen by all stakeholders within the Fund, and a unanimous response from respondents at global and country levels that the Fund meaningfully involves and respectfully listens to all stakeholders, consistently, comprehensively, and systematically. There are multiple examples of feedback being incorporated into changes within the operation of the Fund.<sup>121</sup>

The WPHF is widely considered a feminist fund by relevant stakeholders, and they see feminism as being strongly owned by UN Women in relation to the Fund's mandate, the board members and the secretariat. Without exception, all external respondents praised the efforts of the Fund to ensure engagement and communication, and equal input from civil society.<sup>122</sup>

Multiple respondents at global and country levels highlighted their appreciation of the WPHF Secretariat for the communication and for the sense of ownership engendered across different stakeholder groups:

"It is very unique set-up we have praised this everyone acknowledges that this is unique setup with board when CS is welcome to come and give input on equal terms. This is the Fund doing something in practice that they preach in theory that is very important thing. That is [a] best practice of the Fund."<sup>123</sup>

"I appreciate the diversity of the Board it is not just donors; I think that is very important when we take decisions, generally I value the very direct communication between the Fund and the Funding Board, they regularly seek out feedback and involve us in decision-making that should definitely continue."<sup>124</sup>

"Link to the direct communication, it is a prime example of good work keeping the donors in the loop and the willingness to try out different formats, something I really enjoyed seeing being developed, about 300 CSOs were being surveyed on challenges they see and what came out of this was climate insecurity and connected to this, food insecurity, this is something the Fund could respond to from this the climate window emerged."<sup>125</sup>

"It is great to work with Fund team, really creative how to shape this partnership, we feel like a big team."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> UNW DRC KIIs.

<sup>120</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs.

<sup>121</sup> Multiple global and country WPHF and other stakeholder KIIs.

<sup>122</sup> WPHF global KIIs, other global KIIs, and global document review.

<sup>123</sup> CSO partner KII.

<sup>124</sup> Government KII.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.



“I like the spirit of the Fund and the consultative approach.”<sup>127</sup>

The approach is, of course, not without challenges. Firstly, it has been difficult to balance, in terms of seeking and waiting for feedback but without causing undue delays in operations. In the main, respondents feel that the Fund has well achieved this balance.<sup>128</sup> Secondly, respondents report that what might be lacking, however, is a clear description and operationalization framework of these feminist principles, *including* accountability mechanisms and clarity on why and how to include diversity.<sup>129</sup>

### 3.3 Efficiency

#### To what extent has the WPHF been efficient as a pooled fund for local women’s rights organizations?

**OVERALL EFFICIENCY FINDING 3. The WPHF is as efficient as a UN funding mechanism can be, given generally strict compliance and risk-adverse processes within the UN system. Good Evidence.**

Respondents report that the existing governance structure of the Fund is complimented by stakeholders, allowing the Secretariat to make quick decisions. In terms of resource mobilization, the Fund has demonstrably gone from strength to strength since its establishment. There are clear examples of adaptation and revision according to changing global and country contexts, and the Fund demonstrably increases funding for local women’s rights organizations beyond the ability of any other UN mechanism.<sup>130</sup>

The main challenges for the efficiency of the Fund are rooted in all respects in the basic premise that the Fund is a UN entity. While there are many challenges with strict UN Women systems, these systems are reflective of the wider UN eco-system which tends towards being bureaucratically heavy and being risk averse. The system is simply not set up to do what is the entire purpose of the WPHF, namely, to fund small civil society organizations that do not meet the high organizational compliance criteria the UN system expects.

Most comments on the efficiency of the Fund from country-level colleagues relate to the limitations in the human resources dedicated to work on WPHF initiatives at the country level. Staff at WPHF are considered both helpful and professional, but despite increased allocation of funds for staffing costs since the 2019 mid-term review (after which an additional 3% for M&E costs and 5% for capacity-building, including staffing costs, were added) challenges remain. Funding for country personnel does not cover the full staff-related costs for the entire project period and does not make it possible to have designated personnel to ensure quality implementation or results reporting. There are specific restrictions in how a Fund allocates budget compared to how a programme does, and there are donor requirements to be considered.<sup>131</sup> However, in general, it was reported that WPHF work tends to be understaffed.

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<sup>127</sup> CSO partner KII,

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> WPHF global KIIs, other global KIIs, and global document review.

<sup>130</sup> Multiple global and country WPHF and other stakeholder KIIs, and global document review.

<sup>131</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

**Finding 3.1. While the existing governance structure of the Fund allows the Secretariat to make quick decisions, completely trusted and supported by the board, there are still many operational challenges and bottlenecks that limit efficiency. **Mixed Evidence.**<sup>132</sup>**

From the qualitative data collected through this evaluation, there are various challenges reported regarding governance systems within the Fund, from both global and country level respondents, but also many positives.

**Overall.** The different Funding Windows and different initiatives within the Regular Funding Cycle generally work well. Application times have been considered very carefully for the different windows. Longlisting, evaluating and shortlisting times of proposals are efficient. Decision making processes are expedited by the Secretariat, because it is pool mechanism able to leverage funds more quickly, and in a more agile manner. However, the Secretariat is also part of a larger system.

Generally, WPHF is managed by UN Women, and UN Women Country Offices vary in terms of their capacities, especially for humanitarian-related support. Where the Fund has been successful in rolling out emergency responses, it can be attributed in part to a strong UN Women Country Office.

However, beyond differences in capacities, respondents report that sometimes there are unrealistic expectations about what the CO can do. There are still multiple challenges with the transfer of Funds due to UN Women systems. Delay of transferring the 7% overhead costs is challenging for UN Women Country Offices managing WPHF projects, and ensuring WPHF funds apply only to WPHF projects is also challenging.<sup>133</sup> However, reaching, supporting, and providing monitoring oversight for small and understaffed WROs who have no experience with UN compliance systems and procedures is much more time-consuming and costly than sub-funding to a larger NGO, and many countries report 7% overhead is not enough.<sup>134</sup>

**Internal coherence.** There is an internal coherence between the windows, reflecting the cooperative and feminist nature of the Fund, with the WPHF trying to build an ecosystem of support and learning across different organizations who receive funds in different ways. The L-Hub is a big part of this: however, there is both some duplication between L-Hub and M&E, and there is potentially more to be done.<sup>135</sup> It is also clear that in some countries there is limited information about recipients of other windows, and this could be improved.<sup>136</sup>

**M&E** has continuously strengthened since recruiting an M&E Consultant, as a response to the 2020 MTR. Multiple stakeholders have praised the visuals and data that the Fund is able to produce.<sup>137</sup>

**National Steering Committees.** There are some bottlenecks here with delays, both with NSCs with governments on board and those without. Thoughtful guidelines that balance inclusion of all on the NSC with timeliness and efficiency are not yet fully in place.<sup>138</sup>

From the survey, and in terms of efficiency of processes and procedures, respondents rated the quality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress and results the highest average score, followed by the transfers and grant making, calls for proposals and evaluation processes and timely response and coverage of crises with appropriate funding windows and mechanisms. Quantity and adequacy of human resources was the item that scored the lowest average score.

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<sup>132</sup> While there is robust evidence to support the issues presented above, the evaluation does not have full clarity on whether these are the only challenges regarding efficiency of systems.

<sup>133</sup> WPHF global KIIs,

<sup>134</sup> Multiple UNW country level KIIs.

<sup>135</sup> For example, respondents reported that both L-Hub and M&E have developed capacity strengthening strategies, which results in a level of duplication that needs to be further minimized.

<sup>136</sup> Global and country-level WPHF and CSO KIIs.

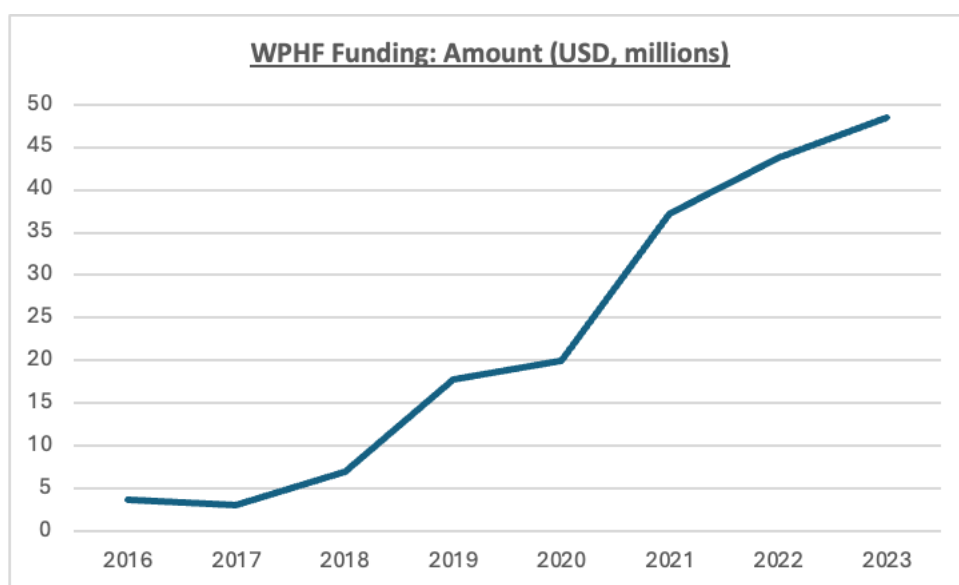
<sup>137</sup> Multiple global WPHF and other stakeholder KIIs.

<sup>138</sup> Multiple WPHF global KIIs and UNW country level KIIs.

**Finding 3.2 The WPHF has been successful in increasingly mobilizing resources from governments, although much of this remains geographically or thematically earmarked, and has also made progress in mobilizing funds from the private sector. In terms of resource mobilisation, the Fund grown year on year, with USD 48.5 million mobilised last year, the highest year yet. However, there is limited evidence of increased resource mobilization at the country level. Good Evidence.**

Overall, in terms of resource mobilisation, the Fund has gone from strength to strength, with **USD 48.5 million** mobilised last year, the highest year yet. The MTR found that even by 2020, the resource mobilization strategy has been highly effective.<sup>139</sup> However, the MTR also found that overall, while there are adequate resources for initiatives, the Secretariat and the UN Women management entities (MEs) at country level are clearly under-funded and understaffed to deliver on the various roles they have, including capacity building towards CSOs. A private sector partnership strategy has been well conceived and has led to significant achievements in partnerships with global corporations and public celebrity ambassadors. This has been confirmed in this current evaluation.<sup>140</sup>

Figure 5: WPHF funding, year on year



(Source: Data collated from WPHF annual reports)

Member State donors are pleased with the Fund’s results, and the dashboards and metrics used to show donors results are a big part of this.

Regarding private sector funding there has been a great diversity achieved, with both Foundations and high net worth individuals engaged. To take just one example, Kristen Bell is a celebrity Global Advocate of the Fund.<sup>141</sup>

There are benefits and challenges with private sector funding. Private sector funders hold different positions that range from very sceptical to very positive and supportive. Of course, the primary benefit is that private sector funding is less restrictive and potentially less political. The increase of private sector funding also reflects an increasing awareness of how conflict affects women and girls around the world.<sup>142</sup>

<sup>139</sup> WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020.

<sup>140</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>141</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>142</sup> Global WPHF KIIs and other global KIIs.

In terms of in-kind contributions, the Global Learning Hub (L-Hub) has made efforts to work with other specialized UN entities to involve them in trainings, but this could be leveraged more. There are examples of innovative funding mechanisms, such as with DELL for the free development of the L-hub Innovative contributions.<sup>143</sup>

One big issue remains the amount of earmarked funds – earmarked both geographically and thematically – which both restricts programming and goes against the feminist principles of the Fund by removing choice from WROs and placing decision-making in global, rather than local, hands.<sup>144</sup>

In terms of the onward movement of funds within WPHF, the transfers and project document reviews are completed at HQ within 1-3 days. However, the Fund has seen many delays of transfers based on numerous different challenges, including:

- UN Women systems but also the challenges there under the NUNO Financing Agreement, and UNW travel policy rules, and organisations must have bank accounts in their own names to receive travel funds.
- NSC meeting/selection process delays.<sup>145</sup>

At the country level, many respondents reported the desire to raise funds directly for the continuation of WPHF projects, but there seem to be many blockages to this, including:

- Lack of success, based on various contextual factors, despite interest from the UN Women managing entity (for example in DRC), and despite efforts such as organizing donor meetings (such as in Uganda).
- Lack of motivation, for example in Lebanon: “When we want to fundraise, even if this programme is beautiful, we know it doesn’t matter how much money we get we will always be underfunded because of the little money the CO gets. We are trying to get other funding to implement the WPHF. The more funding we get the more pressured we will be”.<sup>146</sup>

While country-level resource mobilization is not required or expected by WPHF, and indeed, there may be some overall challenges with the concept, this is a key area of concern at country level.

**Finding 3.3. There are strong examples of effective speed of response to new emergencies as they arise, including in Afghanistan, Haiti, Ukraine and Moldova. The Covid-19 window was a strong example of the institutional flexibility for a new and unprecedented global crisis.<sup>147</sup> **Mixed Evidence**<sup>148</sup>**

The WPHF has shown adaptability over time, as new conflicts or crises arise. For instance, the **Ukraine-Moldova** regional response opened as an emergency track to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.<sup>149</sup>

There is further evidence of timely response to new emergencies. Funding provisions and mechanisms have been established to respond to sudden emergencies, and the Secretariat’s judgement is trusted to make rapid decisions and examples of operationalization can be seen in responses to emerging crises such as **State of Palestine, Libya, Syria** and the 2023 earthquake, and **Sudan**. The Operations

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<sup>143</sup> <https://wphfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/WPHF-Global-L-Hub-Brochure-Updated-2023.pdf>

<sup>144</sup> Global WPHF KIIs and other global KIIs.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> UNW Lebanon KII.

<sup>147</sup> Noting that the Covid-19 window is outside of the scope of this evaluation.

<sup>148</sup> This finding highlights the examples reported by KIIs and in documents, but the evaluation has not reviewed the Fund against all new crises (at national or more localized level) across the temporal scope of the evaluation and therefore the finding is limited.

<sup>149</sup> WPHF. Annual Report 2022.

Manual clearly describes how to proceed in the case of emerging crisis. The response to the Taliban takeover in **Afghanistan** in 2021 was rapid and effective: a response to a clear and explicit gap, and which then further gave rise to the WHRD window.<sup>150</sup> As a response to the increasingly widespread violence in **Haiti** since 2022, and the 2023 Syria-Türkiye earthquake, the WPHF launched an urgent funding appeal to support local women’s organizations in the country to respond to the humanitarian and security crises. As of the end of 2022, USD 4 million out of a target of USD 9 million had been raised, which allowed WPHF to launch a call for proposals in December 2022, *“focusing on humanitarian and crisis response, protection of women and girls and peacebuilding and recovery.”*<sup>151</sup>

At national levels, there is evidence that the Fund is adaptable to reprogramme funds within country contexts based on changing contexts. In the **DRC**, WPHF launched an urgent appeal in December 2022 in response to the escalation of the violence between the March 23 Movement (M23) armed group and the DRC Army (FARDC) in Eastern Congo.<sup>152</sup> The WPHF has shown great flexibility in the DRC to adjust already approved projects to the changed context as new crises arose. For instance, in areas of high insecurity such as North Kivu, projects had to suspend their implementation; these projects were extended at no-cost. CSO partners were also allowed adjustments in the work plan and budget allocation across activities in response to the declaration of the *état de siège* (i.e. military administration), to conduct advocacy requests at the level of the central government instead of the level of the local government.<sup>153</sup>

In **Lebanon**, the Fund responded to the Beirut explosion in 2020 and, more generally, respondents report flexibility which has ensured timely adaptations to changing situations. This has included shifting from a more focused approach to a more decentralized approach, reaching more areas outside of Beirut, and making necessary adjustments to projects during the 2022 elections.<sup>154</sup> In **Syria**, the Fund quickly responded to the 2023 earthquake.<sup>155</sup>

**Finding 3.4. The financing structure of the Fund demonstrably increases funding for local women’s rights organizations beyond the ability of any other UN mechanism. The institutional funding provides an opportunity for longer-term sustainability of WRO’s but in more general terms, the Fund has not, to date, systematically acted as a catalyst to increase funding for WRO’s from other sources.**

**Good Evidence.**

There are two clear sub-findings for understanding if and how the Fund has effectively increased funding for local WROs. Firstly, the Fund itself efficiently increases funding for local WROs. Up to December 2023, the Fund has mobilized USD175,400,000 and funded 1207 WROs, 46.2% of whom received UN funding for the first time through the WPHF.<sup>156</sup> Overall, funding has increased from 30.9 million to 103.1 million in a 4-year period until 2023. Furthermore, the number of CSOs has increased almost four-fold, from 363 to 1207.<sup>157</sup>

Evidence on the increasing amount of funding mobilized and allocated and the growing number of WROs supported, underlies a positive response to this question. Some strategies, like twinning larger and smaller organizations, which was introduced to overcome the risk-adverse UN processes the Fund operates under, have contributed to increased outreach to local WROs.

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<sup>150</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> WPHF DRC Annual Report, and UNW DRC KIIs and other DRC KIIs

<sup>154</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs.

<sup>155</sup> UNFPA Syria KIIs.

<sup>156</sup> WPHF Annual Report. 2023.

<sup>157</sup> WPHF Annual Reports.

All WROs across all countries have appreciated the Fund for providing support to those organizations that cannot access support elsewhere within the UN system. Institutional funding is seen as a respectful and feminist mechanism that centres the capacity and self-determination of WROs, working in their own context for peace and development that they themselves shape.<sup>158</sup>

The openness, responsiveness, and learning orientation of the WPHF to create and validate have contributed to enhance effective financing, from the perspective of CSO partners. For example, based on the RRW review in 2022 the Rapid Response Window implemented an approach in stages to minimize the administrative burden for CSOs when applying to the window. The concept note process involves a simplified set of questions to determine eligibility and alignment with the objectives of the RRW before inviting applicants to submit a full-length proposal. A checklist to determine eligibility has been developed to ease and standardize concept note assessments.<sup>159</sup>

Secondly, however, there is limited evidence that the Fund has increased the capacity of all WRO to the level necessary to then to access funding from other UN agencies, despite the provision of institutional funding. While there has been some resource mobilization capacity building training, and there are some examples of WROs who do then go on to access other funding, there remains a significant gap for a lot of WROs between the level of increased capacity reached by WROs due to this Fund, and the level of capacity necessary for accessing other funding.<sup>160</sup>

In the Philippines and Moldova, there is evidence that WPHF funding supported WROs with attaining legal identities within the country, which is a foundational requirement and a good step forward to receiving other funds.<sup>161</sup>

In Uganda, respondents report that WPHF grants have made CSO partners more attractive to other funders ('trigger effect') due to increased visibility at local, national and international levels, and increased reliability due to improved management capacity (especially monitoring and reporting).<sup>162</sup>

However, these examples are the exception rather than the norm. In general, the evaluation found a remaining gap between the increased level of capacity WROs achieve based on WPHF funding (institutional and programmatic) and the level of capacity required in general for other UN funding.

### 3.4 Effectiveness (of the Fund)

#### To what extent has the implementation of initiatives and processes across WPHF funding windows been effective?

**Overall, the effectiveness of the Fund is considered good, operating as it does within the restrictions of the UN system, and being viewed by many as an example of the best of the UN. The governance structure of the Fund is considered clear, respectful and inclusive and has contributed to the achievement of the three functions. Good Evidence.**

The WPHF has been effective in achieving its overall functions, hindered only by the limited funding and challenges with UN systems, procedures, processes, and bureaucracy. WPHF has been demonstrably effective at increasing visibility of WROs in WPS-HA spaces, and institutional funding and global learning and coalition building are considered key catalysing factors that also contribute to the achievement of the outcomes and ultimate goal of the Fund. The Fund can also be seen as

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<sup>158</sup> WPHF Global KII and multiple country level WRO KIIs.

<sup>159</sup> WPHF global KIIs and multiple country WRO KIIs.

<sup>160</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>161</sup> UNW and WRO Moldova KIIs and annual reports and UNW Philippines KIIs and annual reports.

<sup>162</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs and WRO Uganda KIIs.



contributing to advancing women's participation, leadership, and rights in humanitarian response and peace and security settings.

**Finding 4.1 Overall, the governance structure of the Fund is considered clear, respectful and inclusive, engendering transparent and participatory decision-making. The biggest challenge is working within the restrictive UN systems of UN Women as the managing entity. Good Evidence.**

There are many positive benefits to the current governance structure.

Firstly, the existing governance structures and particularly the Secretariat team, are recognized as fully committed, and capable, with the aim of being as horizontal (an equal decision-making structure rather than a hierarchical vertical one), as possible, as well as responsive and transparent. One key informant reported:

“[It is o]ne of the most collaborative Funds I have seen at the moment and also very open and always listens to the voices of the NGOs as the most relevant.”<sup>163</sup>

Decision-making at the global level is widely considered to be based on consensus across different stakeholders. The Secretariat provides timely feedback and is recognized for preserving its reflexivity and learning approach. Furthermore, respondents report openness and creativity in the thinking of the members of both the Secretariat and the Board, to explore different mechanisms (beyond meetings, including more informal communication structures), through collective decision-making.<sup>164</sup>

At the country level, decision-making is considered clear and transparent, with a strong NSC role contributing to the consensus-based selection of CSO partners (after long-and short-listing at the Secretariat).<sup>165</sup>

Good relationships between WPHF Secretariat and UN Women staff at country level, and respectful, timely, responsive, and cooperative communication from the Secretariat to the COs, are also consistently reported by country level respondents.<sup>166</sup>

However, the governance is not without challenges.

One cross-cutting issue at different levels is the balance between participatory consensus and efficiency and speed of processes. To date, the WPHF have balanced this well, although there are some considerations for making this even stronger in the future.

Other specific issues include:

- NSCs. There are some bottlenecks with NSCs in terms of timely decision-making, and there are strategic questions about government participation in the NSC, which has some benefits and some challenges and is varied across different countries.<sup>167</sup>
- Funding Board decision-making. WPHF is commended for exemplary participatory and respectful communication and decision-making within the Board and but while full and equal participation is best practice, this must be balanced with making final decisions, even if some members do not agree, and moving on.<sup>168</sup>
- Committees. Some issues return again and again (such as within the advocacy committee, the issue of whether WHRD are women alone, or also include men who defend HR of women,

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<sup>163</sup> Global other stakeholder KII,

<sup>164</sup> Global WPHF KIIs and global other stakeholder KIIs.

<sup>165</sup> Multiple UNW country level KIIs. The evaluation notes that bringing short-listing to the Secretariat was implemented after the 2019 MTR, before which it was conducted at country level.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid

<sup>167</sup> WPHF and other global KIIs.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.



and/or other excluded populations like LGBTQ+) and these are seen to have an impact and contribute to a continuation of sometimes inconsistent and thinking across members.

The biggest challenge is getting right the relationship between WPHF and UN Women as the hosting entity.

There have been governance and contractual challenges with UN Women as the hosting entity, and some resistance of systems within UN Women to allow the flexibility and level of risk that this Fund demands. The UN system is generally quite risk adverse, and those UN agencies that have learnt to lower their stringent compliance checks have generally done so through their humanitarian work: a sphere within which UN Women is still learning and maturing. There is a sense from respondents that the WPHF could benefit UN Women in terms of fast-tracked progress towards a flexible humanitarian understanding, but in the meantime, the current resistance to less stringent checks proves to be a bottleneck.<sup>169</sup>

**Finding 4.2 The WPHF has been effective in achieving its overall functions, hindered only by the limited funding and challenges with UN systems, procedures, processes, and bureaucracy. However, progress against different functions is *measured* in different ways. Function 2 can be easily quantitatively measured in terms of the funds received by WRO through this Fund and potentially in the future how many of these WROs go on to access other funds. **Good Evidence.****

The WPHF has been effective in achieving its overall functions, consistent with the challenges of limited funding and UN systems. However, progress against different functions is measured in different ways. The evaluation finds that Function 2 can be easily quantitatively measured in terms of the funds received by WRO through this Fund (see Finding 3.4) and there is potential scope to monitor how many of these WROs go on to access other funds in the future.

Conceptually, this then automatically leads to contributions towards breaking silos at the WRO-level, with some qualitative examples emerging from this evaluation of how this has worked in different countries. Likewise, there are some qualitative examples of how contribution to policy coherence has been achieved by the Fund, again, through the input of addressing structural funding gaps, by providing funding to those WROs that cannot access other funding streams within the UN system.

The Fund follows a results framework and has core indicators at each of the outcome levels,<sup>170</sup> which are quite focused on effective participation and influence around outcome areas. From this monitoring, WPHF can report on all the outcomes, including such as generating data on how many WRO and women are participating in humanitarian, peace and security arenas, and this is then reported annually.<sup>171</sup>

The indicators are not all consistently robust for all outcomes, some of which, as noted above, need more qualitative, context-relevant transformational evidence. Success in the areas of breaking silos and policy coherence must be measured sometimes in more fluid and more qualitative, contextually based ways as opposed to quantification.<sup>172</sup>

Other streams such as institutional funding, as well as the Global L-Hub, have more limited evidence of longer-term impact rather than intermediate results.<sup>173</sup> The Fund has been successful in allocating institutional funding, but the lack of continuous follow-up does not provide evidence about the extent

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Note that this was a recommendation from the MTR.

<sup>171</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>172</sup> WPHF global KIIs and other stakeholder global KIIs; global document review; and evaluation review and analysis of results framework.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

to which the assumptions around institutional funding have been validated and small organizations effectively accessed new, larger funding opportunities. While this is not the only metric that is important, considering any follow-up for continued sustainability of the CSO six, twelve, or eighteen months after the institutional funding has ended (i.e. rather than just the CSO being sustained at the time of institutional funding) means limited evidence of longer-term impact.

Tracking how many WROs are receiving funding for the first time is critical: but tracking whether those receiving funding (either institutional or programmatic) and then go on to receive additional UN or non-UN funding over the following years, thus helping to maintain a sustained voice in humanitarian response and WPS agendas, is missing.<sup>174, 175, 176</sup>

Survey respondents report that the Fund has mainly contributed to addressing structural funding gaps, with the highest average score across the three functions. Breaking Silos scored second highest in terms of survey respondents’ perspectives of effectiveness. Contributing to improving policy coherence scored lowest.

**Finding 4.3. WPHF has been demonstrably effective at increasing visibility of WROs in WPS-HA spaces, with consistently solid and robust examples across multiple countries. Good Evidence.**

The MTR reported “effective internal and external communications which has increased visibility for the Fund. The WPHF 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 reach. This is inclusive of both internal and external communication, as well as at country and global levels. With a new Communications and Advocacy Specialist, the WPHF Secretariat has been excellent and extremely effective in demonstrating impact and increasing visibility of the Fund.”

At the global level, there has been strong emphasis on developing advocacy and communication guidelines and boosting the Fund’s communication strategy. The two global forums (Austria, 2020 and Germany, 2023) have been privileged spaces to boost women voices and visibility.<sup>177</sup>

At the country level, there are multiple examples of how the Fund has increased visibility of WROs within (and at the same time, engagement with and participation in) WPS-HA spaces. Most notable in this regard is **Moldova**, where there is strong quantitative evidence showing that the WPHF has increased visibility for WROs to participate in the refugee response. This is clear from interviews across different organisations including other UN agencies and partners themselves. The support provided by WPHF, and particularly institutional funding, has provided capacity development to allow WROs to strengthen their capacities related to project implementation and reporting at the UN level.<sup>178</sup>

The 2022 Moldova chapter of the Regional Refugee Plan (RRP) had two local partners out of a total of 46 partners. The 2024 RRP has 46 local partners out of 86 partners – an increase from 4.3% local participation to over 50% local participation. WPHF is credited as being the largest contributor to this change – according to one key informant, “The Fund has played a very critical role.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> WPHF global KIIs and other stakeholder global KIIs; global document review; and evaluation review and analysis of results framework.

<sup>175</sup> WPHF respondents confirm that discussions around this have already commenced.

<sup>176</sup> The table below reflects the perceptions of respondents across the eight countries that participated in the evaluation, in terms of whether they believe the Fund has been effective in contributing to each of the functions.

<sup>177</sup> WPHF global KIIs and other stakeholder KIIs, and WPHF annual reports.

<sup>178</sup> : UNW Moldova KIIs, other UN agency Moldova KIIs, WRO partner Moldova KIIs.

<sup>179</sup> Other UN agency Moldova KII.

In **Colombia**, the WPHF has been very successful in increasing visibility of women's rights organizations and leaders, at local/territorial level, but also at global level. Efforts at local level to enhance visibility have been based on WPHF communication guidelines. Some of the Fund's initiatives have also increased visibility in the interactions with government authorities, including advocacy and participation in development dialogues.<sup>180</sup> This is also true in **Uganda**, where the WPHF has increased visibility for WROs at different levels (from local to national), acting as a trigger to access further support from other donors. WPHF CSO partners are encouraged to use different visibility strategies: produce visibility materials (flyers, branded jackets), put up social media accounts and use social media platforms, and use radio spots and messages.<sup>181</sup>

In the **DRC**, the WPHF has increased visibility for WROs through a communications plan aimed at giving visibility to the projects. It included one-to-one training with regards to communication from the UNW DRC Communications team; 2-pagers of WPHF-Spotlight projects for their own advocacy; articles on the projects' achievements published on the partners' websites and social networks; radio programmes and educational spots produced and broadcast; distribution of t-shirts; and installation of billboards and signs with messages. One grantee was awarded a prize that helped them to raise the financial support and the profile of their programme and technical support partners. The WPHF has increased the CSO partners' visibility also through capacity building of the CSOs, now able to participate in the coordination of the humanitarian actions.<sup>182</sup>

In **Ukraine**, global communication guidelines have supported country level efforts to make visible WPHF activities and women's work. Flexibility and context relevance are respected and highlighted.<sup>183</sup>

In the **Philippines**, the WPHF has effectively increased space and visibility for WRO, with different strategies, including engaging journalists in WPS.<sup>184</sup>

The **Lebanon** context highlights some of the challenges with visibility, for example, where LGBTQ+ organizations require a safety-focused approach, involving preserving invisibility/maintaining a low profile while enabling their continuity.<sup>185</sup>

**Finding 4.4 Institutional funding and global learning and coalition building are key catalysing factors that contribute to the achievement of the outcomes and ultimate goal of the Fund. There are different levels of evidence of both strategies being effective, with unanimous praise for institutional funding, although limited evidence of longer-term impact, and more muted praise, but clear examples, of the impact of the L-Hub. Good Evidence.**

The institutional funding stream is an exemplary achievement for the Fund, being entirely founded in feminist and localisation principles. However, the above metrics have not been designed to capture the longer-term impact of the institutional funding (such as the political, development, humanitarian and peace landscape of a country). Effectiveness is tracked against core indicators of how many staff have been retained, and if the organisation can sustain itself, with an indicator for different types of adaptive tools, such as IT systems or PSEA policies. Other indicators are the number of CSOs who have adopted or strengthened internal policies, or who have developed strategies for humanitarian / crisis response. While the broader results can be captured in the short-term, over the longer term a picture

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<sup>180</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, Colombia FGDs, and materials shared by Colombia WROs.

<sup>181</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs, WRO Uganda KIIs, WPHF Uganda Annual Reports.

<sup>182</sup> WPHF DRC Annual Reports, WRO DRC KIIs

<sup>183</sup> UNW Ukraine KIIs.

<sup>184</sup> WPHF Philippines KIIs and 2022 and 2023 Philippines annual report.

<sup>185</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs.

could build up of the impact of this funding on the ultimate goal of the Fund, and this is currently a gap.<sup>186</sup>

However, country level respondents are unanimously appreciative of the institutional funding mechanism. For example, in **Moldova**, institutional funding in particular has been shown to be an effective, respectful, feminist, and impactful mechanism for supporting WROs: it is also unique within the UN system in how it operates.<sup>187</sup> In the words of one key informant, "Institutional funding [is] so important, everyone invests in problems not in capacities."<sup>188</sup> In **Colombia** also, institutional funding is widely recognized as a unique, highly relevant and effective feature of the WPHF.<sup>189</sup>

Regarding global learning and coalition building, the 2023 Annual Report highlights that: "WPHF is a recognized global hub of knowledge and capacity strengthening in the field of women, peace and security and humanitarian action. Since 2020, the WPHF Secretariat has designed and executed a wide range of capacity building, peer exchange and innovative learning initiatives for civil society partners, further realizing its mandate to serve as a global hub of knowledge and capacity building for women's rights and women-led organizations working on issues of women, peace and security and humanitarian action worldwide."<sup>190</sup>

The global learning hub contributes to continuous capacity building but also has a further impact, promoting linkages between WROs, including WHRDs, that can evolve to a movement. It is demand-based and aims to support the projects and sustainability of the organizations. The development of a strategy for the L-hub has enabled increased ownership and a wider recognition of its value and strategic contribution to the Funds purpose and objectives.<sup>191</sup>

A key milestone in relation to coalition building, was the Berlin meeting in May 2023 and the signing of the Berlin Declaration. This was the second global forum, and respondents report that connections made during the first meeting, in Vienna, Austria in 2020, have continued. During the Berlin Forum participants highlighted the importance of convening for creating synergy and movement building, and the 2023 Forum led to new collaborations and alliances, and some joint applications later in the year.<sup>192</sup>

At the country level, global learning and networking is also well appreciated, although perhaps with more caveats than the institutional funding. For example, in **Colombia**, global networking is highly valued by participating organizations / leaders, for most of whom it is a one-time experience. However, participation in the virtual learning opportunities and exchange with other CSO partners was not highlighted by the organizations. The WPHF has offered valuable learning and exchange spaces; high level scenarios and important agenda setting. There is no substantive evidence for continuity and results of the networking and coalition building efforts at the global level for Colombia respondents but there are some national and local related outcomes.<sup>193</sup>

In the **DRC**, there was strong coalition building under the Spotlight Initiative, and WPHF linked to this where Spotlight partners were invited to participate in the WPHF Global Community of Practice online training and knowledge exchange activities, including the WPHF and Women Have Wings CSO Peer Learning awards. One grantee was featured in WPHF Peer Exchange on Coalition building organized with the Spotlight Initiative and bringing together over 220 participants from over 120 CSO from 33 countries.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>187</sup> UNW Moldova KIIs, WRO Moldova KIIs.

<sup>188</sup> UNW Moldova KII.

<sup>189</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, other UN agency Colombia KII, Colombia FGDs.

<sup>190</sup> WPHF Annual Report 2023.

<sup>191</sup> WPHF global KIIs and other global stakeholder KIIs; WPHF annual reports.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs, other UN agency Colombia KII, Colombia FGDs.

<sup>194</sup> WPHF DRC Annual reports, UNW DRC KIIs, WRO DRC KIIs

In **Uganda**, UNW colleagues were involved in a global 'learning café' to train CSO partners at global level and WROs participated in an exchange workshop at the Spotlight-WPHF closure to share good practices, lessons learnt and challenges. However, there is limited evidence of the effectiveness of the coalition building strategy.<sup>195</sup>

In **Ukraine**, WPHF has developed a comprehensive capacity building strategy under the ringfenced capacity-building budget line, within which there is a dedicated activity promoting access to and participation in the L-Hub.<sup>196</sup>

### 3.5 Effectiveness and Sustainability (programmatic)

To what degree have results to date of grants shown progress towards the six outcomes of the Fund and what is the expected sustainability, vis à vis the overarching goal of the Fund?

**OVERALL FINDING. There are clear and demonstrable results at country level against outcomes, with challenges mainly being about attribution of results to specific outcomes rather than a more holistic approach, and in terms of metrics and reporting structures. There is a general sense among all stakeholders of the catalytic impact of the Fund longer-term, although measuring this is difficult. Good Evidence.**

The evaluation finds that the Fund has contributed significantly towards its objectives by, for instance, ensuring essential service provision in areas of dire needs, providing opportunities for socio-economic resilience to people in situations of forced displacement, and enhancing the participation and leadership of women in humanitarian planning and response.

While the Fund has enhanced the CSO partners' competitiveness and capacity to access other funding mechanisms, the absence of certainty and predictability of longer-term commitments is a challenge for sustainability. Moreover, also highlighted was the need for addressing the funding gaps both in M&E to provide insight into the effectiveness of the supported projects and their long-term sustainability, as well as to ensure that UN Women can provide institutional and technical support to CSO partners.

**Finding 5.1. Overall good progress is reported on the outcome areas, but this is not without challenges either in terms of contribution of WPHF activities to different stated outcomes (rather than having a more holistic approach), and in terms of metrics and reporting structures. Good Evidence.**

WPHF Annual Reports do have strong metrics that highlight the impact of results across different outcome areas. Global level annual reports are a well-designed mixture of quantitative and qualitative data points as well as human interest stories, showing consolidated results as well as the impact on individuals and individual WROs that demonstrate the value of this Fund far beyond the numbers only.

The numbers are, however, both useful and at the same time, complicated, as explained below. The below table highlights the successive reports, but with little clarity on whether numbers reported are for the year, or cumulative, and whether numbers reported across different results overlap or not.

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<sup>195</sup> UNW Uganda KIIs, WRO Uganda KIIs, *WPHF Uganda annual reports*.

<sup>196</sup> UNW Ukraine KIIs.

Table 3: Consolidated outcome-level reports

Outcome	2021 Results	2022 Results	2023 Results
Outcome 1a: Enabling Environment for WPS (programmatic funding)	16 CSOs involved in NAP1325 processes	17 CSOs involved in NAP1325 in Myanmar and Philippines	214 CSOs involved in NAP1325
Outcome 1b: Enabling Environment for WPS (institutional funding)	WROs (no reference to how many) have sustained their organizations for a combined 175 months and retained 320 staff	61 WROs increased institutional capacity and sustained organizations for 260 months and retained 238 staff or volunteers	84 WROs and youth-focused organizations have increased institutional capacity and sustained their organization for 396 months and retained 613 staff or volunteers
Outcome 2: Conflict Prevention	7,025 women participated in decision-making in conflict prevention processes	8,313 women participated in decision-making in conflict prevention in Burundi, Iraq, Palestine, Philippines and Uganda	7,957 women participated in decision-making in conflict prevention resulting in 4,581 conflicts being averted
Outcome 3: Humanitarian and Crisis Response	2,144 women from 91 WROs participated in decision-making in humanitarian and crisis response	1,365 women from 38 WROs in 9 countries participated in decision-making in humanitarian response	6,801 women and young women from 80 CSOs participated in decision-making in 13 countries addressing needs of over 107,700 people
Outcome 4: Conflict Resolution	104 women in Afghanistan, Liberia, Mali and South Sudan participated in peace processes	290 women peacebuilders participated in Track 1 and Track 2 peace processes; additional 431 women in Colombia	2,610 women peacebuilders and activists participated in Track 1 and Track 2 peace processes through the RRW and an additional 1,030 women and youth participated through the regular funding cycle
Outcome 5: Protection of Women and Girls	831 WROs coordinated efforts for SGBV protection	1,177 WROs jointly coordinated efforts for GBV protection in 11 countries	3,089 CSOs coordinated efforts for SGBV in 13 countries
Outcome 6: Peacebuilding and recovery	168,411 women with increased agency and resilience	3,787 women with increased agency and resilience, 3,304 women participated in political and decision-making processes in 12 countries.	22,875 women with increased agency and resilience, 4046 women actively participated in political and decision-making processes in 15 countries

Key issues with the reporting against outcome areas include:

- Duplication across years – whether the WROs and individuals reported as benefiting in 2021 are the same or different, or a combination of those reported in 2022 and 2023.
- Duplication, or double-counting across outcome areas – whether for example, those women counted in Outcome 2 are entirely different women than those who work for WROs counted under outcome 2, or those under Outcome 3.
- Outcome 1b metrics are difficult to understand in a meaningful manner.
- Finally, some of the outcome level reported indicators are closer to output level given they focus on participation numbers but not on the quality of participation and any results that might emerge from that participation.

The evaluation understands that donors appreciate quantitative results and that it is important to be able to highlight these. It is also difficult to do so in a manner more detailed than the WPHF already undertakes. Further, there are regular cumulative dashboards produced, which provide an excellent overall summary of results to date, with a banner headline and then multiple data sets presented in as easy-to-read graphics.

Figure 6: Banner statistics of WPHF Dashboard – as of 1st May 2024.

Approved Grants <b>777</b>	Number of Countries <b>44</b>	CSOs Supported <b>1,251</b>	CSOs financed by UN for the first time <b>43.8%</b>	Average size of grants <b>\$128,615 USD</b>	Types of CSOs <b>90%</b> women's rights and/or led <b>5%</b> youth focused and/or led	Resources Mobilized <b>\$187,898,500</b>
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The WPHF introduced a new Index in 2022 to measure its impact. It is a composite measure of 12 indicators across three key domains of peace, security and humanitarian contexts, gender equality,



and space for women’s civil society organizations:<sup>197</sup> The WPHF Index presents a unique opportunity for the Fund to analyse the context in regions it supports and track trends over time towards the achievement of more peaceful and gender equal societies, although with only two years of data to date, these trends are not yet clearly visible.

Figure 7: The WPHF Index

An additional objective of the index is to help inform funding allocation decision making and to advocate for increased funding to WROs in crisis and conflict-affected countries worldwide.<sup>198</sup>

This provides a useful higher-level results matrix for WPHF work, with the objective being to measure the WPHF Goal of contributing to more peaceful and gender equal societies, and the 2022 index highlights a diverse performance across countries, underlining that there is still a long way to go across all three domains. *The value of the WPHF index will become clearer as time progresses, and trends become visible.*



Aside from the numbers, the narrative of WPHF reporting provides a rich tapestry of high positive impact at local levels, on specific WROs and specific women and girls. The country-level annual reporting requirements are heavy and very narrative-focused, which is not necessarily all utilised and could be revised – noting that reporting requirements on Country Offices is always high and should be rationalized as much as possible.<sup>199</sup> However, through the reports and other mechanisms, there are many clear stories of both effectiveness and sustainability (see Finding 5.2, below) of the WPHF.

As highlighted in EQ1, relevance, not all outcomes are considered relevant in all countries. All countries in this evaluation have, however, reported a high appreciation institutional funding,<sup>200</sup> which is an effective way to keep WROs functioning; a foundational requirement for any future engagement in the WPS-HA space. As all WROs require institutional funding for different reasons, it is a challenge to establish common metrics that comprehensively highlight the specific effectiveness of this funding stream, although WPHF has tried to do so with three indicators for CSOs, measuring organizational development in terms of continued operations, staff retention, and polices and systems.

Additional benefits can be seen in different countries, such as the establishment of women’s network, (Colombia), women’s land rights recognized in some communities (DRC), and contribution towards the establishment of LGBTQ spaces (Lebanon).<sup>201</sup>

Many of these additional benefits, seen outside of the monitoring metrics of the Fund, are the most powerful evidence of impact and effectiveness of the Fund.

There are no specific considerations for EQ5.1

<sup>197</sup> WPHF. Annual Report 2022. 2022.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> It is understood that WPHF have pushed back on donor requirements to have more regular (for example quarterly reports) based on trying to reduce the burden on Country Offices as much as possible – however, this requires Country Offices to try and gather twelve months work of worth and summarize it in one report.

<sup>200</sup> Multiple country level WRO KIIs.

<sup>201</sup> UNW, other UN agency, WRO KIIs and annual reports for Colombia, DRC, and Lebanon.



**Finding 5.2. While there is no direct concrete evidence from this evaluation of the sustainability of results – and the question is, of course, how this could be measured? - there is a general sense among all stakeholders of the catalytic impact of the Fund longer-term, in terms of the results highlighted above and the increasing inclusion of women in humanitarian and peace processes. Good Evidence.**

This evaluation built upon the MTR which found evidence of various processes and mechanisms to support sustainability, with key elements of sustainability having been incorporated into the design of the WPHF. These included:

- The establishment of NSCs.
- Building synergies and partnerships.
- The fundamental design and purpose of the Fund, to support grassroots WROs who have long-term perspectives of the local context and work for long-term and sustainable gain.
- The outcome areas of the Fund, such as creating an enabling environment.<sup>202</sup>

Of course, institutional funding is also intrinsically focused on sustainability of local civil society, however, the most important metric, which would be to measure for 3-5 years after institutional funding whether the WRO goes on to receive sustained additional funding, is not in place.

One priority topic addressed by the Global L-hub is resource mobilization, which has generated concrete results in terms of access to new funding, developing their fundraising strategy or learning new tips.<sup>203</sup>

At the country level, stakeholders report different aspects of longer-term sustainability, even in the absence of formalized metrics to measure it. For example, in **Colombia** there is a clear sense that aligning the WPHF work to the UN Women territorial strategy has helped embed sustainability in WPHF projects by linking them to longer-term UN Women programmes.<sup>204</sup>

In the **DRC**, the WPHF projects have served to strengthen existing frameworks and mechanisms in the communities and have ensured that community members were involved and empowered in seeking local solutions to their problems. The capacity building of CSO partners (on monitoring, reporting, financial management, communication, and advocacy) was also mentioned as an element that will facilitate the sustainability of the results achieved.<sup>205</sup>

In **Lebanon** there are some interesting achievements towards sustainability, such as the fact that linkages between some WROs have remained post-WPHF funding, but WROs also highlight the shrinking space for civil society, and requests for further WPHF funding itself highlights their lack of capacity to mobilize other funds.<sup>206</sup>

In **Moldova** there are very clear sustainable results, including the fact that the WPHF has demonstrably contributed to an increase from 4% to over 50% of local participation in the RRP; the establishment of a Ukrainian women refugee network (supported by the WPHF); and some evidence of increased funding from other sources to some WPHF institutional funding CSO partners.<sup>207</sup>

In **Syria**, where projects only started in 2023, sustainability is perceived mainly in relation to investment in young people and strengthening CSO capacities to write proposals to access to additional funding, although there is no concrete evidence of this happening yet.<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> WPHF. Mid-Term Evaluation of WPHF. 2020.

<sup>203</sup> WPHF global KIIs.

<sup>204</sup> UNW Colombia KIIs and Colombia FGDs.

<sup>205</sup> WPHF DRC Annual Reports, WRO DRC KIIs.

<sup>206</sup> UNW Lebanon KIIs and WRO Lebanon KIIs.

<sup>207</sup> Other UN agency Moldova KIIs, and WRO Moldova KIIs.

<sup>208</sup> UNFPA Syria KIIs and WRO Syria KIIs.

In **Uganda**, sustainability of the results achieved is perceived to be facilitated thanks to the institutional support and capacity building of WROs, as well as to a variety of strategies adopted in the CSO partners' interventions to mainstream ownership of the stakeholders, such as: services provided through already existing community structures (e.g. women's groups, local govt institutions, etc.); knowledge and capacity gaps of local government institutions and other duty bearers addressed through capacity building; referrals to existing services provided.<sup>209</sup>

Finally, in **Ukraine**, despite the conflict, stakeholders report that the grants have facilitated sustainability actions and mindsets; have supported CSO to be recognized by the government as partners and experts; and have influenced normative, policy and humanitarian processes led/co-lead by the government.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> WRO Uganda KIIs.

<sup>210</sup> UNW Ukraine KIIs, WRO Ukraine KIIs, WPHF Ukraine Annual Reports 2022 and 2023.

## 4. Conclusions

### 4.1 Overall strategic relevance and positioning conclusions

**CONCLUSION 1. The WPHF is extremely relevant to the global context, coherent with other mechanisms, and most importantly, fills a gap that no other mechanism can reach. This niche of the Fund is critical, although there is not consistent understanding of the specifically feminist niche across all stakeholders. However, overall, in terms of filling a gap, the continuation and expansion of the Fund is critical.**

The Fund not only responds to needs at the grass-roots level in countries, but it does so by filling a gap no other UN mechanism addresses. However, the niche filled by the Fund has not yet been fully leveraged, or 'marketed', within the UN eco-system to its maximum potential. To fully maximise its potential, the Fund requires a more clearly articulated and more consistently understood strategic placement.

While the overall purpose of the Fund remains highly relevant, and the functions and outcomes of the Fund all remain, in and of themselves, relevant, clarity on the logic and cause and effect natures and interlinkages of the three defined Functions and six Outcomes is missing. The 10-year anniversary of the establishment of the Fund in 2026 provides an opportunity to review this situation. Based on this evaluation and other sources of information, such a review should encompass what the Fund actually does, how the Outcomes link through the Theory of Change to the logic of the Functions, and the overall framework for the Fund. This revision can seek to better align the framework of the Fund with good practices from the past decade and embed feminist principles at every level of action. In this respect, the evaluation reaffirms that one of the most critical features of the Fund, and the way it can operate despite the constraints of the UN system, is the feminist foundation of everything the Fund does including the way windows and funding mechanisms are designed, and the governance structure of the Fund.

This niche is a unique strength that can be better leveraged to accelerate and scale the impact of the Fund.

**CONCLUSION 2. The relationship between the WPHF and UN Women has both immense benefits and some challenges. This relationship is currently not viewed as the genuinely symbiotic bond that it could be, with some lack of clarity at both global and country levels and from both sides about the benefits of the relationship.**

Benefits of the relationship include the fact that UN Women is the conceptual and thematic home of WPHF, given the focus on women's participation, and in this regard WPHF normatively aligns with the design and practice of UN Women's own programmes. WPHF is proud of its partnership with UN Women as the host of WPHF's global secretariat, even as WPHF is a separate entity managed by MPTFO and governed by a global funding board.

For UN Women, the high visibility of WPHF projects can be seen as a benefit in terms of offering a level of humanitarian credibility to the Entity as a whole, including UN Women's own humanitarian programmes.

However, challenges to the relationship include the fact that, notwithstanding the entry of UN Women into IASC in 2022, UN Women systems and processes overwhelmingly reflect a risk-averse and slower development approach, rather than a nimble, localized, rapid response approach to delivery. Internal challenges for UN Women include the dependency of the Fund on UN Women country offices to support the management of projects, particularly as small WROs require more administrative and

reporting support than other partners, with a relatively limited budget provision for management costs.

Overall, these dynamics result in a relationship that has spent a decade trying to balance both benefits and challenges, for both WPHF and UN Women. Despite these efforts, the benefits of the relationship are not yet being fully maximized or even agreed upon, and unresolved challenges continue to create some small levels of frustration on both sides. The 10-year anniversary of the Fund offers the opportunity for a reset and a restatement of the symbiotic bond between both the host and the Fund.

## 4.2 Operational conclusion

**CONCLUSION 3. Governance structures of the Fund are feminist, respectful, inclusive, and highly effective. However, like most other UN entities, the Fund highlights challenges of the bureaucratic and risk-adverse overall processes of the UN ecosystem. Although this causes some issues for the Fund, it can manoeuvre in a flexible manner to allow the purpose of the Fund to be achieved. The Fund itself is the antithesis of what UN systems have become, which is funding large, well-established organizations with a proven track record which adhere to the UN's stringent compliance procedures.**

The Fund does not have a top-down, commanding structure: there is unanimous consensus that the Fund operates in meaningfully and genuine participatory and inclusive manner, and the Fund deserves utmost respect and credit for this. This is something that should be recognized, applauded, and replicated in other UN settings.

The Fund is also one of few UN entities that can truly claim adherence to the localization agenda at the most grass-roots level, being unique in its efforts to reach those WROs who cannot access other UN or international funding streams as they don't have the capacity to comply with strict regulations. The benefits of this are visible and impactful but cannot be seen through quantitative reporting only (see next conclusion).

## 4.3 Programmatic conclusions

**CONCLUSION 4. Effectiveness of the Fund's contributions to the WPS agenda is demonstrable. However, the lack of clarity around the logic and interlinkages of the functions, and the siloing of the outcome areas hinders the narrative of positive and demonstrable results.**

The effectiveness of the Fund's contribution to WPS can be seen at country level and has been highlighted in examples throughout this report. However, there isn't a sufficient global level qualitative and meaningful indicator framework from which countries can select allowing for country-level specificity and global consolidation of results. Disparate parts of the Fund, such as the Learning Hub, or conferences (i.e. Berlin) remain scattered and isolated pieces in terms of demonstrating overall impact. Overall metrics are impressive, but quantitative and qualitative indicators could be rationalized to (a) only have those that are useful; and (b) ensure that all metrics cumulatively combine to tell a compelling story of sustainable and transformative impact. This hinders the monitoring and reporting of effectiveness as a holistic whole and impacts the Fund's ability to tell a coherent narrative of the fundamentally transformative work that the WPHF undertakes.

**CONCLUSION 5. The Fund is facing some challenges in assessing and demonstrating sustainability of results, sustainability of WROs, and catalytic actions at country level.**

This challenging of attaining evidence about the sustainability of results at country level, and the current funding mechanism, which does not augment the capacity of WROs receiving WPHF funds to

the level necessary to go on to receive other UN (or non-UN) funding over a longer and sustained period.

The lack of a systematic ability to demonstrate sustainability of results includes the absence of indicators for longer-term measuring of impact, for example, around the institutional funding stream. Current metrics do not allow the Fund to see, and tell the story of, longer-term changes that it is almost certain the Fund is contributing towards.

## 5. Recommendations

The below recommendations are all targeted to WPHF Secretariat, within the authority and mandate of this evaluation. However, some of the recommendations include advocacy to other stakeholders for changes.

Recommendations are provided for each EQ, and sub-divided by strategic, operational, and programmatic levels, where relevant, aligning with the conclusions.

### EQ 1. RELEVANCE

#### **Recommendation 1. [Strategic] WPHF should develop a clear strategy to reframe the identity of the Fund and refocus the Fund entirely from a perspective grounded in feminist principles.**

The uniqueness of the Fund is its foundation of feminist principles.

Therefore, the Fund should review all aspects, including Functions and Objectives, and all documentation, to ensure that feminist principles apply in every statement, process, and operation, even where WPHF is strategically shaping its message based on audience and context.

- For example, firstly define and promote, where relevant, the notion of “feminist peace” – linking to a longer-term sustainability and building of social cohesion, rather than simply an absence of conflict. It is noted that the Fund is seen at country levels and by donors as being very much a Nexus Fund, which is not completely reflected in the title: this can be resolved not necessarily by changing the title, but by ensuring that the feminist definition of peace, including longer-term social cohesion and resilience (for which development is essential) is fully understood within and outside of the Fund, even where the actual word “feminist” is not explicitly articulated..
- Ensure all feminist principles are reinforced and clarified in all operational guidance, even where the actual word “feminist” is not explicitly articulated.

#### **Recommendation 2. [Strategic] While the WPHF has recently been reviewed, refined, and revised based on the findings of the 2019 MTR, the logic between Functions and Outcomes should be reviewed.**

The WPHF is hindered by a lack of consistent understanding and agreement about the logic between the Functions, between the Outcomes, and connecting the Outcomes to the Functions. A review of this logic and clear dissemination of it to all levels of WPHF would be useful.

- Firstly, the three functions do not exist at the same level in terms of cause and effect. Funding local WROs is the means through which silos can be broken down between humanitarian, peace and development and this is the way through which the Fund does this; Improving policy coherence is not such a visible outcome area of the Fund anymore (noting this was a more prominent area of intervention when the Fund was still Global Acceleration Instrument (GAI) for women, peace and security). The functions should be revised.
- Secondly, outcomes need review and clarity on how the outcomes interlink. Outcome 1 is generally considered to be a transversal, or supporting outcome to the other outcome areas, and should be revised as such.
  - Outcomes could be merged, simplified and revised for coherency and consistency.
  - All outcomes should be reviewed to ensure they are measuring results at outcome level and not results at output level (for example, results that focus solely on quantitative participation numbers without measuring the effects of that participation

are not, in reality, outcome level results.<sup>211</sup> outcome level results and not output level results.

- In the spirit of breaking silos, WPHF refine reporting so the connections between different outcome areas can be mapped and seen clearly. There is the potential to have projects that have a primary outcome, and then, also, subsequent related secondary outcomes.

## EQ 2. COHERENCE

**Recommendation 3. [Strategic] WPHF should consider the promotion and visibility of the Fund at global and country levels of the WPHF vis à vis UN Women and the Fund as a multi-partner entity which works across the UN system.**

There are both benefits and challenges to the close WPHF and UN Women relationship, but there are also other opportunities for the Fund as an MPTF within the UN system, working with other UN agencies as well as UN Women.

WPHF should develop a clear and final strategy for branding as a Multi-Agency Fund to include practical changes, such as a change of email address, reinforcing the independence of WPHF within the UN system while also recognizing the normative alignment with UN Women. This strategy should include time-bound and resource-allocated sub-strategies specifically to:

- Advocate with other UN agencies to be more visible as stakeholders in WPHF at country and global level.
- Recognize the work undertaken at country level by UN Women COs, AND recognizing the benefit to women and girls generally if UN Women humanitarian response is improved, so seeing this as a sub-goal of the WPHF and allowing for UN Women to learn and benefit from the Fund where possible.
- Advocate within UN Women regarding the level of risk necessary within systems for WPHF to achieve its purpose, and the benefits that come with this. Risk meaning allowing for failure and only funding those organisations that are tested and demonstrably can report effectively is the antithesis of the very purpose of this Fund.
- Develop a position to present paper, together with UN Women, on clarification of the relationship between WPHF and UN Women, specifying roles and contributions, including inputs and flexibility to respond to context specificities, monetization and articulation with own programme and strategies.

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<sup>211</sup> Please refer to Outcome 5.1 for more information: the evaluation recognizes that indicators for outcomes must be based on data that is realistic and feasible to collect, so the evaluation recommends a review of indicators to ensure actual outcomes can, to the extent possible, be measured, and a clear understand of where outcomes are being measured and where outputs are being measured. So, for example, reporting on participation numbers is generally viewed as an output, it is an immediate effect of an intervention under the sphere of control of the project / programme. The related outcome then is a change in behaviour (has the participation been meaningful? what changes have occurred because of that participation? Which should then ultimately lead to impact, being measurable systemic changes.



### EQ 3. EFFICIENCY

#### **Recommendation 4. [Operational] WPHF should review and invest in a more comprehensive and qualitative set of MEL metrics, indicators and reporting systems.**

While metrics are impressive, a refocus on a narrative that really tells the story of impact, while rationalizing administrative burden of reporting, could be useful.

WPHF should revise the MEL framework and indicators, and, wherever possible, move towards outcome and/or impact indicators and strengthen qualitative indicators more than quantitative indicators.<sup>212</sup>

The qualitative reporting gives much more compelling and powerful impact information, and the numbers can be confusing, and / or considered negligible within the wider context of humanitarian and peace funding structures, and / or lacking in meaningful significance.

Qualitative indicators could include, as examples:

- Feedback from country-level coordination mechanisms (i.e. clusters) re increased meaningful participation of WRO voices.
- Feedback from WRO's one-, two-, and three-years post WPHF funding on continued activities and engagement.

Once a few qualitative indicators are identified, WPHF should include these in annual reporting templates.

Other specific activities for reviewing the MEL framework and strategy include:

1. Establish an ongoing community of practice among managing entities to promote continuous exchange, learning and a mechanism to nourish the WPHF based on local context and experiences. This could build on focal point retreats and country coordination meetings to become a platform for continuous and ongoing informal discussion and support across countries.
2. Consider revised reporting templates, for annual WPHF country reporting, including less free-flowing narrative. Add specific questions aimed at understanding outcome level results and encouraging qualitative data that can be aggregated: 'What does this mean?' 'What will we change?' 'What are lessons?'
3. Introduce an annual update for WROs who received institutional funding for up to 5 years after the funding was received. Make this as easy as possible to complete, in whatever form works best depending on the context, as an update of what the WRO has continued to do.
4. Maximise use of data for feedback loop into programming, not just reporting, as much as is possible. For example, in WPHF Secretariat to develop systematic feedback mechanisms providing suggestions based on annual reports, and subsequent annual reports to include a section highlighting how feedback has been integrated into programming.
5. Make the purpose of reporting, and how reports are utilized clear to everyone working on WPHF projects. This should lead to a rationalization of reporting and communication of data. Ensure this is developed under the umbrella of a feminist utilisation focus, specifically for reducing burden on MEs and WROs.

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<sup>212</sup> This is already being considered by WPHF.

#### EQ4. EFFECTIVENESS

##### **Recommendation 5. [Strategic] WPHF should develop an operational plan and commitment for investing in quality, under an umbrella feminist funding strategy.**

For its longer-term continuation, the WPHF funding strategy could evolve to ensure that investing in quality is a paramount principle, including both length and amount of support provide to a country.

WPHF should review its funding policy to develop:

1. An explicit statement on how long support to a country will be provided, with a minimum window (for example, 3 years) regardless of change in circumstances (in line with triple nexus commitments). This should be supported by a clear business case return on investment (ROI) argument for setting up the processes and structures and the added value of continuing for a defined period, keeping the window open through the transition phase. Note, this links to the point in Recommendation 1, above, that the Fund is very much seen as a nexus fund by donors, and this should be leveraged for continued commitment.
2. Review the minimum funding level again, to ensure that support is impactful.
3. A feminist funding strategy, to continually map, and subsequently target, those donor governments who are moving towards feminist foreign policies, and particularly for unearmarked funds.

##### **Recommendation 6. [Operational] WPHF should review develop a standing operating procedure (SOP) with options for accelerating timelines for decision-making processes.**

At the country level, a review of the mechanisms for implementation of WPHF projects is required to streamline the process and maximize efficiencies. These would include:

1. A "cheat sheet" of pros and cons of government involvement in NSCs, against which countries can make an informed decision; and
2. A "no-delay clause" – i.e. rules to ensure that the NSC must convene within four weeks of the shortlisting submission to the ME and RCO and, if not possible, how decisions can be taken via email with X% of votes.

##### **Recommendation 7. [Programmatic] WPHF should conceptualize and develop operational guidance for LNOB, as it applies to the Fund. This should include:**

1. Developing a position paper on the meaning, implications of and outreach to drive a LNOB approach from a feminist perspective.
2. Further focus on the smallest and most disadvantaged women's organizations: develop, unpack existing strategies and good practices to facilitate this.
3. WPHF should have a statement on LNOB for CSOs and for advocacy for the Fund with other UN agencies.

#### EQ 5. EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

##### **Recommendation 8. [Programmatic] WPHF should develop a "Bridging the Gap" strategy, to address the challenge in sustainability highlighted in the findings and conclusions sections.**

One of the hindering factors to WPHF contributions to the WPS agenda resulting in sustainable changes is that WROs receiving funding from WPHF do not necessarily go on to receive sustained funding from other sources: Sustainability covers an array of factors but continued funding from other UN agencies and INGOs to WROs at the level that WPHF provides support is critical for continued voice of WROs in humanitarian and peace spaces.

Therefore, this strategy should be one of working up (seeing how WPHF can increase the capacity gained by WROs through WPHF support) and advocating for UN agencies to work down (providing exceptions to the normal compliance regulations through pre-agreed arrangements between WPHF and certain UN agencies). This would include:

1. Advocacy to 1—3 specific UN agencies to fund WROs “pre-approved” by WPHF.
2. Metrics to track not just 1st access to UN funds, but for WROs who have received WPHF funds, whether they have accessed other UN funding for up to five years afterwards – this should be implemented by WPHF in a way that is most convenient and least burdensome for WROs. Learn lessons from this, systematically follow-up and interview WROs who have received WPHF and then received further UN funds and track which UN agencies.
3. Consider different social accelerator models for WROs to achieve the level required for receiving UN funds.
4. Develop a strategy for a significant programme of support for country level CSO resource mobilization.

## Annexes

### Annex I. Full Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question and Sub-Questions	Indicators	Sources of information / Levels of analysis (2. portfolio analysis, 2. focus country case examples, 3. organizational analysis)
EQ1 [Relevance]. To what extent has the WPHF remained relevant in the evolving context of women’s peace and security since 2016?		
<p>1.1 Does the purpose and three functions of the WPHF remain relevant to the needs of women's rights organizations (WRO) involved in working across the triple nexus of humanitarian, development, and peace spheres?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence that breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance by investing in enhancing women’s engagement, leadership and empowerment remains relevant</li> <li>- evidence that addressing structural funding gaps for women’s participation in key phases across the HDP nexus remains relevant;</li> <li>- evidence that improving policy coherence and coordination by complementing existing financing instruments and promoting synergies across all actors remains relevant.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level (as provided by WPHF centrally) / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies, funding board members-</p>
<p>1.2 Does the framework of the WPHF, and particularly it's six stated outcomes, remain relevant to the needs of women's rights organizations (WRO) involved in working across the triple nexus of humanitarian, development, and peace spheres?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence that the outcomes of WPHF are all focus areas of local WRO across different context;</li> <li>- evidence that the fund aligns with needs as identified by WRO across different contexts;</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies, and FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p>

<p>1.3 Do the grants funded by the WPHF remain relevant to the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda as per the Security Council resolution 1325 and further developments such as the SDGs and the Grand Bargain commitments?</p>	<p>- evidence that there is continued alignment to existing and new / revised normative frameworks.</p>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) and global framework documentation / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey</p>
<p>1.4 Does the geographical scope and WPHF eligibility criteria for countries remain relevant and flexible given the crisis and conflict contexts globally?</p>	<p>- evidence of relevant coverage of existing and emerging crises and conflicts; - evidence of continued relevance of the theory of change in eligible countries and regions; - evidence of flexibility to responded to new, shifting, expanding, or changing conflicts and crises.</p>	<p><i>Level 1 and Level 3 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) and global framework documentation / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey</p>
<p>1.5 What are the recommendations to improve relevance of the WPHF?</p>	<p>-- suggestions, recommendations, and proposed changes, improvements or revisions from stakeholders</p>	<p>All stakeholder interviews + Evaluator analysis</p>
<p><b>Q2 [Coherence]. To what degree does WPHF maintain coherence with other interventions globally and at country level, including coherence and coordination with other stakeholders and donors?</b></p>		
<p>2.1 Is the WPHF complementary and / or aligned with other global initiatives and standards around WPS-HA?</p>	<p>- evidence that the WPHF at global level is complementarity to other mechanisms and initiatives for advancing WPS-HA; - evidence that WPHF grants at country level are aligned with other country level initiatives.</p>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies - if applicable</p>

<p>2.2 How has the Fund effectively positioned itself as a multi-agency Fund, and leveraged strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including across multiple UN agencies, at global, regional, and country levels?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence that WPHF partnerships are strategic, relevant, comprehensive, and impactful;</li> <li>-evidence that WPHF positions itself as a Fund partner for all UN agencies, beyond UN Women;</li> <li>- evidence that WPHF actively adds value to strategic partnerships.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews</p> <p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies, if applicable</p>
<p>2.3 Specifically relating to feminist principles, what is the level of ownership shown by the different stakeholders involved in the Fund, including Country Offices, WRO-grantees, and Board Members?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- perceptions as expressed by different stakeholder groups, disaggregated by group;</li> <li>- evidence of engagement, participation, and feedback of stakeholders in and to WPHF initiatives and the WPHF Secretariat;</li> <li>- evidence of pro-active and ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to ensure meaningful engagement and participation in WPHF strategy.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies, government - if applicable FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p> <p><i>Level 3 Analysis:</i> Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews</p>
<p>2.4 What are the recommendations to improve internal and external coherence?</p>	<p>-- suggestions, recommendations, and proposed changes, improvements or revisions from stakeholders</p>	<p>All stakeholder interviews, Evaluator analysis</p>
<p>EQ3 [Efficiency]: To what extent has the WPHF been efficient as a pooled fund for local women’s rights organizations?</p>		

<p>3.1 Do the Fund’s governance structure, processes, human resources, and operations remain efficient as the Fund has grown and expanded in reaching local WRO in a timely and flexible manner?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of process efficiency of calls for proposals and evaluation processes, including National Steering Committee processes and selection of grantees;</li> <li>- evidence across efficiency of transfers and grant making (role of MPTFO as Administrative Agent and Management Entities at the Country Level);</li> <li>- perception of efficiency by grantees, and perception that challenges are addressed efficiently at different levels.</li> <li>- quality of monitoring, evaluation and reporting of progress and results, particularly as the Fund has moved to institutional funding as well as programme funding.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and FGDs with members of grantee organizations  <i>Level 3 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (financial and operational documents) / Global Secretariat Interviews / Survey</p>
<p>3.2 Is the financing structure of the Fund efficient for effectively mobilizing critical resources from governments and the private sector towards its objectives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of sustained and/or increasing resources raised.</li> <li>- level of funding to local women’s rights organizations</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and grantees,  <i>Level 3 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (financial and operational documents) / Global Secretariat Interviews / MPTFO interviews / Survey</p>
<p>3.3 Has the WPHF effectively responds to new emergencies, conflict and/or crises as they arise?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of overage of crises with appropriate funding windows and mechanisms;</li> <li>- evidence of robust preparedness and horizon scanning;</li> <li>- evidence of efficient / sufficient speed of grant making process from crisis onset.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and FGDs with members of grantee organizations  <i>Level 3 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (financial and operational documents) / Global Secretariat Interviews / Survey</p>



<p>3.4 Does the financing structure of the fund efficiently increase funding for local WROs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of funding to local women’s rights organizations</li> <li>• Acceptability of the fund structure to stakeholders</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and FGDs with members of grantee organizations  <i>Level 3 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (financial and operational documents) / Global Secretariat Interviews /</p>
<p>3.5 What are the recommendations to improve efficiency in the funds processes, human resources and operations?</p>	<p>-- suggestions, recommendations, and proposed changes, improvements or revisions from stakeholders</p>	<p>All stakeholder interviews + Evaluator analysis</p>
<p><b>EQ4 [Effectiveness (of the Fund)]: To what extent has the implementation of initiatives and processes across WPHF funding windows been effective?</b></p>		
<p>4.1 Have governance structures, including respective roles and responsibilities, for the Fund remained effective for decision-making, which is transparent and timely, and participatory as per feminist principles as the Fund has grown?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of transparent and participatory decision-making by the WPHF Administrative Agent, Secretariat, Board, NSC and PUNOs/NUNOs;</li> <li>- stakeholder perception of timeliness, effectiveness, openness, transparency, and participatory-nature of decision-making.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic, operational, and financial documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p>
<p>4.2 Is the WPHF is effective in achieving its overall objectives and main three functions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of contribution to breaking silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance by empowering WRO across all spheres;</li> <li>-evidence of contribution to addressing structural funding gaps for women’s participation in crisis, peace and security;</li> <li>- evidence of contribution to improving policy coherence and coordination.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic, operational, and financial documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies</p>

<p>4.3 How effective has the WPHF been in increasing visibility and advocating for local women's rights organizations in WPS-HA spaces?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of contribution of WPHF towards increasing visibility of WRO in humanitarian spaces;</li> <li>'- evidence of contribution of WPHF towards increasing visibility of WRO in peace spaces;</li> <li>'- evidence of contribution of WPHF towards increasing visibility of WRO in security spaces;</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (reporting documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies</p>
<p>4.4 How effective have the two strategies of the Fund as articulated in the current Strategic Plan, being institutional funding, and global learning and coalition building, been effective to at contributing to the outcomes and ultimate goal of the Fund?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-evidence of specific areas of capacity that has been improved at WRO level through the Fund.</li> <li>- evidence of increased institutional funding for WRO through the Fund.</li> <li>- evidence on the implementation and actions taken by WPHF on the strategy or efforts made towards the mainstreaming of strategic priorities.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (reporting documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff and FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p>
<p>4.5 What are the recommendations to improve effectiveness in the implementation of initiatives and processes across WPHF?</p>	<p>-- suggestions, recommendations, and proposed changes, improvements or revisions from stakeholders</p>	<p>All stakeholder interviews + Evaluator analysis</p>
<p>EQ5 [Effectiveness and Sustainability - programmatic]: To what degree have results to date of grants shown progress towards the six outcomes of the Fund and what is the expected sustainability, vis à vis the overarching goal of the Fund?</p>		

<p>5.1 What key results have been achieved across WPHF outcomes?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 1 - enabling environment for WPS commitments;</li> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 2 - conflict prevention;</li> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 3 - humanitarian and crisis response;</li> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 4 - conflict resolution;</li> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 5 - protection of women and girls;</li> <li>- evidence of contributions reported by grantees towards outcome area 6 - peacebuilding and recovery;</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (reporting documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies, and FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p>
<p>5.2 Have WPHF functions and initiatives facilitated (a) the sustainability of results achieved by grants, and (b) normative changes and local ownership at country and CSO level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- evidence of proportion of gains achieved through institutional funding that are sustained over time;</li> <li>- evidence of capacity building and advocacy that supports sustained gains;</li> <li>- evidence of continuation of achieved changes following grant completion.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Level 1 Analysis:</i> Doc review at global level (strategic documents) / Global Secretariat, Funding Board and Donor Interviews / Survey  <i>Level 2 Analysis:</i> Doc review at country level / country visits and KIIs at country level, including managing entity staff, other UN agencies and FGDs with members of grantee organizations</p>
<p>5.3 What are the recommendations to improve sustainability of the results achieved by grants of the Fund?</p>	<p>-- suggestions, recommendations, and proposed changes, improvements or revisions from stakeholders</p>	<p>All stakeholder interviews + Evaluator analysis</p>

## Annex II. Full List of Interviewees

### Global interviews

	Name	Position	Organisation	Type of Organisation
1	Erica Stillo	WPHF Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
2	Maria Krisch	Programme Lead	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
3	Sophie Gisscard D'Estaing	Programme Coordinator	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
4	Achille Sommo	RRW Window Lead	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
5	Andrea Hendrickson	Operations Programme Specialist	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
6	Matthew Rullo	Communications and Advocacy Specialist/Officer in Charge (acting)	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
7	Emilie Vidal	Programme Lead WPHF-Global L-HUB	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
8	Katrin Fischer	Programme Lead (Yemen, Syria, Uganda, DRC)	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
9	Sarra Sfaxi	Programme Analyst	WPHF Secretariat	WPHF
10	Dolores Infante-Canibano	Human Rights Officer	UN OHCHR	UN Agency
11	Chian Yem Lim	Human Rights Officer	UN OHCHR	UN Agency
12	Paivi Kannisto	Chief, UNW Peace & Security Unit	UN Women	UN Agency
13	Henia Dakkak	Chair of Board, Head of Policy and Liaison Unit at UNFPA	UNFPA	UN Agency
14	Rahel Beigel	Civil Society Board Member and Director of Women's Refugee Commission	Women's Refugee Commission	UN Agency
15	Eva Saenz	MPTFO-Administrative Agent (UNDP Fund Portfolio Manager)	UNDP MPTFO	UN Agency
16	Rachel Dore Weeks	Executive Director Office (EO)	EDO	UN
17	Noah Visky	Assistant Desk Officer	Crisis prevention, stabilization and peacebuilding, Germany	Government
18	Lieneh Modalal	Desk Officer	Crisis prevention, stabilization and peacebuilding, Germany	Government

19	Pia van Ackern	Desk Officer	Crisis prevention, stabilization and peacebuilding, Germany	Government
20	Signe Guro Gilen	Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security	Government of Norway, Section for UN Policy	Government
21	Krista House	Canada, First Secretary for Political Affairs at Permanent Mission of Canada	Board Member + Gov't of Canada	Government
22	Klara Backman	Advocacy Advisor	Kvinna til Kvinna	Civil Society Organisation
23	Clara Souffir	Protection Officer	Agir Ensemble	Civil Society Organisation
24	Flora Stevens	Head of Protection	Agir Ensemble	Civil Society Organisation
25	Maja Vitas	GPPAC, RRW Partner	GPPAC	Civil Society Organisation
26	Anne Kwakkenboz	CORDAID, RRW Partner	CORDAID	Civil Society Organisation

### In-country Interviews

	Name	Position	Organisation	Location (Country)	Type of Organisation
1	Lucio Severo	PME Coordinator, WPHF Focal Point	UN Women	Colombia	UN Women
2	Carlos Martínez	Specialist of the Secretariat for Competitive Funds	UN Women	Colombia	UN Women
3	Rocío Guerrero	Financial manager of the Secretariat for Competitive Funds	UN Women	Colombia	UN Women
4	Yureli Ariza	Administrative manager of the Secretariat for Competitive Funds	UN Women	Colombia	UN Women
5	Silvia Arias	National Officer for the Women Peace and Security Programmes	UN Women	Colombia	UN Women
6	Laura Martínez	Project acceleration	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
7	Sarah Guerrero	Gender and humanitarian action	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
8	Isabel Legarda	Pro-defenders project	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
9	Daniel Salcedo	PME	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women

10	Danar Martínez	Koica Project	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
11	Mauricio Castel	Commercialization	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
12	Maribel Muñoz	Migration and human mobility	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
13	Diana Carolina Hidalgo	Coordinator	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
14	Diana Moreno	Communications	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
15	Sandra Ximena Dorado	Young women	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
16	Marce Cuero	Violence prevention	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
17	Martha Sanchis	Administrative Assistant	UN Women subregional office Nariño	Colombia	UN Women
18	Alice Beccaro	Coordinator	Multidonor Fund	Colombia	UN
19	Luz Marina Gallego	Founder and National Coordinator	Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres	Colombia	Network
20	Andrea Perilla	External relations	CODHES	Colombia	CSO Partner
21	Mercedes Álvarez	External relations	CODHES	Colombia	CSO Partner
22	María Cecilia de la Rosa	Board of Directors	CENTRAD	Colombia	CSO Partner
23	Marlen Díaz	Logistical and administrative support	CENTRAD	Colombia	CSO Partner
24	Susana Mejía	Coordinator	Red Nacional de Mujeres	Colombia	CSO Partner
25	Andrea Riascos	Directora	Corporación Ocho de Marzo	Colombia	CSO Partner
26	Juliana Pareño	Project coordinator	Corporación Ocho de Marzo	Colombia	CSO Partner
27	María Cristina Burgos	Technical coordinator	Surcos de Vida	Colombia	CSO Partner

28	Alejandra Pazmiño	Legal representative	Surcos de Vida	Colombia	CSO Partner
29	Gabby Narvaez	Director	Fundem	Colombia	CSO Partner
30	Leny Viviana Mora	Legal representative	COPDESARRO LLO	Colombia	CSO Partner
31	Ericka Guerrero	Director of the "Patás Arriba" House	COPDESARRO LLO	Colombia	CSO Partner
32	Mayra Enriquez	Programme specialist	Hombres en Marcha	Colombia	CSO Partner
33	Fabio Romero	Director	Hombres en Marcha	Colombia	CSO Partner
34	Marcia Planeada	Monitoring and evaluation	Hombres en Marcha	Colombia	CSO Partner
35	Juliana Maya	Project coordinator	Flor de Kinde	Colombia	CSO Partner
36	Pedro Antonio Ortega	Legal representative	Flor de Kinde	Colombia	CSO Partner
37	Ingrid Joana Rodríguez	President	Consejo rescate Las Varas	Colombia	CSO Partner
38	Laura Maribel Cortez	Member	Consejo rescate Las Varas	Colombia	CSO Partner
39	Candelaria	Member	Consejo rescate Las Varas	Colombia	CSO Partner
40	Eliana Ramírez	Member	Corporación Yo Puedo	Colombia	CSO Partner
41	Alexandra Contreras	Administrative support	Corporación Yo Puedo	Colombia	CSO Partner
42	Viviana Palacios	Legal representative	Corporación Yo Puedo	Colombia	CSO Partner

43	Denis Valac	WPHF Project Coordinator, WPHF Focal Point	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
44	Daniela Dutca	WPHF Officer	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
45	Evghenia Hiora	Project Officer	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
46	Diana Guzan	WPHF Associate	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
47	Ludmila Bocsanean	WPHF Associate	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
48	Sabine Ebner	Programme Analyst	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency



49	Dominika Stojanoska	UN Women Country Representative	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
50	Olesa Simion	Communications Officer	UN Women	Moldova	UN Agency
51	Diego Nardi	Inter-Agency Coordination Officer	UNHCR	Moldova	UN Agency
52	Simon Springett	United Nations Resident Coordinator	UN	Moldova	UN
53	Merle Kreibaum	Head of Cooperation	Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany	Moldova	Government
54	Liliana Palihovici	President	Isitutum Virtuetes Civilis	Moldova	CSO Partner
55	Gabriela Iordan	Project Coordinator	Isitutum Virtuetes Civilis	Moldova	CSO Partner
56	Octavian Bratusin	Training Programme Coordinator	Isitutum Virtuetes Civilis	Moldova	CSO Partner
57	Ecaterina Mardarovi ci	Executive Director	Women Political Club	Moldova	CSO Partner
58	Oxana Buzovici	Project Coordinator	Unity for Equality and Health	Moldova	CSO Partner
59	Irina Goreacea	Consultant	Unity for Equality and Health	Moldova	CSO Partner
60	Elena Sirbu	Director	ROMNI	Moldova	CSO Partner
61	Marina Afanas	Communication Specialist	The Moldova Project	Moldova	CSO Partner
62	Viorica Cerbusca	Director	NIKA-Generation	Moldova	CSO Partner
63	Valentina Bodrug Lungu	President	Gender Centru	Moldova	CSO Partner
64	Alina Cebotari	Programme Coordinator	Femi pentru Femi	Moldova	CSO Partner
65	Irina Revin	President	AEFL	Moldova	CSO Partner
66	Elena Meseat	Economical Programme's Coordinator	AEFL	Moldova	CSO Partner
67	Diana Cebotari	Director	HELP	Moldova	CSO Partner
68	Ludmila Iachim	Executive Director	Motivatie	Moldova	CSO Partner
69	Tatiana Jaloba	Executive Director	Agency of Innovation and Development (Transnistria)	Transnistria (Moldova)	CSO Partner
70	Zinaida Emilianova	Project Coordinator	Agency of Innovation and Development (Transnistria)	Transnistria (Moldova)	CSO Partner

71	Eiena Sinica	Coordinator	Agency of Innovation and Development (Transnistria)	Transnistria (Moldova)	CSO Partner
72	Nina Lozinschi	Member	Platform for Gender Equality	Moldova	Network
73	Adriana Zaslavet	Member	Platform for Gender Equality	Moldova	Network
74	Veronica Lupu	Member	Platform for Gender Equality	Moldova	Network
75	Olga Patlati	Member	Platform for Gender Equality	Moldova	Network
76	Natalia Arhipcenko	Founder	Ukrainian Women Refugee Network	Moldova	Network
77	Valentina Milasenko	Founder	Ukrainian Women Refugee Network	Moldova	Network
78	Elena Ciupricova	Founder	Ukrainian Women Refugee Network	Moldova	Network
79	Iluiana Zencenko	Founder	Ukrainian Women Refugee Network	Moldova	Network
80	Ana Socur	Founder	Ukrainian Women Refugee Network	Moldova	Network

81	Isabella Bwiire	Programme Officer, Monitoring, Evaluation and Communication	UN Women	Uganda	UN Agency
82	Brian Mwinamura	Finance Officer	UN Women	Uganda	UN Agency
83	Kathryn Wilkes	Gender Advisor (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Coordinator and Human Rights Focal Point)	UN Women	Uganda	UN Agency
84	Adekemi Ndieli	Deputy Country Representative	UN Women	Uganda	UN Agency
85	Diana Oroma	Project Officer WPS	Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC)	Uganda	CSO Partner
86	Jennifer Nalubega	Programme Manager	Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA)	Uganda	CSO Partner
87	Naumy Mbareeb	Executive Director	Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA)	Uganda	CSO Partner
88	Naigwe Claire	Advocacy & Communication	Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA)	Uganda	CSO Partner
89	Michelle Nakiwu	Drop-In Centre Nurse	Women's Organisation Network for Human Rights Advocacy (WONETHA)	Uganda	CSO Partner

90	Goretti Amuriat	Programme Manager Gender and ICT Policy Advocacy	Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)	Uganda	CSO Partner
91	Esther Nyapendi	Technical Support Officer	Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)	Uganda	CSO Partner
92	Letowon Saitoti Abadi	Senior Technical Support Officer	Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)	Uganda	CSO Partner
93	Iribagiza David	Programme Manager Information Sharing and Networking	Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)	Uganda	CSO Partner
94	Mariam Nakibule	Finance and Administration	Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET)	Uganda	CSO Partner
95	Kusemei erwa Ismail	Executive Director	Mid-western Region Anti-corruption Coalition (MIRAC)	Uganda	CSO Partner
96	Byamukama Solomon	Legal Officer	Mid-western Region Anti-corruption Coalition (MIRAC)	Uganda	CSO Partner
97	Bategeka Jolly	Programme Officer	Mid-western Region Anti-corruption Coalition (MIRAC)	Uganda	CSO Partner
98	Kyaligonza Betty	Accountant Assistant	Meeting Point Hoima (MPH)	Uganda	CSO Partner
99	Kyalisiima Monica	Accountant	Meeting Point Hoima (MPH)	Uganda	CSO Partner
100	Nizeylmana Vallenge	Programme / Project Officer	Meeting Point Hoima (MPH)	Uganda	CSO Partner
101	Ayebazibwe Allen	Executive Director	Umbrella of Hope Initiative (UHOPI)	Uganda	CSO Partner
102	Evelyn Hope	Programme coordinator	Umbrella of Hope Initiative (UHOPI)	Uganda	CSO Partner
103	Dranimva Patrick	Head of Programmes	Amani Initiative	Uganda	CSO Partner
104	Florence Amaguru	Child adolescents and youths Programme Coordinator	Amani Initiative	Uganda	CSO Partner
105	Nixon Ochatre	Head of Strategy and Partnership	Amani Initiative	Uganda	CSO Partner

### Country Online Interviews

Name	Position	Organisation	Location (Country)	Type of Orga
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1	Théodore Bahimba	Chef de projet Femmes, Paix et Sécurité (WPHF Focal Point)	UN Women	DRC	UN Agency
2	Catherine Odimba	Deputy Director	UN Women	DRC	UN Agency
3	Jean Bahati	Country Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Specialist	UN Women	DRC	UN Agency
4	Gloria Mwenge	Finance and Administrative Officer	UN Women	DRC	UN Agency
5	Eyere Apek Chérie-Fa	Directrice Exécutive	Association des jeunes filles et femmes autochtones engagées dans la protection de l'environnement et la lutte contre la pauvreté féminine (APFE)	DRC	CSO Partner
6	Nelly Mbangi	Directrice Exécutive	Sauti Ya Mama Mukongomani (SMM)	DRC	CSO Partner
7	Félicité	Directrice Pouvincial de FFP du Kasai Central	Fondation Femme Plus (FFP)	DRC	CSO Partner

8	Hiba Abbani	Programme Analyst Monitoring and Capacity Building, WPHF Focal Point	UN Women	Lebanon	UN Agency
9	Olivia Schmitz	Planning, Coordination and Resource Mobilization Specialist	UN Women	Lebanon	UN Agency
10	Nancy Nahhas	Programme Assistant	UN Women	Lebanon	UN Agency
11	Josephine Zgheib	President	Auberge Beity Association	Lebanon	CSO Partner
12	Jumana Billeh	Director	Auberge Beity Association	Lebanon	CSO Partner
13	Lina Jarrous	Communication and Advocacy Specialist	Seeds	Lebanon	CSO Partner
14	Nada Anid	Executive Director	Madanyat for Equality.	Lebanon	CSO Partner
15	Lama Amine	Head of Arts	Seenaryo	Lebanon	CSO Partner
16	Hiba Hussein	Country Manager	Seenaryo	Lebanon	CSO Partner
17	Siel Devos	Programme Manager	Seenaryo	Lebanon	CSO Partner

18	Jonas Gregory Perez	WPHF Focal Point	UN Women	Philippines	UN Women
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19	Jhing Mejia	Programme Associate	UN Women	Philippines	UN Women
20	Nery Ronatay	Team Leader for WPS Team	UN Women	Philippines	UN Women
21	Gilbert Guevarra	M&E Specialist	UN Women	Philippines	UN Women

22	Grace Hauranieh	Programme Operations Specialist, WPHF Focal Point	UNFPA	Syria	UN Agency
23	Omar Ballan	Assistant Representative	UNFPA	Syria	UN Agency
24	Ahmad Turkmani	Quality and Development Manager	Sanad Youth for Development Foundation	Syria	CSO Partner
25	Yousef Alhayek	CEO of Council	Syria Youth Council	Syria	CSO Partner
26	Ali Ismaeel	Project Manager	Syria Youth Council	Syria	CSO Partner

27	Roman Sheiko	Project Coordination Analyst, WPHF Focal Point	UN Women	Ukraine	UN Agency
28	Tetyana Kudina	Programme Coordinator	UN Women	Ukraine	UN Agency
29	Halyna Skipalska	Director	Ukrainian Foundation for Public Health (UFPH)	Ukraine	CSO Partner
30	Iryna Rubis	Head	Pislyazavtra	Ukraine	CSO Partner

## Annex III. Full List of Documents Reviewed

### Country documents

1. Colombia, WPHF Annual Report 2020, 2021
2. Colombia, WPHF Annual Report 2021, 2022
3. Colombia, WPHF Annual Report 2022, 2023
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8. DRC, WPHF Regular Annual Report 2023, 2024
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12. DRC, WPHF-Spotlight: Annual and end of programme report, 2024
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15. Philippines, WPHF Annual Report 2022, 2023
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17. Syria, WPHF Annual Report 2023, 2024
18. Uganda, WPHF Annual Report 2021, 2022
19. Uganda, WPHF Annual Report 2023, 2024
20. Uganda, WPHF-COVID-19 ERW Report July 2020 - Dec. 2021, 2022
21. Uganda, WPHF-Spotlight Partnership Annual Report 2021, 2022
22. Uganda, WPHF-Spotlight Partnership Annual Report 2022, 2023
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24. Ukraine, WPHF Annual Report 2022, 2023
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1. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, The state of women human rights defenders, 2023
2. UN Secretary General, Women and peace and security: report of the Secretary-General, 2023
3. WPHF, 2019 Annual Report, June 2020
4. WPHF, 2020 Annual Report, 2021
5. WPHF, 2021 Annual Report, 2022
6. WPHF, 2022 Annual Report, 2023
7. WPHF, 2023 Annual Global Report, 2024
8. WPHF, 2023 Annual Project Narrative Progress Report. WPHF Global Learning Hub (L-HUB), 21 March 2024
9. WPHF, Annual CSO Survey on WPHF Global Learning Hub (L-HUB) Initiatives, 2022
10. WPHF, Board Meeting, 11 May 2022
11. WPHF, Board Meeting, 2 March 2022
12. WPHF, Board Meeting, 27 June 2022
13. WPHF, Capacity Building Strategy, January 2023
14. WPHF, CSO Survey on WPSHA, August 2022
15. WPHF, CSO Survey on WPSHA, June 2021
16. WPHF, Dashboard, December 2023
17. WPHF, Global CSO Survey Brief, 28 April 2023
18. WPHF, Global CSO Survey Brief 2023, May 2024
19. WPHF, Global Learning Hub (L-HUB) 2021 Annual Report, 2022

20. WPHF, Global Women's Forum for Peace & Humanitarian Action (GWF 2023), May 2023
21. WPHF, Learning Hub (L-HUB) 2022 Annual Report, 2023
22. WPHF, MTR Report Summary, 2019
23. WPHF, MTR Report, December 2019
24. WPHF, MTR. Burundi case study, December 2019
25. WPHF, MTR. Implementation status of Management Response, 3 November 2023
26. WPHF, Operations Manual Annexes, November 2023
27. WPHF, Operations Manual, November 2023
28. WPHF, Project Document, January 2020
29. WPHF, Rapid Response Window (RRW) Unit 2021 Annual Report, 29 March 2022
30. WPHF, Rapid Response Window (RRW) Unit 2022 Annual Report, 24 March 2023
31. WPHF, Rapid Response Window (RRW) Unit 2023 Annual Report, 27 March 2024
32. WPHF, Rapid Response Window Board meeting, 22 April 2022
33. WPHF, Secretariat 2020 Annual Report, 31 March 2021
34. WPHF, Secretariat 2021 Annual Report, 29 March 2022
35. WPHF, Secretariat 2022 Annual Report, 29 March 2023
36. WPHF, Secretariat 2023 Annual Report, 21 March 2024
37. WPHF, Secretariat Project Document 2020-2024, November 2023
38. WPHF, Spotlight Initiative. Two-page Summary, 2022
39. WPHF, Strategic Plan 2023-2025, 2023
40. WPHF, The WPHF Global Learning Hub Brochure, June 2023
41. WPHF, Window on Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) 2022 Annual Report, 28 March 2023
42. WPHF, Window on Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD) 2023 Annual Report, 27 March 2024
43. WPHF, Working Level Funding Board Meeting, 12 December 2022