UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

30 YEARS

UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030

Resourcing Resilience. Delivering Results. Realizing Rights.
For every woman and girl to live free from violence.



UN WOMEN

FOR ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

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Foreword

Three decades ago, the international community took a decisive step at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing: it called for the creation of a United Nations trust fund dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. Established by the General Assembly in 1996, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls (UN Trust Fund) became the first and remains the only General Assembly–mandated system-wide pooled financing and accountability mechanism devoted exclusively to this goal.

Today, as we look towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's final horizon, the UN Trust Fund's mission is more vital than ever. Violence against women and girls persists at alarming levels, intensified by conflict, displacement, climate and economic crises, and backlash against gender equality. Yet we also know that change is possible. When women's organizations are resourced, when women's organizations have sustained and flexible support, and when the global community acts in solidarity, violence can be prevented, lives can be transformed, and rights can be realized.

This Strategic Plan (2026–2030) sets out a bold, practical and feminist-informed pathway to achieve that mission. It reaffirms the UN Trust Fund's unique role within the United Nations system: a bridge between Member States, multilateral partners and the women's organizations at the front lines of change. It strengthens the UN Trust Fund's commitment to quality, long-term funding, organizational resilience and care-centred partnerships that enable women's and feminist movements to thrive.

UN Women is proud to administer the UN Trust Fund and to champion its inter-agency, multi-stakeholder governance model that exemplifies the United Nations system at its best: inclusive, accountable, and grounded in human rights. I invite all Member States, partners and allies to join us in turning commitments into action and resources into results – ensuring that every woman and girl, everywhere, can live free from violence.

Sima Bahous

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women

Abbreviations

AI	artificial intelligence
Beijing+30	2025 Political Declaration marking the thirtieth anniversary of Beijing
CSO	civil society organization
EVAW/G	ending violence against women and girls
GEAP	Gender Equality Acceleration Plan
GPAC	General Programme Advisory Committee
LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and others
ODA	official development assistance
RPAC	Regional Programme Advisory Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UN Trust Fund	UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAW/G	violence against women and girls
WLOs	women-led organization
WOs	women's organization
WROs	women's rights organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The UN Trust Fund and its Strategic Plan

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls (UN Trust Fund) is the **only General Assembly–mandated, system-wide, inter-agency, pooled financing and accountability mechanism** dedicated exclusively to ending violence against women and girls.

Established in 1996 by General Assembly Resolution 50/166, following the Fourth World Conference on Women, the UN Trust Fund institutionalized the demands of women's and feminist movements and the commitments of Member States – by embedding the elimination of violence against women and girls as a standing United Nations priority.

This Strategic Plan sets the direction of the UN Trust Fund for the period 2026 to 2030. It outlines the UN Trust Fund's mandate, vision, mission and values. It describes the need and opportunity for action and agility, and defines key priorities for advancing the elimination of violence against women and girls. The Strategic Plan serves as the UN Trust Fund's framework for decision-making and measuring performance.

Guided by principles of inclusion, transparency and evidence-informed design, the Strategic Plan was developed through a participatory process drawing on evaluations, surveys and practice-based knowledge, and informed by consultations with 165 stakeholders. Women's organizations were central to shaping the analysis and priorities, ensuring that the voices and realities of women and girls most affected by violence are at the heart of the strategy.

Vision and mission

The UN Trust Fund's vision is a world where **all** women and girls live free from all forms of violence, able to exercise their rights, voice, and agency. Its mission is to ensure that quality funding and comprehensive support reach those driving change, especially women's organizations; to support other partners to accelerate progress; to generate evidence, advocate and convene partners to strengthen the global ending violence against women and girls ecosystem; and to uphold accountability for the right of every woman and girl to live free from *all forms* of violence.

Proven impact and a model for UN80

After three decades, the UN Trust Fund stands as a proven, grant-making mechanism. It has mobilized more than US$ 250 million from nearly 40 Member States and supported 725 initiatives in 140 countries and territories to drive transformative, evidence-based action to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

The UN Trust Fund, administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) – operationalizes United Nations commitments across humanitarian, development and peace contexts. Its model – delivering quality funding, strengthening learning, evidence and practice-based knowledge, and driving convening and advocacy for movement building and system-wide accountability – exemplifies the UN80 vision.

Why now? Urgency and opportunity

The right of women and girls to live a life free from violence is universal and inalienable, grounded in binding international human rights instruments and reaffirmed by Member States for decades. Yet violence against women and girls remains one of the most pervasive human rights and health emergencies.

Grounded in structural inequality and sustained by discrimination, impunity and patriarchal norms, violence against women and girls erodes rights, undermines peace and blocks sustainable development.

Nearly one in three women worldwide have reported experiencing violence, though pervasive underreporting masks the true scale. Harmful practices such as early, forced and child marriage and female genital mutilation persist world over. Femicide is rising – a woman was killed every ten minutes by an intimate partner or family member in 2023.

Women and girls who are structurally marginalized – on the basis of Indigeneity, disability, sexual or gender identity or expression, race, or forced displacement – are disproportionately affected, facing both higher risks of violence and greater barriers to protection, services and justice.

In 2026, risks are intensifying as violence escalates in contexts of polycrisis – where conflict, displacement, poverty, climate shocks and democratic backsliding intersect – compounded by technology-facilitated abuse, emerging AI-powered threats, and a coordinated global backlash that is shrinking civic space.

And yet, the evidence is clear: ending violence against women and girls is achievable. Prevention works. Survivor-centred services save lives. Policy and legal frameworks reduce violence. But they must be adequately resourced, sustained over time and adapted to context.

The global funding gap

Women's organizations are facing acute funding pressures. Their share of official development assistance (ODA) – already below 0.1 per cent of ODA gender equality funding – is declining and becoming increasingly unpredictable.

Despite decades of political commitments, the quantity and quality of funding for the prevention of gender-based violence remain profoundly misaligned with the scale and urgency of the crisis, and funding models remain insufficient.

UN Trust Fund global demand data reflect this funding gap: annual requests for support exceed available resources many times over, leaving the vast majority of demand unfunded.

Data reveal a persistent disconnect between stated commitments and the scale of investment required to address the crisis. This underresourcing has consequences. Prevention efforts are fragmented and short-term; essential, specialist services for survivors remain unavailable or overstretched in many contexts; and accountability systems – including laws, policies and financing frameworks – are unevenly implemented and weakly enforced. The result is a cycle in which violence persists, escalates during crises, and disproportionately harms those already facing structural marginalization.

This moment must be seen as a time of urgency. Member States have renewed commitments to long-term, predictable and sustainable funding for gender equality, including stronger support for efforts to end violence against women and girls. The United Nations is advancing system-wide reforms (UN80) that promote pooled financing, shared responsibility and strengthened accountability. These reforms accompany growing recognition that resources must be directed where they can have the greatest impact across prevention, services and accountability – particularly at national and local levels.

Turning commitments into concrete, coordinated action is now essential. A failure to do so will further widen the gap between political ambition and lived reality at the expense of women's and girls' lives, safety, freedom and hard-won gains in human rights, gender equality and democracy.

Intensifying efforts to deliver impact

By 2030, the UN Trust Fund aims to achieve the following impact: more women and girls – especially those most structurally marginalized – live free from all forms of violence, stigma and discrimination across humanitarian, development and peace contexts. This impact will be underpinned by two complementary levels of results – **Thematic Results Areas**, which describe the substantive changes the UN Trust Fund seeks to advance, in partnership with grantees, in ending violence against women and girls – across prevention, access to services and accountability; and **Strategic Results Areas**, which describe how the UN Trust Fund, as a General Assembly–mandated, system-wide, inter-agency, pooled financing and accountability mechanism, will deliver these results – through quality funding, learning and evidence, and convening and advocacy.

To deliver these results, the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 **will intensify efforts in the following areas of work**.

- **Quality funding for all grants:** Every grant provides core, flexible funding for organizational resilience alongside programmatic funding. All grants are for a minimum of four years, with aspirations to extend funding to six-plus years.

- **Comprehensive, tailored support model:** A holistic wraparound model – providing tailored accompaniment, peer learning, well-being resources and advocacy visibility – is part of *every partnership*, establishing the UN Trust Fund as "more than a donor" and strengthening the organizational resilience of partners, particularly those in volatile, high-risk, and crisis-affected settings.
- **Civil society at the centre of governance:** Structural representation across advisory and oversight bodies ensures women's and feminist movements shape priorities and decisions.
- **A globally dispersed Secretariat closer to partners:** With four regional hubs (Bangkok, Istanbul, Panama City and Nairobi), the UN Trust Fund team is positioned closer to partners and contexts – enhancing responsiveness, cost-effectiveness, and front-line impact. The hubs are supported by headquarters in Bonn, Germany, and a strategically located satellite office in New York, United States of America.
- **Strategic prioritization in a constrained funding environment:** Based on evidence that resources will not meet demand, the UN Trust Fund will make explicit prioritization choices, directing funds where emerging risks, structural marginalization and exclusionary funding patterns converge. This could include, for example, efforts to address technology-facilitated and other emerging forms of violence, and violence linked to climate change and crisis contexts; adolescent-focused approaches; and integrated approaches that enhance women's economic and social empowerment as part of broader violence-prevention and response efforts.
- **More agile and accessible grant-making:** Annual grant-giving, open Calls for Proposals, strategic thematic windows and simplified multilingual processes aim to lower barriers for small and emerging organizations.
- **Leave No One Behind and impact across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** A twin-track Leave No One Behind approach prioritizes structurally marginalized women and girls while mainstreaming intersectionality across all grants. This advances progress across multiple SDGs and catalyses progress across the 2030 Agenda.
- **Learning and evidence for impact:** The UN Trust Fund will continue efforts with grantee partners to co-create a new definition of impact – one that recognizes impact, progress and success will look different in different contexts and that can be used as essential evidence to inform policy, advocacy and accountability across diverse settings.
- **Enhanced role in global funding, learning and system-wide accountability:** Leveraging its unique global evidence base – from Calls for Proposals, portfolio monitoring, the evaluation library, and mandated reporting – the UN Trust Fund will strengthen system-wide learning coordination and accountability on ending violence against women and girls. This includes analysing funding demand, gaps and results to inform funding strategies, support coordinated action and advance a more coherent United Nations-wide funding framework to close the global funding gap.

Together, these efforts position the UN Trust Fund as both a strategic funder and a system-level catalyst, linking funding, evidence, learning and advocacy to deliver impact at scale.

Accelerating our partnership – a call for joint action

The UN Trust Fund has a distinct and proven offer in global efforts to end violence against women and girls. It bridges global commitments, front-line realities and locally led solutions, translating pooled financing into collective power and global partnership, and directing resources where they have the greatest impact. Positioned within key multilateral processes – including the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council – the UN Trust Fund connects normative commitments with sustained financing for implementation on the ground.

This Strategic Plan is both an offer and a call to action to Member States, United Nations entities, civil society, and allies, to join this partnership – to resource what works, strengthen resilience where it matters most, and partner with women's and feminist movements worldwide. Through collective commitment and long-term investment, we can realize the right of all women and girls to live free from violence.

1

THE UN TRUST FUND AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2026–2030



1.1. About the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls

The United Nations system-wide fund to end violence against women and girls – bridging Member States, United Nations entities, and women's movements to turn commitments into results.

The UN Trust Fund was established by General Assembly Resolution 50/166 as a landmark outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.

The Resolution requested the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator in consultation with the Secretary-General to establish a trust fund within the then United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to support national, regional, and international efforts – by governments, UN and civil society – to eliminate violence against women. The creation of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Girls (UN Trust Fund) institutionalized the demands and leadership of women's and feminist movements, United Nations officials and Member States. It marked the first time the United Nations formally made ending violence against women and girls a system-wide priority.

General Assembly mandate

The UN Trust Fund's mandate is clear and enduring: to mobilize and coordinate pooled resources across – and on behalf of – the United Nations system to support national, regional and global initiatives to end violence against women and girls, anchoring prevention, sustained resourcing and accountability where responsibility lies.

Since its creation, more than 40 Member States have contributed resources to advance this mandate.

The UN Trust Fund was established with the capacity to support a wide range of actors. It has primarily supported civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly women's rights organizations (WROs), recognizing they are among the most impactful yet underresourced drivers of change. It has also supported government-led and United Nations joint programmes that have been co-designed with civil society and that strengthen accountability, policy implementation and 'whole-of-nation' approaches while ensuring women's organizations' role as central agents of change. This flexibility enables the UN Trust Fund to strengthen local and national partnerships that are essential to long-lasting and accountable results.

The UN Trust Fund is currently administered by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). It is guided by distinct governance arrangements and pooled fund principles that uphold its mandate within the United Nations system.

ALL MEMBER STATES CONTRIBUTORS SINCE 1996



1.2. About this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan sets the direction of the UN Trust Fund for the period 2026 to 2030. It defines key priorities for advancing the elimination of violence against women and girls and serves as the framework for decision-making across resource mobilization, grant-making, partnerships, accountability to stakeholders and performance measurement.

Guided by principles of inclusion, transparency and evidence-informed design, the Strategic Plan was developed through a participatory process drawing on evaluations, surveys and grantees' practice-based knowledge, and was further informed by consultations with 165 stakeholders. Women's organizations were central to shaping the analysis and priorities, ensuring that the voices and realities of women and girls most affected by violence are at the heart of the strategy. The Strategic Plan also draws on UN Trust Fund portfolio data and institutional experience, as well as an assessment of the current global context, to remain both ambitious and adaptable to evolving realities.

1.3. Vision, mission and feminist principles

Vision and mission

The UN Trust Fund's vision and mission are grounded in its mandate and informed by practice, evidence, and partner experience and consultation. They provide continuity and direction as risks, opportunities and demands evolve.

Vision
A world where **all** women and girls live free from all forms of violence, able to exercise their rights, voice and agency – essential for gender equality, sustainable development, peace and justice.

Mission
To ensure that quality funding and comprehensive support reach those driving change, especially women's organizations; to support other partners to accelerate progress; to generate evidence, advocate and convene partners to strengthen the global ending violence against women and girls ecosystem; and to uphold accountability for the right of every woman and girl to live free from *all forms* of violence.

Values and principles

Strong values and principles guide all the work of the UN Trust Fund. First and foremost, all women and girls are at the centre of all work.

Grounded in the Charter of the United Nations and feminist-informed principles, the following values are not mere aspirations; they guide how the UN Trust Fund makes decisions, measures success, designs grants, approaches partnerships, manages risks and co-creates learning and evidence generation.

Though tensions arise when applying these values within United Nations systems and compliance frameworks, the UN Trust Fund is committed to being transparent about those constraints while modelling how feminist-informed, values-based funding can deliver integrity, accountability and impact.

VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

1

Feminist and survivor-led

We centre the agency, expertise and priorities of women, girls and survivors, especially those facing intersecting discrimination. Women's organizations remain at the heart of our mission.

In practice: *we prioritize initiatives led by women's organizations closest to the issues. These initiatives are designed with and/or led by survivors, reflect their needs and priorities, and uphold the principles of safety, dignity and agency.*

2

Intersectional justice and human rights

We centre the universal dignity and equal rights of all people. Our work challenges systems of inequality and violence, and is informed by intersectional, rights-based, anti-racist approaches.

In practice: *we mainstream intersectionality and use special funding windows to resource organizations led by and serving women and girls who face intersecting discrimination on the basis of Indigeneity, disability, sexual or gender identity or expression and other factors (see* ***Box 3****).*

3

Locally led, adaptive and movement-aligned

We respond to the realities and priorities defined by women's organizations, adapting to crisis, complexity and change.

In practice: *our grant-making is flexible and context specific. It evolves with emerging risks and opportunities, ensuring that sustainable, locally led solutions are resourced with trust.*



4

Care, compassion, and collective well-being

We understand care as a collective and relational practice of empathy, mutual support and shared responsibility that sustains those working to end violence against women and girls. We understand well-being as the emotional, physical and psychological health of individuals and teams, strengthened through trauma-informed and restorative approaches that enable organizations and movements to endure and thrive.

In practice: *we promote emotional, physical and collective well-being for partners and our staff and support self- and collective care activities for teams and activists.*

5

Integrity, mutual accountability and transformative partnership

We are guided by transparency, mutual accountability and the value of long-term, trust-based partnerships. Our work is defined by ethical practice and a commitment to shifting power and sharing risk, while ensuring rigorous stewardship of resources.

In practice: *we accompany our partners to achieve high standards of financial and governance integrity while building transformative, power-sharing relationships.*

6

Acknowledging power and advancing localized and equitable funding practices

We recognize our influence in the global financing architecture and power imbalances when United Nations entities compete with civil society for resources. We are committed to shifting, not reinforcing, these dynamics and investing in organizational resilience.

In practice: *we use transparent decision-making, civil society representation on advisory committees, simplified and multilingual grant processes, predictable entry points for small and emerging organizations, a decentralized Secretariat, and strong feedback and mutual accountability mechanisms with grantee partners.*

2 IMPERATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES



2.1. The right to live free from violence

Women's and girls' right to live free from violence is universal, inalienable and grounded in binding international and regional human rights commitments. This right is enshrined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and reinforced through global, regional and national frameworks.[1] These instruments recognize violence against women and girls as a human rights violation and oblige States to prevent violence, protect survivors and prosecute perpetrators.

Member States have reaffirmed their obligations in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (through target 5.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the 2025 Political Declaration marking the thirtieth anniversary of Beijing (Beijing+30).

These binding commitments require not only universal recognition of rights, but deliberate prioritization, resourcing and accountability to ensure that women and girls facing the greatest risks are not left behind.

2.2. The need for urgent action

Violence against women and girls – a global emergency

Nearly one in three women worldwide – as many as 852 million – have reported experiencing violence, though pervasive underreporting masks the true scale.[2] Grounded in structural inequality and sustained by discrimination, impunity and patriarchal norms, violence against women and girls undermines peace, erodes rights and blocks sustainable development. Harmful practices such as early, forced and child marriage and female genital mutilation persist[3] world over, and femicide is rising, with a woman killed every ten minutes by an intimate partner or family member in 2023.[4] Violence against women and girls is both enduring and adaptive, requiring prevention strategies that address root causes while remaining responsive to new and evolving risks.

The burden of violence is most acute in least developed and low- and middle-income countries, and in contexts of polycrisis, where conflict, displacement, humanitarian emergencies, poverty, public health crises, climate shocks and democratic backsliding intersect. It is compounded by emerging technological threats and a coordinated global backlash that is shrinking civil space and targeting women's human rights defenders. Together, these factors further restrict access to resources and increase risk.[5] Reports of conflict-related sexual violence have surged 25 per cent since 2024, accompanied by a chronic undercount due to lack of funding.[6] **These dynamics underpin the need to prioritize crisis-, conflict-, and climate-affected settings, where intersecting risks are highest and resources are most constrained**.

These risks are further compounded by structural exclusion. Intersecting forms of discrimination – based on race, ethnicity, class, disability, migration status, age, sexual and gender identity and expression or forced displacement – intensify exposure to violence while limiting access to essential services, prevention and empowerment programmes and organizational financing. Women and girls who experience intersecting discrimination remain among the least reached by laws, systems and funding, despite facing disproportionate harm. **It is essential that grant-making prioritizes those who are structurally marginalized and face intersecting risks**.

New forms of violence are emerging and evolving faster than policy, legal and institutional protections. Technology-facilitated violence against women and girls – including online harassment, non-consensual image sharing, surveillance, deepfakes and gendered disinformation – is expanding the scale, reach and persistence of harm, often beyond the scope of existing laws and services. The rapid acceleration of artificial intelligence (AI) and digital surveillance technologies is further amplifying risk, particularly for women and girls already facing intersecting forms of discrimination and for women's rights organizations and leaders who are increasingly targeted. **A strategic focus is required to ensure that organizations and survivors have access to timely, flexible resources to address new and evolving forms of violence, while sustaining efforts to prevent and respond to long-standing and pervasive forms of violence**.

Prevention works – with women's and feminist movements in a lead role

Violence against women and girls is preventable. Rates of violence have been shown to decrease within programmatic time frames.[7] Proven, documented whole-of-society, whole-of-government approaches to ending violence against women and girls include coordinated, multisectoral services; prevention through shifts in harmful social norms; strong laws and accountability frameworks; and integration of approaches across sectors, including health, education and economic policy.[8]

Evidence further demonstrates that prevention impact is greatest when interventions reach girls and women at key life stages – particularly adolescence – and address structural drivers, such as economic insecurity and social norms that heighten vulnerability to violence. Poverty, displacement and crisis amplify these risks, making investments in women's social and economic empowerment central to primary and secondary prevention.[9]

Research, policy and practice all highlight the leadership role of autonomous women's and feminist movements in ending violence against women and girls.[10] When well resourced and empowered, they shift harmful norms, transform power relations, advance social and economic empowerment, and deliver life-saving services – especially where State systems fall short.[11] **Women's organizations** – especially those that are small, locally based, and led by women, girls or constituents – are trusted by communities and survivors, and often sustain life-saving services during crises.[12] The leadership role of women's organizations is formally recognized as indispensable in international political commitments.

Gaps, risks and backlash

Political will is often visible in international commitments but fails to translate into sustained national action and adequate financing.

Developing countries face an **annual US$ 420 billion shortfall** in achieving gender equality under the SDGs.[13] Official development assistance (ODA) was expected to contract by up to 17 per cent in 2025,[14] producing devastating impacts on women's and feminist organizations, which have received less than 0.1 per cent of total ODA in recent years.[15] Funding for organizations led by marginalized women remains even scarcer.[16] A 2025 UN Women survey found 90 per cent of women's organizations faced financial losses due to cuts in major bilateral aid programmes, and nearly half were at risk of closure.[17]

ODA commitments for ending violence against women and girls averaged only US$ 572 million in 2022–2023, most of it channelled to governments and international non-governmental organizations, bypassing women's organizations.[18] UN Trust Fund application data shows demand for funding for initiatives to end violence against women and girls far exceeds resources available: surpassing US$ 6 billion since 2019 and US$ 2 billion in 2025 alone.[19]

Compounding the financing crisis is a deliberate and organized backlash. UN Trust Fund research with more than 100 CSOs in 2025 showed that backlash is deliberate, systemic and entrenched and that women's organizations and activists are directly targeted through exclusion, disinformation and criminalization.[20] Anti-rights actors are weaponizing "anti-gender" rhetoric to delegitimize and defund work to end violence against women and girls.[21]

As the Secretary-General warned at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the world is at a "red alert" moment for civil society: without urgent action, decades of gains risk being reversed.[22]

These dynamics make clear that ending violence against women and girls requires deliberate, transparent, United Nations system-wide prioritization – directing limited resources to where risk is greatest, prevention leverage is highest, and women's rights organizations are best positioned to deliver sustained change.

Priorities from the frontlines

For 30 years, the UN Trust Fund has partnered with women's organizations working on the front line of ending violence against women and girls. UN Trust Fund partners have shared a clear set of **priorities**:[23]

- Predictable, flexible and organization-led core funding, aligned with responsive and context-driven strategies.
- Care-centred, power-sharing partnerships, supported by simplified, accessible and proportionate processes.
- Resilience support, including for organizational capacity-strengthening, digital resilience, well-being, and collective care.
- Safe and inclusive access to spaces and systems, including multilingual platforms, digital infrastructure and security.
- Systemic monitoring and documentation of risks and backlash, to inform adaptive responses and advocacy.
- Strengthened voice and leadership of women's organizations and survivors in policy and accountability arenas, including through the UN Trust Fund accountability line to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council.

2.3. The UN Trust Fund response: reforming funding and financing, partnership and power

The UN Trust Fund is intensifying efforts to respond to the urgent need to reform funding and financing, partnerships and power dynamics to advance ending violence against women and girls. It is moving towards longer-term, flexible and core funding, paired with tailored support to strengthen organizational and portfolio-level resilience.

Quality funding – sustaining organizations, programming and impact

Women's organizations deliver a consistent message: **current funding models are not fit for purpose**. Short-term, rigid and administratively burdensome funding undermines rather than sustains feminist organizing.[24] Women's rights organizations delivering essential services – such as shelters, legal aid and survivor support – are often the first to lose funding or be forced to close when political pressure intensifies or crises unfold. In the absence of institutional legitimacy, political cover and predictable resources, funding is least likely to reach those operating where risk is greatest, exacerbating protection gaps and increasing exposure to harm for both organizations and survivors.

Evidence shows that funding approaches grounded in organizational priorities and trust enable feminist movements to sustain impact and navigate increasingly hostile environments.[25] Yet "quality funding" (i.e. long-term, core, flexible and context-driven funding) remains rare.[26]

The UN Trust Fund is shifting its funding model towards longer-term, flexible and core funding to support programmatic and organizational needs, paired with comprehensive tailored support for partners.

Partnership – working together better

Alongside the need for expanded quality funding, the way the United Nations approaches partnership, risk-sharing and accountability must change. Partnerships must be centred on organizational, self- and collective care. Power must be shared and processes must be reformed to ensure no one is excluded.

This Strategic Plan sets out a reformed model of partnership between the UN Trust Fund and women's organizations, emphasizing quality funding, wraparound support, structural representation and strategic prioritization.

Power – resolving inequities

The **power dynamics that shape the financing architecture must be addressed**. Practice-based knowledge generated by women's rights practitioners has long been systematically undervalued compared to academic research produced in the Global North – weakening both the relevance and the effectiveness of policy and programming.[27] Equally critical are **barriers to participation in decision-making** – including in intergovernmental processes, such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Human Rights Council. Visa restrictions, language exclusion, digital divides, financial constraints and security risks continue to prevent feminist actors from shaping the agendas that most affect them.[28] Until these inequities are addressed, funding, policy and programming models will remain disconnected from lived realities.

The UN Trust Fund is working to resolve these inequities through its intergovernmental mandate and its role to promote coherence, accountability and best practice throughout all levels of the United Nations system. The UN Trust Fund will centre the engagement of its global network, ensuring national and local evidence, results and lessons from front-line action inform oversight, policymaking and financing priorities at all levels and in direct partnership with Member States and the United Nations system.

The UN Trust Fund offer

In alignment with reform priorities – including UN80 and the Gender Equality Acceleration Plan – the UN Trust Fund strengthens coordinated financing and accountability by consolidating demand data, evidence and practice-based knowledge from across its global portfolio. This supports Member States and the United Nations system to identify gaps and direct resources where they can have the greatest impact, including through strengthened coordination at country level. In this reform context, the UN Trust Fund offers:

- **For Member States** – a system-wide financing and accountability instrument to support front-line women's organizations, track progress and demonstrate results on global commitments to end violence against women and girls
- **For the United Nations system** – a pooled financing mechanism aligned with UN Women's gender equality and women's empowerment mandate and system-wide coordination leadership, including the Gender Equality Action Plan and in line with UN80 and United Nations Development System reform
- **For women's organizations, including WROs and CSOs** – long-term, flexible funding and tailored, comprehensive support, along with partnership with the United Nations, Member States and a global network of organizations
- **For the broader ecosystem to end violence against women and girls** – partnerships to advance global evidence, learning, coherence and collective accountability

3

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS LEARNED



The UN Trust Fund enters the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan period with three decades of experience and proven results. Since its establishment, the UN Trust Fund has invested more than US$ 250 million – including contributions from over 40 Member States – in over 725 initiatives across 140 countries and territories, supporting prevention, services and accountability to end violence against women and girls across humanitarian, development and peace contexts.

3.1. Reach, results and achievements

UN Trust Fund-supported initiatives have been implemented in every region of the world, across all contexts. Since 2010, the UN Trust Fund has expanded both the number and overall value of its grants – from 109 grants and US$ 55 million (2010–2015) to 153 grants and US$ 70 million (2021–2025).

The portfolio composition has evolved over time based on evidence of what works. Earlier grant cycles funded CSOs, United Nations country teams and governments. Since 2015, **all partners have been CSOs, and since 2020, all have been women-led**. Over 70 per cent have been WROs[29] and nearly half small organizations,[30] with a growing share also constituent-led – led by and supporting women and girls facing structural exclusion and marginalization.

The UN Trust Fund has been pivotal in expanding access to United Nations resources for front-line and historically underfunded actors. In 2024: 30 per cent of grantee partners worked in crisis settings; **30 per cent reported this was their first grant from the United Nations; and nearly 50 per cent were able to mobilize additional resources (totalling US$ 21 million)**, in addition to UN Trust Fund support.

Since 2016, more than 174 million people were reached, about half of whom were women and girls, including survivors of violence.

Grantee partners have provided millions of women and girls with **access to essential, survivor-centred services**, including shelters, legal aid, psychosocial support and referral pathways.

Partners have **advanced prevention** through community-led initiatives, education, media engagement and advocacy, contributing to shifts in harmful norms and practices.

UN Trust Fund grants have enabled partners to **advance laws, policies and national action plans** on ending violence against women and girls, and supported organizations to build resilience, even in volatile contexts.

External assessments and evaluations consistently confirm the UN Trust Fund's effectiveness, accountability and operational excellence[31]. Feminist networks and women's rights organizations have recognized the UN Trust Fund as a model for channelling flexible grants, specifically to smaller organizations, while pairing financing with learning, accompaniment, and protection-oriented support.[32]

The UN Trust Fund has continuously adapted its funding approach in response to emerging needs and persistent gaps.

Strategic thematic funding windows (see Box 1) have enabled the UN Trust Fund to spotlight underfunded and overlooked areas of work, concentrate resources where risks are acute, support focused, context-sensitive interventions, and generate theme-specific practice-based knowledge.

BOX 1: **STRATEGIC THEMATIC FUNDING WINDOWS**

The UN Trust Fund's **thematic windows** address urgent and underfunded priorities, ensuring resources reach the most structurally marginalized women and girls.

- **Violence against women and girls in forced displacement and humanitarian contexts:** More than 50 initiatives supported in humanitarian contexts, providing protection, essential services and safety to thousands of forcibly displaced women and girls
- **Disability-inclusive violence prevention and response:** Grants to nearly 30 organizations that advanced inclusive, accessible services, prevention strategies and policy advocacy that addressed violence against women and girls with disabilities and reduced systemic barriers to protection and justice
- **Crisis- and shock-responsive funding (including COVID-19):** Rapid funding to 44 existing partner organizations in 39 countries, sustaining life-saving services during lockdowns through online counselling, mobile outreach and community-based support

3.2. Lessons and insights

This Strategic Plan is informed by 30 years of institutional experience, over 200 evaluations, more than 80 co-created knowledge products and consultations with more than 165 stakeholders.

Across this body of evidence, four interrelated lessons have emerged.



Rights
Centring women and girls as rights holders

Resourcing
Funding what works

Resilience
Supporting women's and feminist movements

Results
Redefining impact, centring practice-based knowledge and strengthening accountability

1. Rights – centring women and girls as rights holders

- **Centring women and girls as rights holders** who participate as decision makers, leaders and co-designers – rather than passive recipients – in the decisions affecting their lives and communities makes programmes more appropriate and effective.
- **Women's organizations that are women-, girl- and constituent-led should be prioritized** to ensure interventions position rights holders as leaders and change makers (see **Box 2**).

BOX 2: **CENTRING RIGHTS HOLDERS – FOCUSING ON THE MOST *STRUCTURALLY MARGINALIZED* WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Structurally marginalized women and girls face higher risks of violence, stigma and discrimination, and greater barriers in accessing services, support and justice. To meet their needs, the UN Trust Fund has prioritized organizations led by members of these groups, that is, "constituent-led" organizations of women and girl survivors of violence, people with disabilities, Indigenous women, and racial and ethnic minority women, as well as girl-led or girl-centred organizations, refugee-led or internally displaced people (IDP)-focused groups and groups of LGBTIQ+ persons.

2. Resourcing – funding what works

- **Quality funding** – directed to survivor-centred interventions and applicable across sectors, including those intersecting with SDGs such as those in health, education and economic empowerment – is essential, delivers impact and should be continued, including through four-year grants at minimum.
- **Catalytic and demand-driven funding** channels resources to underfunded areas and emerging priorities, filling critical gaps and ensuring commitments translate into action where needs are greatest – including through strategic thematic windows for underresourced themes.
- **Intersectionality and Leave No One Behind must guide resourcing** to mainstream intersectionality across the portfolio and use strategic thematic windows to prioritize structurally marginalized women and girls and the organizations that centre them (see **Box 3**).

BOX 3: **EMBEDDING INTERSECTIONALITY AND LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND ACROSS THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The UN Trust Fund applies **intersectionality and the principle of Leave No One Behind** as cross-cutting priorities across all aspects of its work.[33] It prioritizes support for women and girls facing multiple and **intersecting forms of discrimination** – such as those related to disability, Indigeneity, age, race and ethnicity, migration status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or displacement – and promotes approaches best suited to address these layered risks. We recognize the **diverse experiences within and across these groups** – for example, how **Afrodescendent** and **Indigenous women and girls**, among others, face distinct and intersecting forms of violence shaped by historical, structural and contextual inequalities. To ensure no one is left behind, the UN Trust Fund pursues a two-pronged **approach**:

- **Mainstreaming intersectionality** across all funding windows, grant-making, and learning processes
- **Occasionally opening dedicated funding windows** for emerging or chronically underserved groups facing systemic exclusion

This approach allows the UN Trust Fund to address intersecting inequalities consistently, while also retaining flexibility to respond to specific gaps in line with its Leave No One Behind commitment.

3. Resilience – supporting women's and feminist movements

- **Movements and organizational resilience sustain progress towards ending violence against women and girls** – embedding support for the resilience, well-being and safety of women's organizations, and programmatic funding, are central.
- **Reliability and responsiveness are unique and core strengths**, providing uninterrupted support, global reach and local and flexible funding through reliable, consistent, open access, demand-driven grant-making.
- **Building expertise through partnership strengthens the ecosystem** – the UN Trust Fund's wrap-around support model fosters tailored support, from financial management to organizational resilience, safeguarding, accompaniment in times of crisis and adaptation. This strengthens feminist and women's institutions and the wider movements of which they are part.

4. Results – redefining impact, centring practice-based knowledge and strengthening accountability

- **Impact must be redefined** – what constitutes "success" is context specific and impact must be understood in diverse, qualitative and meaningful ways that reflect lived realities. The UN Trust Fund – with its broad network and connection across partners from women's organizations, to research institutions, to policymakers – could play a key role in envisaging impact in ending violence against women and girls for the post-SDG era.
- **Evidence and learning must drive change**. The UN Trust Fund consolidates practice-based knowledge, and findings from annual global surveys and independent evaluations into global evidence. Investment in data, learning, and the uptake of results will strengthen systems and scale up what works. The UN Trust Fund has a key role in elevating practice-based knowledge alongside research and other forms of evidence to drive broader uptake and impact.
- **Convening and accountability must be amplified**. The UN Trust Fund is a unique bridge-builder between global commitments and grass-roots realities. It should sharpen its roles as an accountability channel within the United Nations system and a standard-setter for funding to end violence against women and girls.

These achievements and lessons have directly informed changes in how the UN Trust Fund will operate in the period 2026–2030.

They are evident in the Strategic Results Areas set out in Section 4, which define how the UN Trust Fund will work differently to deliver greater impact at scale in this Strategic Plan period.

4

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030 THEORY OF CHANGE

OUR VISION

A world where all women and girls live free from all forms for violence and able to exercise their rights, voice and agency.

OUR VALUES

- EQUITABLE FUNDING PRACTICES
- INTEGRITY & TRANSFORMATION
- CARE & COLLECTIVE WELLBEING
- ADOPTIVE & MOVEMENT-LED
- INTERSECTIONAL & RIGHTS-BASED
- FEMINIST & SURVIVOR-LED



OUR MISSION

Providing quality funding and comprehensive support to women's organizations; advancing evidence, partnerships, and advocacy to strengthen the global EVAWG ecosystem, and upholding accountability to end violence against women and girls.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

More women and girls - especially those most structurally marginalized - live free from violence, stigma and discrimination, across humanitarian, development and peace contexts.

OUR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION
- PARTNERSHIPS & COMMS
- RESULTS-BASED PROGRAMMING
- EMPOWERED PEOPLE
- PERFORMANCE

EVAWG RESULTS

FROM WRO/CSO PARTNERS'



ENHANCED VIOLENCE PREVENTION



BETTER ACCESS TO SERVICES



STRONGER EVAWG ACCOUNTABILITY

OUR STRATEGIES

TO SUPPORT WRO/CSOs



QUALITY FUNDING & COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT



LEARNING, EVIDENCE & PBK



CONVENING & ADVOCACY

- MOVEMENT BUILDING
- GLOBAL ACCOUNTABILITY
- ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE
- SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS

The UN Trust Fund's enduring mandate, vision and mission will be operationalized through a set of Strategic Results Areas and priorities and measured through a Results Framework. *Implementation is subject to the availability of resources; all targets are projections based on the resource mobilization target of up to US$ 150 million by 2030.*

The Strategic Plan 2026–2030 distinguishes between two complementary levels of results. **Thematic Results Areas** describe the substantive changes the UN Trust Fund seeks to advance, with our grantee partners, in ending violence against women and girls – across prevention, access to services and accountability. **Strategic Results Areas** describe how the UN Trust Fund, as an inter-agency pooled fund, will deliver these results – through quality funding, learning and evidence, and convening and advocacy.

Together, these results areas link programmatic impact with the UN Trust Fund's delivery model and Results Framework.

4.1. Impact 2030

By 2030, the UN Trust Fund aims to contribute to the following impact:

More women and girls – especially the most structurally marginalized – live free from all forms of violence, stigma and discrimination, across humanitarian, development and peace contexts.

This impact statement recognizes that pathways to ending violence against women and girls vary by context and over time. The UN Trust Fund therefore prioritizes approaches that are context specific, rights-based and led by women's organizations closest to affected communities, in line with the principle of Leave No One Behind (see Box 4).

BOX 4: **REDEFINING IMPACT AND THE POST-SDG OUTLOOK FOR ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS**

Recognizing that SDG 5 is off track, impact will be context specific. It will not look the same everywhere.

In some contexts, it may mean reducing the prevalence or severity of violence; in others, safeguarding hard-won gains against backlash; and in many, strengthening the resilience and leadership of women's and feminist movements to drive change. It may mean providing essential services where few or none exist or preventing violence from escalating further. Impact may also be recognized as progress across interrelated SDGs – including in health, education, justice and economic empowerment. Looking beyond 2030, these context-driven pathways, shaped by the knowledge and expertise of women's organizations, will help define the post-SDG agenda, ensuring that ending violence against women and girls remains a global priority anchored in human rights, gender equality, peace and justice.

4.2. Thematic Results Areas

Grounded in the context, evidence and partner experience outlined in Sections 2 and 3, impact will be achieved by supporting initiatives to end violence against women and girls across three interconnected Thematic Results Areas.

1. **Prevention:** Improved prevention of violence against women and girls through changes in behaviours, practices, attitudes, socioeconomic opportunities, agency and leadership for women and girls, and effective, context-specific engagement of men and boys to transform harmful masculinities and power relations
2. **Access to services:** Improved access for women and girls to essential, specialist, safe and adequate multi-sectoral services[34]
3. **Accountability:** Increased effectiveness of legislation, policies, and national action plans and strengthened accountability systems and data to prevent, monitor and end violence against women and girls

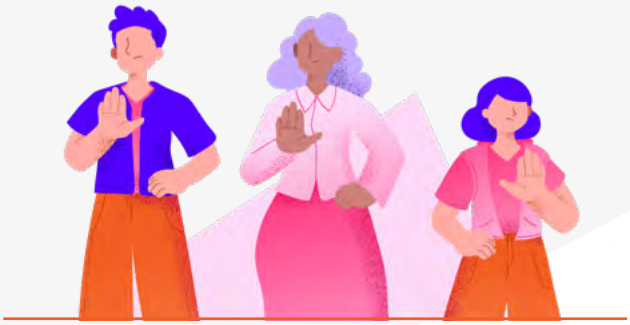
Supported initiatives will integrate cross-sectoral approaches across all contexts.

Across all three Thematic Results Areas, prioritization will be guided by the principle of Leave No One Behind, directing resources to women and girls facing the highest levels of risk, exclusion and unmet need, and to the women's organizations best positioned to reach them.

The UN Trust Fund supports demand-driven initiatives to end violence against women and girls – predominantly led and designed by women's organizations – that advance the right of women and girls to live free from violence, with a focus on the most structurally marginalized. Through their work – whether directly with women and girls as rights holders, agents and drivers of change, or through and with communities, institutions and systems – the UN Trust Fund's partners create the enabling conditions through which women and girls are able to access services, live free from violence, and claim justice and accountability.

Partners engage a diverse range of actors – including men and boys, community and faith leaders, service providers, educators, media, traditional and youth leaders, civil society, private sector actors and government officials – all of whom play vital roles in transforming norms, strengthening accountability and advancing women's and girls' rights. In contexts where State systems are weak, underresourced or absent, the partners the UN Trust Fund supports are often the first line of prevention and response, ensuring that women and girls have access to life-saving services, safety and support.

Most partners work along the prevention–response continuum, addressing both the immediate needs of survivors and the structural, social and institutional drivers of violence. This holistic approach strengthens both systems of care and efforts to transform norms, ensuring that response and prevention reinforce one another.



PREVENTION

Women and girls are able to live free from violence as prevention efforts strengthen positive behaviours, equitable practices and social norms.

Key results

- Community norms, behaviours, attitudes and practices are reformed to promote equality, respect and non-violence.
- Public spaces and environments are made safer, including schools, workplaces and transport hubs.
- Women's and girls' social and economic empowerment and access to safe, decent livelihoods are strengthened as core prevention strategies, reducing exposure to violence and increasing agency and autonomy.
- Adolescent girls are supported by age-specific prevention initiatives that strengthen life skills, agency, safety and access to education and economic opportunities.
- Interpersonal relationships are strengthened to support non-violence and shared decision-making within households.
- Leadership and agency of women and girls in efforts to end violence are strengthened (e.g. as change agents, human rights defenders and community leaders).
- Institutions such as schools, workplaces and faith organizations more actively promote gender-equitable norms and prevention through policies, curricula and training.
- Technology-facilitated violence against women and girls is prevented through interventions that promote digital safety, address online abuse and exploitation, and strengthen protections in digital spaces.
- Prevention efforts increasingly address intersecting inequalities and structural drivers of violence, including discrimination based on gender, class, race, ethnicity, disability and/or sexual orientation and gender identity.



SERVICES

Women and girls are able to access essential, specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services that uphold their rights and respond to their diverse needs.

Key results

- Access to adequate and safe specialist support services (e.g. shelters, helplines, psychosocial support) is improved.
- Specialist services are strengthened, diversified and adapted to respond to evolving forms of violence and the needs of different survivor groups, including adolescent girls and survivors of technology-facilitated violence, through digital, remote, confidential, and in-person support mechanisms.
- Access to essential services through health, social, welfare and justice systems is improved.
- Cases of violence are more effectively reported, handled, referred, investigated and/or prosecuted.
- Access to justice in cases of violence is strengthened (e.g. through legal aid, court access or institutional improvements).
- Access to information, goods and resources to prevent and respond to violence is increased (e.g. through awareness of available services or crisis resources).
- Coordination and quality assurance of multisectoral services are strengthened through improved referral systems, data sharing and survivor-centred standards.
- Inclusion and accessibility of services are enhanced for women and girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination (e.g. based on disability, displacement, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation).
- Access to safe and adequate services in crisis and humanitarian settings is improved through emergency and context-specific mechanisms.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Women and girls are able to access their rights and accountability through effective laws, policies and institutions that prevent and respond to all forms of violence.

Key results

- Government institutions design and implement reforms, strategies and policies to prevent and respond to violence.
- Guidelines, protocols and standard operating procedures for service delivery and protection are developed or strengthened.
- Legal, policy and accountability frameworks are strengthened to address emerging and evolving forms of violence, including technology-facilitated violence against women and girls, and to protect the rights of women and girls, including adolescent girls.
- Institutional capacities are strengthened to develop and implement multisectoral strategies, policies and action plans to end violence against women and girls.
- Laws are developed, implemented or improved to criminalize and prevent violence against women and girls.
- Accountability systems are established or improved to hold governments and duty bearers to account for commitments to end violence against women and girls.
- Data and evidence systems are enhanced to collect, analyse and use disaggregated information to inform and monitor policies and programmes to end violence against women and girls.
- Public financing/resource allocation for policies to end violence against women and girls are increased and sustained.
- Civil society and women's rights organizations increasingly participate meaningfully in policy dialogue, monitoring and accountability processes.

4.3. Strategic Results Areas

Three interconnected Strategic Results Areas define how the UN Trust Fund will deliver the Thematic Results Areas outlined in Section 4.2. The three Strategic Results Areas are mutually reinforcing and together define the UN Trust Fund's distinct added value as a system-wide, pooled financing mechanism. Quality funding and comprehensive support (SRA 1) enable women's organizations to deliver sustained results across prevention, services and accountability. Learning, evidence and practice-based knowledge (SRA 2) ensure those results are captured, strengthened and translated into insight for adaptive grant-making and broader system change. Convening and advocacy (SRA 3) leverage this evidence and the UN Trust Fund partnership network to influence policy, mobilize resources and strengthen system-wide accountability. Together, the Strategic Results Areas create a continuous cycle that links funding, learning and influence to drive impact at scale.

SRA 1
Delivering quality funding and comprehensive support for sustainable results in ending violence against women and strengthening organizational resilience



The UN Trust Fund will mobilize and direct quality funding (see Box 5) to women's organizations, enabling them to lead initiatives that deliver **sustainable, context-specific results** across prevention, services and accountability that prioritize structurally marginalized women and girls across humanitarian, development and peace contexts.

The UN Trust Fund will strengthen the long-term organizational resilience of grantee partners through hybrid, flexible support that covers both organizational and programmatic needs. This **includes resourcing core and flexible funding, including for care and well-being, accessibility and security, and contingency and adaptation in volatile contexts**. The UN Trust Fund will also provide tailored accompaniment through its wraparound support model. This will include risk management, organizational support and adaptive implementation, supporting organizations and leaders to remain operational, protect staff, respond to rapidly changing conditions and sustain their leadership role, including during crises.

The UN Trust Fund operationalizes quality funding through a grant-making and support model that is anchored in United Nations legitimacy and accountability, and designed to deliver both programmatic results and organizational resilience. In practice, the model combines transparent, demand-driven grant-making with hybrid funding and tailored wraparound support, ensuring that every grant meets the highest standards of equity, integrity and impact. A more comprehensive description of the features of the model is provided in Annex D.

BOX 5: **WHAT IS QUALITY FUNDING?**

Quality funding is:

- **Flexible and long-term:** Multi-year grants (typically four years with aspirations to extend to six-plus years) that enable organizations to plan, adapt, and sustain change beyond project cycles
- **Hybrid (covering organizational and programmatic costs):** Ensuring resources support both interventions and the core functions needed for resilient, sustainable organizations, including care and well-being, accessibility, security, and contingency for adaptation
- **Accessible and equitable:** Reaching women's organizations of all sizes, with priority to constituent-led groups representing structurally marginalized women, girls and communities
- **Care-centred and power-sharing:** Grounded in trust and equity, demand-driven ownership of results, and recognizing budgets for self- and collective care
- **Responsive and context-driven:** Adaptable to emerging needs, including crises and backlash, while strengthening local leadership and resilience

Overview of the UN Trust Fund grant-making and support model



SRA 2
Strengthening learning, evidence and practice-based knowledge for impact, accountability and results

A UN Trust Fund Learning Plan will be developed and implemented for this Strategic Plan in partnership with grantee partners and key actors in the field. The Learning Plan will consolidate data, evidence and practice-based knowledge[35] generated across grant-making, portfolio management, monitoring and evaluation, partnerships and grantee partner engagement. It will continue informing and strengthening decision-making for the Trust Fund and its partners, contribute to the global evidence base on what works to end violence against women and girls, centre women's rights organizations as knowledge holders, and support United Nations system-wide accountability.



Learning as power-shifting and accountability

The UN Trust Fund will position learning as a means of shifting power in efforts to end violence against women and girls and a mechanism through which institutions – including the UN Trust Fund – are held to account. By supporting grantee partners to generate, utilize and disseminate their own knowledge, the UN Trust Fund centres their lived realities, feminist praxis and front-line innovation as critical evidence of "what works". This **redefines what counts as evidence and whose knowledge matters**, and it amplifies the strategies of feminist movements as both advocacy and accountability.

Monitoring, evaluation and portfolio learning

Monitoring and evaluation are designed to support learning, strengthen implementation and uphold accountability to grantee partners, Member States and the United Nations system, while remaining responsive to diverse contexts and capacities.

Monitoring and evaluation will include:

- **Annual monitoring and reporting of Strategic Plan indicators** within a robust Results Framework
- **Key performance indicators and realistic targets co-developed with staff and grantees**, and disaggregated when feasible by sex, age, disability and other relevant characteristics to ensure no one is left behind
- **Annual common indicator surveys on grantee results and reach and an annual grantee survey seeking feedback** on UN Trust Fund support, services and operations and the needs of women's organizations
- **Portfolio-level aggregation and analysis of results and learning** to synthesize trends, risks and impacts across initiatives and contexts
- **Strategic assessments** of specific themes, funding windows and results, which are critical for learning and accountability
- **Independent midterm and independent external evaluation** of the Strategic Plan

BOX 6: **UN TRUST FUND HOLISTIC LEARNING APPROACH AND TOOLS**

The UN Trust Fund has built a distinctive, integrated learning approach that enables it to be a unique contributor to the global field of ending violence against women and girls. The integrated learning and knowledge approach entails:



Learning as power-shifting and accountability

capturing data and insights across hundreds of grants to adapt strategies, share lessons with Member States and centre women's organizations as knowledge holders.

For example, *through its mandated report to the Commission on the Status of Women and Human Rights Council and its Annual Report.*



Expanding the role of data, foresight and technology

identifying emerging trends and challenges to inform global advocacy, global funding gaps and scalable solutions.

For example, *through Call for Proposals demand data – a live snapshot of feminist organizing, emerging forms of violence, and scalable solutions.*



Monitoring, evaluation and portfolio learning

rigorous monitoring and evaluation to measure results and to interrogate which outcomes and impacts are valued.

For example, *through the UN Trust Fund Evaluation Library with 200+ reports, 80+ co-created knowledge products, Annual Grantee and Partner Survey.*



Amplifying knowledge and uptake

through inclusive and tailored access to knowledge and peer exchange.

For example, *through SHINE (the UN Trust Fund's multilingual knowledge exchange hub), grantee country exchanges, regional dialogues and webinar series.*

The UN Trust Fund will also draw systematically on grantee project evaluations and reporting. Because many of the most meaningful contributions appear as qualitative shifts – stories of change, lived experience and relational and institutional change – grounded qualitative evidence will be prioritized alongside quantitative data analysis. This will be grounded in feminist monitoring, evaluation and learning principles that value diverse ways of knowing, including Indigenous and community-based knowledge systems. All data collection will be proportionate to grant size and context, with support to minimize reporting burden.

Expanding the role of data, foresight and technology

The UN Trust Fund will strengthen learning capacity by:

- Using strategic foresight to anticipate risks, backlash dynamics and opportunities, to stress-test grant-giving and support offers, and to identify emerging trends and challenges to inform global advocacy and donor engagement
- Harnessing ethical data and AI tools to synthesize evidence, translate and disseminate learning in multiple languages, and improve accessibility. AI use will follow clear guardrails: consent and minimization, no survivor-identifiable data, bias checks, human-in-the-loop review, and multilingual accessibility by default
- Applying inclusive, survivor-safe data practices that protect privacy, respect local realities, and are grounded in ethics and safety principles
- Synthesizing learning across strategic priority areas into actionable insights that shape future grant-making, strengthen global advocacy, and inform annual global policy priorities

Amplifying knowledge and uptake

The UN Trust Fund will amplify learning through an integrated set of mechanisms that ensure evidence generated across its portfolio is accessible, usable and influential (see Box 6).

The UN Trust Fund will tailor outputs for different audiences – how-to tools for partners, evidence briefs for donors, and synthesis notes for United Nations and policy forums – and will focus on uptake of learning into decision making and practice, not merely publication.

The Learning Hub (the UN Trust Fund's online repository of learning) and SHINE Hub (the UN Trust Fund's multilingual community of practice with 3,000+ participants in 50+ languages) will continue enabling rapid peer-to-peer problem-solving and diffusion of "what works". SHINE also enables the UN Trust Fund to learn from and co-create with both grantee partners and the wider ending violence against women and girls ecosystem.

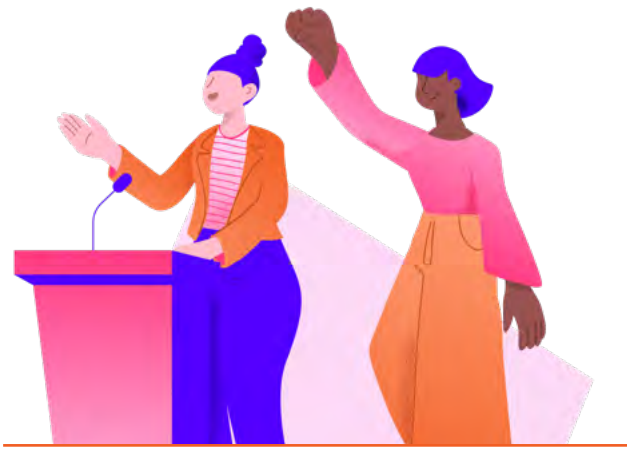
By embedding learning across our systems – and valuing practice-based as well as formal evidence – the UN Trust Fund will ensure that insight flows back into **grant-giving, partnerships, advocacy and internal reform** (accessibility, proportionality, service standards). This will strengthen the UN Trust Fund's contribution to informed accountability and help make United Nations procedures more accessible and responsive to civil society leadership.

SRA 3
Driving convening and advocacy for system-wide accountability and movement building

The UN Trust Fund will convene and advocate to translate practice-based knowledge into policy influence, financing shifts and strengthened system-wide accountability for ending violence against women and girls.

It will engage with key moments in the intergovernmental calendar and regional convening spaces to advance a coherent advocacy agenda.

In this context and through co-creation with partners, the UN Trust Fund will advocate for predictable, increased funding for women's organizations, strengthen United Nations system-wide accountability for commitments and build strategic partnerships and a global movement to end violence against women and girls.



Advocating for predictable, increased funding for women's and civil society organizations

The UN Trust Fund holds an extensive body of evidence that clearly supports the efficacy of predictable, increased funding for women's organizations working to end violence against women and girls. Data from each global Call for Proposals provide insight into feminist organizing, emerging forms of violence, and scalable solutions. Monitoring across 200+ active partners in 70 countries and three decades of evaluation data has given the UN Trust Fund a unique reservoir of feminist evidence.

The UN Trust Fund will use its data to:

- Counter disinformation
- Inform policy
- Illuminate rising forms of violence and how they evolve in different contexts
- Identify where civic space is closing and where needs are most acute
- Demonstrate that solutions exist but remain critically underfunded
- Strengthen global advocacy for sustained investment in women's organizations

Advocating for system-wide accountability

In co-creation with partners, UN Trust Fund advocacy will seek to advance gender equality and hold leaders accountable across the United Nations system.

It will use key moments in the intergovernmental calendar to amplify shared messages. This will include mobilizing the **UN Trust Fund's unique platform and accountability mechanisms** (e.g. to the Commission on the Status of Women, the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council) and supporting UN Women's coordination mandate to achieve coherent action across the United Nations system and the ending violence against women and girls ecosystem. This includes co-leadership of the Interagency Initiative to Advance a **UN-wide Funding Framework for Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations** (see Box 7) to strengthen the quality, accessibility, and impact of pooled financing and to ensure the United Nations meets Gender Equality Action Plan commitments on funding women's organizations. This will also be directly linked to the work of the **Inter-Agency Network on Gender Equality**, which is chaired by UN Women and serves as the network of Gender Focal Points in United Nations offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes.

BOX 7: **UN-WIDE FUNDING FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS**

The Interagency Initiative to Advance a UN-wide Funding Framework for Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations is intended to transform how the United Nations system resources these actors. Co-led by the UN Trust Fund and the Spotlight Initiative in close collaboration with the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and other United Nations agencies, the initiative promotes a unified approach to quality funding. It seeks to standardize grant processes, adopt consistent principles, balance risk management with partner support, and strengthen tracking systems – reducing barriers and ensuring more predictable, flexible resources for local organizations at the front lines of gender equality.

Strategic partnerships for movement building

The UN Trust Fund plays both a catalytic and a partnership role across the ending violence against women and girls ecosystem. It unites diverse actors from local to global levels around shared priorities, innovative solutions, joint advocacy and financing. This role is grounded in the understanding that progress towards ending violence against women and girls depends on women's rights movements that are well resourced, able to shape global agendas, and supported by an enabling environment that is coherent, accountable and backed by strong political and financial commitment. This reduces fragmentation and isolation at moments of political pressure. Without this continuity and momentum, collective power weakens and long-term efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women give way to short-term survival.

To deliver on these aims, the UN Trust Fund engages five types of partner:

Women's organizations and feminist movements



More than 700 current and former grantee partners form the heart of the UN Trust Fund's network. Under this Strategic Plan, the UN Trust Fund will deepen its partnership with them as a connected regional and global movement. The UN Trust Fund will work with women's and feminist funds and networks to co-mobilize resources, collaborate on advocacy and communications campaigns, and develop strategies to ensure funding reaches grass-roots women's groups.

➜ **Example:**
The UN Trust Fund contributes to major feminist spaces and global advocacy events – including Women Deliver, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) International Forum, and the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) Forum – amplifying the voices of grantee partners, including by sponsoring partners to attend to ensure access.

Member States and donors



More than 40 Member States have entrusted funds to the UN Trust Fund over its lifetime. The UN Trust Fund will continue to work with them as key partners and deepen engagement with them through dialogue, evidence sharing and donor forums. The UN Trust Fund will diversify its donor base to include the private sector, private foundations, philanthropic alliances and individual giving. Advocacy in these spaces will emphasize the need for quality funding for women's organizations and ensure that donor and Member State policies reflect practice-based knowledge. Beyond funding and access, the UN Trust Fund collaborates with Member States on shared programme objectives.

➜ **Example:**
The UN Trust Fund and partners of the What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls I and II programme (funded by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) have worked together to elevate practice-based knowledge and integrate it into the global evidence base.

UN Women



The UN Trust Fund is administered by UN Women and contributes directly to its Strategic Plan and commitments on ending violence against women and girls. The UN Trust Fund's mandate is distinct yet complementary: it is integral to UN Women's strategy. It is its flagship funding mechanism for women's organizations working on ending violence against women and girls, and is positioned as a key intervention within its Gender Equality Accelerator on Ending Violence against Women and Girls and its theory of change.[36] UN Women provides fiduciary oversight and alignment with normative and United Nations coordination mandates, and ensures that ending violence against women and girls is embedded across broader gender equality priorities. Operationally, the UN Trust Fund works in tandem with UN Women regional and country offices to expand outreach, integrate practice-based knowledge into global strategies to end violence against women and girls, and connect grantee partners to wider initiatives, including that of the United Nations country teams.

➜ **Example:**
The UN Trust Fund places Portfolio Managers and key support partners at regional hubs in UN Women Regional Offices nearer to partners and policy spaces, co-structuring country engagements, and participating in joint Programme Advisory Committee reviews. This positioning anchors advocacy more effectively in local contexts while reinforcing UN Women's coordination role and advancing system-wide coherence.

United Nations system



The UN Trust Fund is an inter-agency fund and involves several United Nations entities on its Programme Advisory Committee, positioning it as a mechanism of choice for system-wide, pooled financing. The UN Trust Fund will continue its deep collaboration and complementarity of strategies with sister funds and agencies – including the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Spotlight Initiative, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – to align strategies, share evidence, and, where appropriate, deliver pooled resources efficiently to women's organizations. The UN Trust Fund will also explore collaboration and partnerships with United Nations Special Rapporteurs. Advocacy within the United Nations system ensures feminist civil society perspectives are elevated in inter-agency co-ordination, pooled financing instruments, and policy-setting forums, strengthening accountability to commitments to end violence against women and girls.

➜ **Example:**
The UN Trust Fund will continue to co-lead the work of the Inter-agency Task Force for Advancing a United Nations-wide Funding Framework for Women's Organizations and Civil Society Organizations, which is developing coherent approaches across the United Nations system to strengthen the flow of resources to feminist movements.

The broader ending violence against women and girls ecosystem



The UN Trust Fund will continue to work in solidarity with and explore strategic partnerships with feminist funds, philanthropic foundations, international non-governmental organizations, research institutions and other partners with whom it has effectively shared and amplified advocacy platforms.

➜ **Example:**
The UN Trust Fund will explore partnerships to tackle critical root cause issues (e.g. engaging men and boys to tackle patriarchal social norms to transform masculinities, or to tackle structural inequalities) and crises intersecting with violence against women and girls (e.g. climate change, humanitarian disasters, the rise of AI and the digital gender gap) to mobilize resources, generate knowledge and extend influence. This will include collaborations with the private sector, and multilateral and international financial institutions (e.g. the UN Trust Fund has collaborated with private sector partners on cause-related marketing campaigns, as well as individual and employee giving initiatives, to directly benefit grantee partners).

Partnerships are not only how the UN Trust Fund works – they are how it shifts power, drives advocacy and sustains results. By leveraging its General Assembly mandate, convening diverse actors, and generating evidence and knowledge, the UN Trust Fund ensures ending violence against women and girls is visible and resourced as a global priority. Over time, these efforts have translated into reforms that deliver more predictable and quality funding, stronger monitoring and accountability frameworks, and greater recognition of women's organizations, within the context of women's and feminist movements as essential leaders in the ending violence against women and girls agenda. The ripple effect is evident not only in stronger organizations but also in greater solidarity across the ecosystem – amplified through joint advocacy for feminist leadership and the right of all women and girls to live free from violence.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS
TO SHIFT POWER, DRIVE ADVOCACY & SUSTAIN RESULTS



Women's Organizations & Feminist Movements

Deeper partnership with 700+ current and former partners and feminist funds to amplify advocacy and co-mobilize resources, for grassroots actors.

Member States

Engagement of Member States and donors through accountability, evidence sharing and diversified financing via a trusted pooled funding mechanism.





UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

Broader EVAWG Ecosystem

Strategic alliances across feminist funds, philanthropy, research and others to generate knowledge and extend collective influence.

UN System

System-wide coherence through inter-agency collaboration, pooled financing, shared evidence and coordinated UN action.



UN Women

Positioning as a complementary and integral flagship financing mechanism, aligning funding, coordination and global strategies to EVAWG.



4.4. Intensifying efforts to deliver impact

To deliver these results, the Strategic Plan 2026–2030 will **intensify efforts in the following areas of work**.

- **Quality funding for all grants:** Every grant provides core, flexible funding for organizational resilience alongside programmatic funding. All grants are for a minimum of four years, with aspirations to extend funding to six-plus years.
- **Comprehensive, tailored support model:** A holistic wraparound model – providing tailored accompaniment, peer learning, well-being resources and advocacy visibility – is part of *every partnership*, establishing the UN Trust Fund as "more than a donor" and strengthening the organizational resilience of partners, particularly those in volatile, high-risk, and crisis-affected settings.
- **Civil society at the centre of governance:** Structural representation across advisory and oversight bodies ensures women's and feminist movements shape priorities and decisions.
- **A globally dispersed Secretariat closer to partners:** With four regional hubs (Bangkok, Istanbul, Panama City and Nairobi), the UN Trust Fund team is positioned closer to partners and contexts – enhancing responsiveness, cost-effectiveness, and front-line impact. The hubs are supported by headquarters in Bonn, Germany, and a strategically located satellite office in New York, United States of America.
- **Strategic prioritization in a constrained funding environment:** Based on evidence that resources will not meet demand, the UN Trust Fund will make explicit prioritization choices, directing funds where emerging risks, structural marginalization and exclusionary funding patterns converge. This could include, for example, efforts to address technology-facilitated and other emerging forms of violence, and violence linked to climate change and crisis contexts; adolescent-focused approaches; and integrated approaches that enhance women's economic and social empowerment as part of broader violence-prevention and response efforts.
- **More agile and accessible grant-making:** Annual grant-giving, open Calls for Proposals, strategic thematic windows and simplified multilingual processes aim to lower barriers for small and emerging organizations.
- **Leave No One Behind and impact across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** A twin-track Leave No One Behind approach prioritizes structurally marginalized women and girls while mainstreaming intersectionality across all grants. This advances progress across multiple SDGs and catalyses progress across the 2030 Agenda.
- **Learning and evidence for impact:** The UN Trust Fund will continue efforts with grantee partners to co-create a new definition of impact – one that recognizes impact, progress and success will look different in different contexts and that can be used as essential evidence to inform policy, advocacy and accountability across diverse settings.
- **Enhanced role in global funding, learning and system-wide accountability:** Leveraging its unique global evidence base – from Calls for Proposals, portfolio monitoring, the evaluation library, and mandated reporting – the UN Trust Fund will strengthen system-wide learning coordination and accountability on ending violence against women and girls. This includes analysing funding demand, gaps and results to inform funding strategies, support coordinated action and advance a more coherent United Nations-wide funding framework to close the global funding gap.

Together, these efforts position the UN Trust Fund as both a strategic funder and a system-level catalyst, linking funding, evidence, learning and advocacy to deliver impact at scale.

These shifts underscore **the UN Trust Fund's unique role** as a United Nations system-wide instrument, operating under a General Assembly mandate to sustain women's rights organizations and programming to end violence against women and girls, through partnership approaches that connect more than 40 Member States, over 750 initiatives across 140 countries, and the United Nations system. The UN Trust Fund model supports UN80 reform to strengthen the gender architecture of the United Nations system.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030: INTENSIFYING EFFORTS FOR IMPACT



HOW WE FUND

Quality funding for all grants

Core, flexible funding with programmatic support. Minimum 4-year grant duration (ambition for 6+ years)

More agile and accessible grant-making

Annual cycles, open Calls and thematic windows. Simplified, multilingual processes

Strategic prioritization in constrained contexts

Explicit prioritization where risk, exclusion and funding gaps converge



HOW WE PARTNER

Comprehensive, tailored support model

Wraparound accompaniment, peer learning, well-being and advocacy visibility

Civil society at the centre of governance

Structural representation across advisory and oversight bodies

Globally dispersed Secretariat closer to partners

Regional hubs supported by HQ and satellite presence



SYSTEM-LEVEL IMPACT

Leave No One Behind & SDG impact

Twin-track approach prioritizing marginalized groups and advancing intersectionality

Evidence for Impact

Co-creating a context-sensitive definition of impact to inform policy

Funding, learning & accountability role

Leveraging demand data and portfolio evidence for action and coherence

5

DELIVERING THE STRATEGY



The UN Trust Fund provides a proven mechanism to channel resources directly to women's rights organizations, while aligning pooled financing, evidence generation and accountability with UN Women's system-wide coordination mandate on gender equality and ending violence against women and girls. This enables the UN Trust Fund to support country-level implementation, reinforce coherence across United Nations entities, and ensure that national, regional and global efforts are mutually reinforcing.

This Strategic Plan sets out how the UN Trust Fund will consolidate and scale this role – mobilizing increased quality resources, deepening partnership across the United Nations system, and advancing a coherent system-wide funding framework – so that women's organizations are better resourced, connected and positioned to drive transformative change to end violence against women and girls.

This section sets out how the UN Trust Fund will operationalize the strategy.

5.1. Prioritization, grant-making and funding decisions

Each funding cycle, the UN Trust Fund will agree a strategic funding prioritization framework with its governance and consultative mechanism and publish it in the Call for Proposals. It will guide the Trust Fund in deciding who, what and where to fund, aligned with its values, principles and strategic direction. These choices will help the UN Trust Fund maintain a diversified portfolio that reflects the global nature of violence against women and girls, spreads risk across contexts and maximizes opportunities for cross-regional learning and catalytic impact.
The framework will apply primarily to the **open Call for Proposals**, which covers the UN Trust Fund's full range of strategic priorities. The **strategic thematic funding windows** (previously called "special" windows) are designed to mobilize and channel resources towards a defined subset of these priorities. Each window is created in response to identified ecosystem risks, emerging gaps or areas facing acute underinvestment (e.g. crisis-affected settings, marginalized groups or particular regions) and is thus time-bound and issue-focused. This structure allows for more targeted fundraising and programming, while remaining firmly within the UN Trust Fund's overall strategic framework.

What types of initiatives will be funded

The UN Trust Fund will prioritize interventions focused on **addressing *all forms* of violence against structurally marginalized women and girls** across humanitarian, development and peace contexts. This will include investment across the **prevention–services–accountability continuum**, embedding organizational resilience in every grant and ensuring interventions are demand driven and context specific.

The portfolio will maintain a **proportional balance** between:

- **New initiatives** that test innovative ideas and/or are through organizations not previously funded by the United Nations
- **Scaling and adapting evidence-based models** to strengthen the evidence base and expand impact

This balance **allows the UN Trust Fund to invest in what works, explore new solutions and manage risk** across the portfolio. It also enables donors to support both innovation and proven approaches through a single pooled mechanism. To support sustainability and long-term change, funding may be strategically provided to current and former grantees where appropriate, enabling implementation periods to extend beyond four years. *Longer-term intervention periods are particularly needed for prevention as it takes time for social norm change and sustainable results to take root.*

The UN Trust Fund **will support cross-sectoral approaches** that address intersections between ending violence against women and girls and other SDGs, with particular attention to emerging and underresourced areas.

What types of organizations will be funded

Women's organizations will remain at the centre of the UN Trust Fund portfolio. This includes **WROs, constituent-led groups and other CSOs and community-based groups** that advance ending violence against women and girls at a local to national level. It also includes those organizations unable to self-identify as rights-focused due to context-specific risks.

The prioritization framework ensures that **women-led organizations** (WLOs) are consistently at the core of funding in all cases. The UN Trust Fund aims to support a balanced and diverse range of small, medium and larger women's organizations, in recognition of the unique role of each.

Constituent-led organizations – such as survivor-, youth-, disability-, Indigenous-, Afrodescendent- and girl-led groups – are explicitly elevated within the prioritization framework, recognizing that these actors are often closest to affected communities, least able to access institutional funding, and disproportionately impacted by funding shocks.

The UN Trust Fund will allow space for funding other partners where this extends reach and systemic impact and aligns with the strategic prioritization framework. Examples of previous partners include knowledge and research institutions, international non-governmental organizations, governments and United Nations country teams.

What regions will be funded

Grant applications will remain open to organizations based in **all Development Assistance Committee ODA-eligible countries**, with transparent prioritization criteria set in each Call for Proposals based on need and risk.

The UN Trust Fund will work to **balance geographic distribution**, with particular attention to regions experiencing compounding crises, shrinking civic space or limited access to international financing.

5.2. Funding targets and resource mobilization

Between 2026 and 2030, the UN Trust Fund aims to mobilize at least **US$ 150 million in pooled resources**, enabling new grants to be awarded each year and supporting delivery across the three Strategic Results Areas. This includes sustaining an active grants portfolio while investing in learning, advocacy and system-wide accountability functions that amplify impact. While ambitious, this target captures only a fraction of actual demand: the Cycle 29 Call for Proposals in 2025 attracted requests of over **US$ 2.1 billion**, underscoring both the strength of civil society and the scale of unmet need.

The UN Trust Fund's ambition is to meet this *minimum* commitment while demonstrating capacity to mobilize and deliver more, should additional resources become available for both grant-making and Secretariat costs.

Resource mobilization efforts

To deliver on its strategic priorities, the UN Trust Fund will implement a strengthened and diversified resource mobilization strategy focused on four areas:

1. **Deepening engagement with Member States** – broadening Member State engagement, particularly with the Global South and non-traditional partners while strengthening long-standing partnerships, to advance collective accountability for ending violence against women and girls
2. **Expanding non-traditional donor partnerships** – engaging private foundations, philanthropic networks, feminist funds and high-net-worth individuals committed to advancing gender equality and ending violence against women and girls
3. **Diversifying funding modalities and financing streams** – advancing pooled and aligned financing, joint mobilization with United Nations entities and feminist funds, and exploring innovative approaches such as blended finance, catalytic or impact investment instruments, and private sector collaborations that can increase the volume and predictability of resources reaching women's and women-led organizations
4. **Strengthening the donor community around shared values** – championing quality, multi-year, flexible funding and demonstrating the transformational results achieved when grass-roots women's rights and women-led organizations have sustained resources to drive prevention, services and accountability

The UN Trust Fund is not only aiming to raise more resources; it is committed to raising and delivering **quality resources**: multi-year, flexible, and grounded in partnership, accountability and adaptability.

While the UN Trust Fund will mobilize resources for both open Calls for Proposals and strategic thematic funding windows – enabling targeted support for specific needs, contexts or groups – as well as for ad hoc allocations and calls (like the COVID-19 response), it may also raise dedicated resources for specific learning and advocacy interventions across Strategic Results Areas.

All contributions will ideally continue to be unearmarked and pooled. Pooled and unearmarked funds are central to the UN Trust Fund's mandate and added value, ensuring that no form of violence, no region, and no group of women and girls is left behind. A pooled structure allows the UN Trust Fund to deliver on its General Assembly mandate by supporting the full breadth of interventions needed worldwide, while maximizing collective impact, reducing fragmentation, and enabling strategic, equitable allocation of resources. It also strengthens the ability to manage risk across a diverse portfolio and remain flexible in responding to emerging crises and opportunities. See Box 9.

BOX 9: **THE UN TRUST FUND'S DISTINCT ADDED VALUE FOR DONORS**

The UN Trust Fund provides donors with a tested, transparent pooled mechanism to fulfil multilateral and institutional commitments to end violence against women and girls. By contributing, donors gain:



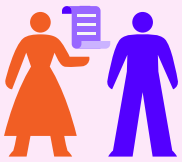
Reach and access

Resource hundreds of women's organizations, including WROs and WLOs, worldwide – many otherwise excluded from international financing.



Strategic influence

Translate practice-based knowledge into global policy spaces and strengthen accountability for commitments to end violence against women and girls across the United Nations system and Member States.



Impact and sustainability

Ensure every grant combines programmatic funding with core support, resilience, and wraparound services, delivering both immediate results and long-term change.



Flexibility and responsiveness

Contribute to open Calls for Proposals, strategic thematic funding windows, or targeted learning and advocacy interventions – all within a pooled structure that manages risk and adapts to emerging crises and opportunities.



Value for money

Benefit from rigorous fiduciary oversight, equitable allocation and reduced fragmentation through pooled financing.



Visibility and recognition

Achieve meaningful visibility for donor contributions while maintaining the UN Trust Fund's commitment to centring grantee partner voices and feminist leadership.

5.3. Governance and management

Governance, management and accountability are at the core of the UN Trust Fund's operation as an inter-agency pooled fund. **For the UN Trust Fund, governance is not only oversight; it is a tool for feminist-informed accountability, equity and shared leadership**.

The UN Trust Fund's structure reflects its core values – centring civil society, enabling multilateral cooperation, and ensuring that accountability is embedded in feminist funding practice.

The UN Trust Fund governance structure ensures that (see Figure 1):

- The Accountability pillar anchors the UN Trust Fund within the intergovernmental system, ensuring its legitimacy, fiduciary integrity and alignment with UN Women's mandate and the United Nations regulatory framework.
- The Advisory pillar complements this by embedding multi-stakeholder participation at every level of the UN Trust Fund's strategy and operations.

Together, these pillars balance intergovernmental oversight with participatory, feminist-informed mechanisms – strengthening the UN Trust Fund's transparency, responsiveness and credibility while elevating its visibility within the United Nations system as the primary global financing mechanism dedicated to ending violence against women and girls.

Accountability

As a defining element of feminist governance, accountability underpins the UN Trust Fund's legitimacy, credibility and relationships. It begins with formal, governance-linked mechanisms that ensure compliance and oversight, and extends into participatory practices that reflect the UN Trust Fund's feminist values and commitment to co-ownership.

a) **Governance-linked accountability anchors** the UN Trust Fund within the United Nations intergovernmental and regulatory frameworks, safeguarding fiduciary integrity and institutional legitimacy. It includes:

   - Annual reporting to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Human Rights Council, the UN Women Executive Board, and donors
   - Independent audits and evaluations of both the UN Trust Fund and individual grants
   - Adherence to UN Women's financial regulations, policies and audit requirements

b) **Operational and relational accountability** extends beyond formal oversight to encompass the UN Trust Fund's relationships with its grantees, civil society partners, and peers across the United Nations system. It is through this dimension that accountability becomes a practice of feminist-informed solidarity and shared leadership. It is realized through:

   - Transparent and competitive Calls for Proposals, with published eligibility criteria and evaluation summaries
   - Public reporting on grants and results through the UN Trust Fund website and Learning Hub
   - Regular dialogue and annual grantee and partner surveys capturing feedback on accessibility, reporting and support – informing continuous improvement

Together, these two dimensions form a continuum of accountability: one ensuring institutional compliance and oversight, the other fostering trust, participation, and learning. In this way, accountability functions not only as a governance requirement but as a living practice of feminist governance – bridging the UN Trust Fund's formal obligations with its relational commitments to those it serves.

Advisory

To make governance even more meaningful, the UN Trust Fund is embedding a strengthened model that ensures women's organizations and women's and feminist movement representatives are central and play a key advisory role:

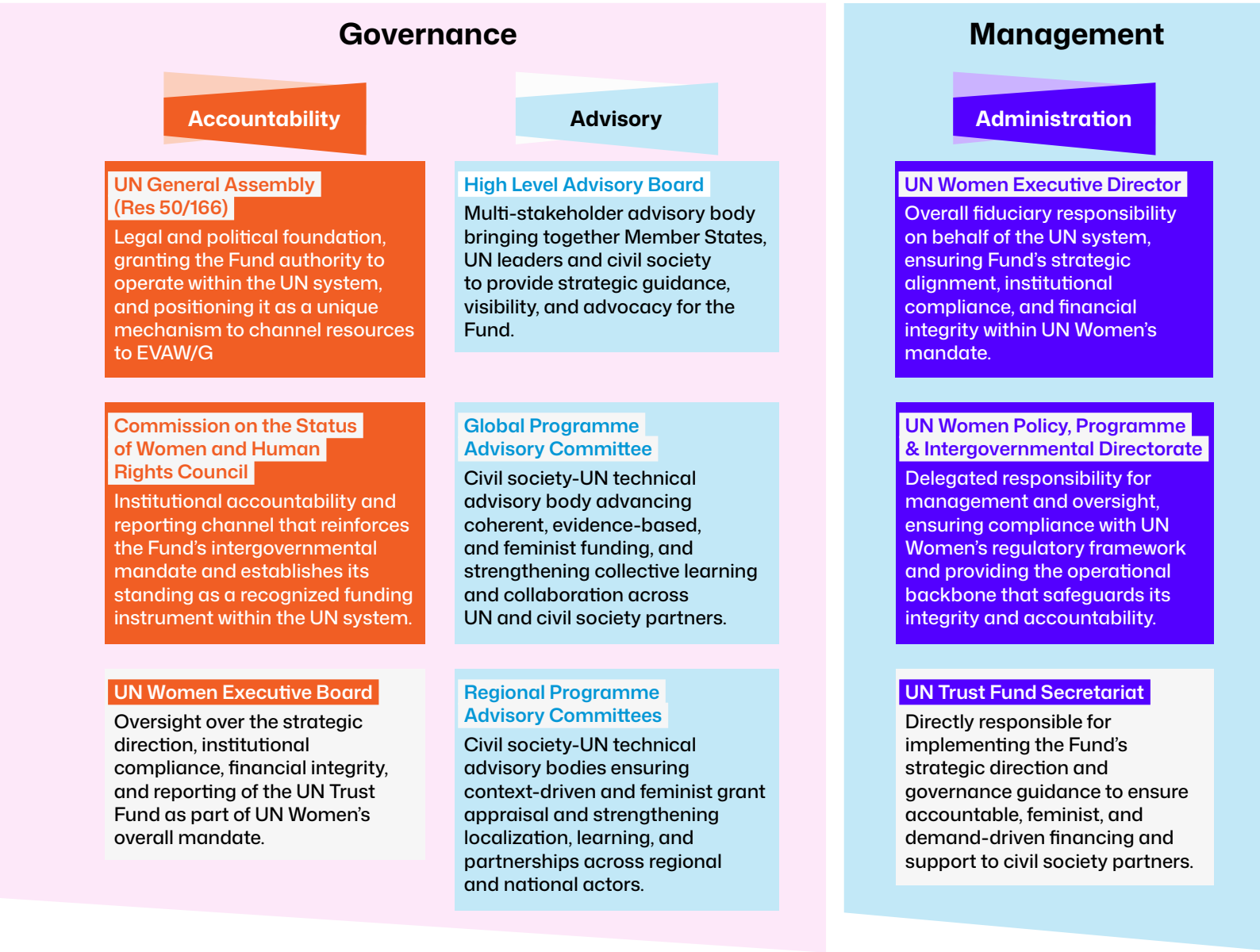
- **High-Level Advisory Board (new):** Convening annually, this Board will include civil society leaders alongside Member States, United Nations agencies and other strategic partners. Its role is to provide strategic guidance, champion the UN Trust Fund in multilateral and feminist spaces, and open opportunities for

growth, visibility and influence.

- **Programme Advisory Committees (global and regional):** Comprised of both civil society representatives and United Nations entities, these committees provide technical advice on priorities, facilitate knowledge exchange and review grant allocations. Civil society's presence ensures values are safeguarded and decision-making remains accountable to those most affected by violence.

By placing civil society in both the High-Level Advisory Board and Programme Advisory Committees, the UN Trust Fund ensures that women's organizations and movements are not only recipients of funding but co-governors in shaping the UN Trust Fund's direction. The UN Trust Fund will review governance arrangements periodically to ensure they remain inclusive, effective and aligned with evolving feminist principles and global best practice.

Figure 1: The UN Trust Fund governance and management structure



Management

Administration refers to the execution of decisions through UN Women and the UN Trust Fund Secretariat, which manage the UN Trust Fund's day-to-day operations in line with governance mandates.

Administration

The UN Trust Fund is administered by UN Women on behalf of the United Nations system. The UN Women Executive Director holds overall responsibility, delegated to the Policy, Programme and Intergovernmental Director. Day-to-day operations are led by the UN Trust Fund Chief and a globally distributed Secretariat team. The Secretariat manages the UN Trust Fund's grant-making portfolio and strategy, ensuring principled, locally led financing to civil society. Its core functions span five areas: (i) strategic planning, positioning and oversight; (ii) financial and operational management to ensure fiduciary integrity and risk-mitigation; (iii) partnerships, advocacy and resource mobilization; (iv) global grant-making, portfolio management and tailored accompaniment of grantees; and (v) knowledge generation, monitoring and evidence dissemination. Together, the team provides wraparound support to grantee partners – combining funding with technical guidance, capacity development, and evidence sharing – while also representing the UN Trust Fund in global policy, advocacy and inter-agency coordination spaces.

Being embedded in UN Women provides key strengths:

- A solid institutional framework for financial management, compliance, and fiduciary oversight
- Established, system-wide grant-making infrastructure – including standardized procedures, a multilingual online grants management system, and two decades of operational learning from administering multiple global funds – which reduce donor transaction costs and ensure transparent, efficient management
- Integration with UN Women's normative and coordination mandates on ending violence against women and girls
- Access to decentralized UN Women offices to extend outreach to civil society at country and regional levels

At the same time, the UN Trust Fund's inter-agency governance structure, feminist values and dedicated Secretariat ensure that operations remain distinct, mission-driven and partner-centred.

5.4. People and operations

People, systems and safeguards bring the UN Trust Fund's values and principles to life, ensuring that resources are managed with care and accountability. The combination of rigorous financial stewardship with feminist-informed ways of working makes the UN Trust Fund more than a donor – it is a partner that strengthens organizations and movements to thrive in complex environments.

Through its people, operating framework and risk management, the UN Trust Fund models feminist-informed operations in practice. By listening to and learning from grantee partners, it continuously refines its internal approaches, making them more accessible and responsive, while also using this learning to advocate for better practices across the United Nations system. In this way, operations contribute directly to Strategic Results Areas, particularly in strengthening feminist-informed systems and organizational resilience.

People

The UN Trust Fund Secretariat is a dedicated, multidisciplinary team with **deep expertise** in ending violence against women and girls, grant-making and management, feminist-informed funding, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, communications, and partnership development and management. Secretariat staff are **globally representative**, bringing diverse experiences, cultures and linguistic capacities, and increasingly drawn from the communities that grantee partners serve.

In line with UN Women's pivot to the regions, personnel are **based across key regions** in Bangkok, Istanbul, Panama City and Nairobi, with global headquarters in Bonn and a satellite office in New York. This structure allows the UN Trust Fund to work across time zones, bring regionally grounded perspectives, and remain close to the realities of grantee partners.

The UN Trust Fund's **comprehensive support and tailored accompaniment ensures that each grantee partner** has a dedicated Portfolio Manager, Finance support staff, monitoring, evaluation staff, as well as communications staff. This holistic approach enables one-to-one, context-specific accompaniment when needed, as well as network-wide support through webinars, tools and learning exchanges. It ensures compliance and responsive tailored support, strengthening resilience and enabling sustainable results. It is what makes the UN Trust Fund *more than a donor.*

The UN Trust Fund aims to embody its feminist-informed values internally. Its human resource strategies promote diversity, equity, continuous learning and feminist leadership, while prioritizing well-being, anti-harassment measures, and care-informed management for staff and partners. This holistic model strengthens both programmatic delivery and organizational health, ensuring that partners emerge from grants stronger, more resilient and better positioned to sustain results.

Operating framework

The UN Trust Fund's operating framework employs a systems approach where compliance, capacity-building and accessibility interconnect seamlessly to create the conditions for transformative impact.

Stewarding resources with integrity, accountability and care

The UN Trust Fund's operations are governed by UN Women's institutional systems, with guardrails for transparency, accountability and value for money. The operating framework aspires to be agile, adaptive, and responsive to partners, embedding feminist-informed principles in the way we manage resources and relationships.

A cornerstone of this framework is the UN Trust Fund's **capacity-development package** (as part of the wraparound support model), which accompanies every grant. Partners receive support on the principled design of their initiative, technical and strategic programming and implementation monitoring, ethics and safety, financial accountability, and communications – delivered through one-to-one accompaniment and network-wide learning. This package is continuously refined based on feedback and independent evaluation to ensure relevance and that organizations not only deliver projects, but also strengthen their systems and sustainability.

To strengthen accessibility, the UN Trust Fund is committed to making funding as inclusive as possible. It continues to assess and, where possible, simplify forms and reporting, and provide multilingual guidance. With decentralization, the UN Trust Fund is looking at opportunities to better adapt the dissemination of Calls for Proposals to each regional setting for greater accessibility.

The UN Trust Fund upholds clear service standards: predictable decision timelines for grant-making, timely tranche disbursements and responsive multilingual help desk support. Standards are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain effective and equitable. They provide transparency for partners and accountability for the UN Trust Fund.

Audit and assurance mechanisms remain a cornerstone of UN Trust Fund integrity. Alongside them, the Project Performance Assessment Criteria function as an early warning system to identify and address delivery challenges before they escalate. These measures safeguard donor resources, protect portfolio health and generate lessons that directly strengthen support to partners.

The UN Trust Fund operating framework links directly to its work on feminist-informed operations. By applying the same principles internally that the UN Trust Fund promotes externally, and by advocating within the United Nations system for simpler, more accessible processes, the UN Trust Fund models how feminist-informed approaches to risk, compliance and stewardship can create the conditions for transformative change.

Risk and resilience

The UN Trust Fund supports organizations operating in volatile and complex contexts. Its approach to risk management is feminist-informed and adaptive: **risk is not only something to mitigate, but is an enabler of impact, especially when countering the backlash**. The UN Trust Fund's risk management framework includes real-time monitoring through a risk and incident register, which enables streamlined escalation

and response pathways, and helps monitor trends and support greater proactivity.

Key features include:

- Comprehensive risk assessments at portfolio and grant levels, updated regularly
- Integration with UN Women's Enterprise Risk Management framework to ensure systemic and high-level risks are escalated through established corporate channels and addressed in line with UN Women's risk taxonomy and standards
- Review of programmatic and strategic risks at the General Programme Advisory Committee and/or High-Level Advisory Board level, respectively, to strengthen oversight, ensure shared accountability, and guide risk-informed decision-making across the UN Trust Fund's portfolio and operations
- Context-sensitive due diligence that identifies capacity gaps and generates tailored support
- Flexibility in project implementation to adapt to crises or shocks
- Clear protocols to manage emerging risks, safeguard survivors and staff, and uphold duty of care
- Provision for security-related and contingency costs within grant budgets
- Recognition of digital threats – such as online harassment and surveillance – with commitments to expand support for digital safety

Safeguarding is central. The UN Trust Fund upholds a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment, embedding mandatory standards in all grant agreements and capacity development. The UN Trust Fund also applies survivor-safe data practices, upholding privacy, consent, and minimization standards to ensure that evidence is collected ethically and never at the expense of safety or dignity.

Resilience is both a means and an outcome of UN Trust Fund support. By embedding organizational resilience into every grant, supporting safety and security costs, well-being, self- and collective care, and engaging partners in risk dialogue, the UN Trust Fund aims to support their ability not only to protect staff and organizational assets and withstand shocks but also to adapt, innovate and lead in uncertain contexts.

By continuously listening to and learning from partners, the UN Trust Fund not only refines its own practices but also advocates for system-wide improvements that make funding more accessible, flexible, and transformative. This is how the UN Trust operationalizes its values – and how it models feminist-informed operations across the ending violence against women and girls ecosystem.

6

ACCELERATING OUR PARTNERSHIP – A CALL FOR JOINT ACTION



The elimination of violence against women and girls is urgent, possible, and indispensable to achieving gender equality, peace, and sustainable development. The challenges are profound – from systemic backlash to shrinking resources – but the opportunities are equally historic. With the United Nations at a moment of renewal and reform, and Member States having reaffirmed their commitments on ending violence against women at Beijing+30, there is both an obligation and a pathway to act decisively.

The UN Trust Fund brings a unique and proven offer: a General Assembly–mandated, system-wide, inter-agency, pooled financing and accountability mechanism that delivers resources where they matter most – to women's organizations supporting structurally marginalized women and girls across humanitarian, development and peace contexts, including in crisis-affected and underserved contexts.

This Strategic Plan is more than an internal road map. It is a collective call to Member States, donors, United Nations entities, and civil society partners to join us in pushing back on the backlash, scaling proven solutions, and standing with women's and feminist movements worldwide. Together, through resourcing, resilience, and results, we can realize the right of all women and girls to live a life free from violence.

We invite all our partners to walk this path with us – to match commitments with action, and to ensure that by 2030, we have moved decisively closer to a world where every woman and girl can live free from violence.

Annex A: Consultation record

The following organizations, associations and groups served as key informants and were consulted through either interviews or focus group discussions as part of the development of the UN Trust Fund Strategic Plan 2026–2030. The UN Trust Fund expresses its sincere gratitude to all listed below for their contribution to the Strategic Plan development process.

Key informant groups	Representatives
Strategic Advisory Group	• Laila Alodaat, Executive Director, Prospera • Jody Myrum, Founder and Director, Our Collective Practice • Vanessa Thomas, Program Manager, Black Feminist Fund • Fanta Toure, Director, Girls First Fund • Joanne Sandler, Senior Associate, Gender at Work • Elizabeth Dartnall, Executive Director, Sexual Violence Research Institute • Nisha Pahuja, freelance filmmaker, writer, producer and researcher – Stand with Her campaign • Susana Chávez, Director, PROMSEX Centro de Promoción y Defensa de los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos • Humaira Shaikh, Director Programs, Shirkat Gah • Monica Aleman Cunningham, International Program Director, Gender, Ethnic and Racial Justice – Ford Foundation • Teresa Zapeta, Executive Director, FIMI • Hala Al-Karib, Regional Director, SIHA
Grantee Reference Group	• Zinet Yimer, ELiDA, Ethiopia • Atinuke Odukoya, CEWHIN, Nigeria • Clarisse Reberteau Gouraud, DMF, Central African Republic • Socheat Thak, CWCC, Cambodia • Arvintaria Nordogjav, NCAV, Mongolia • Tikadevi Dahal, NDWA, Nepal • Liz Meléndez, Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán, Peru • María Fernanda Rascón Rojas, Infancia Común, Mexico • Patricia Viviana Ponce-Pascuale, Haurralde Fundaziao, Guatemala • Taban Shoresh, The Lotus Flower, Iraq • Randa Siniora, WCLAC, State of Palestine • Jeannette Frangieh, Himaya Daeem Aataa, Lebanon • Vicky Fletcher, Women's Centre Gulrukhsor, Tajikistan • Biljana Stepanov, Centre for Support of Women, Serbia • Veprore Shehu, Medica Kosova, Kosovo • Wangechi Wachira, CREAW, Kenya • Natsnet Ghebrebrhan, Raising Voices, Uganda
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Annex B: Theory of change



Vision

A world where *all* women and girls live free from all forms of violence, able to exercise their rights, voice and agency – essential for gender equality, sustainable development, peace and justice.



Mission

To ensure that quality funding and comprehensive support reach those driving change, especially women's organizations; to support other partners to accelerate progress; to generate evidence, advocate and convene partners to strengthen the global ending violence against women and girls ecosystem; and to uphold accountability for the right of every woman and girl to live free from *all forms* of violence.

IMPACT

More women and girls – especially the most structurally marginalized – live free from all forms of violence, stigma and discrimination, across humanitarian, development and peace contexts.

THEMATIC OUTCOMES AND THEMATIC RESULTS

Prevention	Access to services	Accountability
Improved prevention of violence against women and girls through changes in behaviours, practices, attitudes, socioeconomic opportunities and leadership	Improved access for women and girls to essential, specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services	Increased effectiveness of legislation, policies, national action plans and strengthened accountability systems and data to prevent, monitor and end violence against women and girls

DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC RESULTS AREAS

Quality funding	Learning and impact	Convening and advocacy
Delivering quality funding for **sustainable EVAW/G results and organizational resilience**	Co-creating data, evidence and practice-based knowledge **for impact and learning on EVAW/G**	Convening and advocating **for system-wide accountability and movement building**
CSOs and WROs benefit from quality funding that is responsive to demand-driven programmatic and organizational needs, for sustainable EVAW/G results and organizational resilience	Data, evidence and practice-based knowledge co-created through collaborative partnerships are used to shape programming, policy, and global strategies for EVAW/G	The EVAW/G ecosystem is strengthened through enhanced coordination and partnership among actors, amplified visibility and advocacy of CSOs and feminist movements, and increased commitments and resources from Member States and donors

DEVELOPMENT OUTPUTS

The UN Trust Fund provides quality funding to CSOs and WROs with context-specific, programmatic, operational and organizational budget allocations	The UN Trust Fund delivers comprehensive wraparound support including capacity-building, technical assistance and accompaniment	The UN Trust Fund generates and disseminates data, evidence and practice-based knowledge, co-created with CSOs, WROs and partnerships	The UN Trust Fund convenes EVAW/G stakeholders and amplifies the visibility and advocacy of CSOs, WROs and feminist movements through communications, global platform engagement and resource mobilization

CSO: civil society organization. EVAW/G: ending violence against women and girls. WRO: women's rights organization.

ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OUTPUTS				
Accountability and performance The UN Trust Fund demonstrates the financial and operational accountability of its global grants portfolio through risk management, oversight, monitoring and reporting.	**Resource partnerships and communications** The UN Trust Fund mobilizes reliable, long-term funding for its grants operations, and effectively manages advocacy, communication, and relationships with donors and external parties.	**Business transformation and innovation** The UN Trust Fund drives innovation and sustainability by improving operational processes, and by ensuring fair, transparent and demand-informed grant selection processes.	**Empowered people** UN Trust Fund staff are empowered through leadership and learning opportunities in a work environment that reflects diversity and inclusion, promotes professionalism and supports the welfare of personnel.	**Programme effectiveness through rbm** The UN Trust Fund advances impact through results-based management, robust monitoring and timely reporting.

Annex C: Glossary, terms and definitions

This annex is intended to help users and readers understand the Strategic Plan. The entries in this annex do not represent institutional definitions unless official sources are explicitly cited. The definitions applicable to the work of the UN Trust Fund are context specific and may evolve over time as the UN Trust Fund continues to learn and adapt.

Term	Definition
Civil society organizations (CSOs)	Non-State, not-for-profit voluntary entities, formed by people in the social sphere, that are separate from the State and the market. CSOs represent a wide range of interests and ties. CSOs include but are not limited to community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, youth-led organizations, LGBTIQ+ organizations, faith-based organizations and academic institutions. The definition of CSOs does not include business or for-profit associations. (Source: UN Women)
Comprehensive support	The UN Trust Fund Comprehensive Support includes at minimum for grantee partners: • Tailored accompaniment from Portfolio Managers through regional hubs for context-sensitive support • Financial and operational support through dedicated programme and finance focal points • Capacity development on operational and programmatic skills (e.g. on programming principles and knowledge for ending violence against women and girls, and on practical feminist tools and peer learning across regions) • Embedded funding and guidance for self-care and collective care, plus contingency resources to adapt to crises and shocks • Support to mobilize additional resources (e.g. through referrals to other donors), plus visibility and advocacy platforms to amplify grantee voices • Knowledge co-created with partners, curated and shared across the ending violence against women and girls ecosystem for influence, with insights feeding back into funding priorities
Core funding	For the UN Trust Fund, core funding (also referred to as unrestricted funding) is flexible financial support that can be used for costs not directly attributable to a specific project. It covers essential organizational expenses such as management, governance and board functions, innovation and project development, fundraising, partnership and stakeholder engagement, internal and external coordination, quality assurance, and organizational policies, procedures and systems.
Ending violence against women and girls ecosystem	The various women's and feminist movements, civil society actors, States, United Nations entities, and partners that collectively work to realize women and girls' right to live free from violence, anchored in international human rights norms and standards.
Feminist/women's movements	Feminist/women's movements can be described as social movements with certain feminist and gendered characteristics. Their agenda is built from a gendered analysis of the problem or situation they are confronting or seeking to change. Women form a critical mass of the movement's membership or constituency, and the women are the subjects, not objects or targets, of the movement. (Primary source: Association for Women's Rights in Development)
Flexible funding	Flexible financial support that allows women's organizations to set their own priorities (demand-driven needs), respond to changing circumstances, needs and opportunities, and cover their essential operating costs. For the UN Trust Fund, flexible funding refers to the following budget categories: Indirect Cost, Flexible Funding and a Contingency Line.

Term	Definition
Intersectional approach	An intersectional approach to violence against women and girls includes a consideration of where gender intersects with other inequalities and oppressions (sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity, age, Indigeneity, immigration status, disability) to produce unique experiences of violence. By understanding the many ways in which violence is perpetrated and experienced, an intersectional praxis can design and develop appropriate context-specific responses when addressing violence against women and girls. An intersectional approach derives from the concept of "intersectionality" originally formulated by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw.
Leave No One Behind	Leave No One Behind and reaching the furthest behind first are the central promises of the 2030 Agenda. They represent the commitment of the United Nations to address the multidimensional causes of poverty, inequalities and discrimination. They help to reduce the vulnerability of the most marginalized in society, including non-citizens.
Organizational resilience	In the context of women's organizations working to end violence against women and girls, organizational resilience is the power (ability, capacity) of women's organizations to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, adapt to, learn from and thrive through crises, challenges and changing circumstances. These challenges may be internal and external, and be within a context of systemic discrimination against women, girls and marginalized groups, and the organizations that represent them. Organizational resilience enables organizations to maintain operational continuity in accordance with feminist values, serve communities, and protect and empower staff while progressing towards goals in ending violence against women and girls.
Practice-based knowledge	The cumulative knowledge acquired from designing and implementing ideas and methodologies over a sustained time frame, including insights gained from observation, direct experiences and programme monitoring. Grounded in feminist, Indigenous and community-led practice, practice-based knowledge captures insights that emerge from doing, adapting and reflecting over time. (Inspired by Raising Voices)
Practice-based learning	The cumulative journey of intentional learning over time, informed by insights gained from direct experiences, observations, stories, informal reflections, monitoring processes and more. Practice-based learning builds collective understanding over time to strengthen strategies for change and accountability. (Inspired by Raising Voices)
Programme Advisory Committee	The consultative committees of the UN Trust Fund, composed of representatives from United Nations entities, civil society and external experts. Programme Advisory Committees review and make recommendations on grant applications received through Calls for Proposals, ensuring alignment with the UN Trust Fund's mandate, strategic priorities and eligibility criteria. They operate at both regional and global levels, providing an inter-agency and expert mechanism to safeguard the transparency, accountability and quality of the UN Trust Fund's grant-making.
Small organizations	For the UN Trust Fund (in 2025), small organizations are those with an annual organizational budget less than US$ 200,000 (on average) in the past three years.
Strategic funding window	A targeted funding stream for specific types of interventions, contexts, forms of violence, organizations or groups of women and girls.
Structurally marginalized groups	Women and girls who face systemic marginalization and intersecting forms of discrimination due to factors such as age, disability, displacement, Indigeneity, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status and minority status (ethnicity, race, caste). This includes adolescent girls, older women, women with disabilities, forcibly displaced women and girls, Indigenous women, LGBTIQ+ people and others. The inclusion of "structurally" reflects that marginalization is embedded in power relations and systemic inequalities, rather than arising from personal vulnerability or circumstance.

Term	Definition
United Nations system	The intergovernmental organs, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and inter-agency mechanisms of the United Nations, working collectively in line with the Charter of the United Nations, human rights instruments and intergovernmental mandates.
Violence against women	Violence against women is defined as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." (Source: Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, article 1) UN Women traditionally uses the term "violence against women" primarily in its policy and advocacy work, defined as "violence which is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately". This includes violence faced by women who have actual or perceived sexual and/or romantic relations with other women, including lesbian and bisexual women, transgender women and women who are otherwise perceived as defying sexual or gender norms.
Violence against women and girls	In line with the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and its own work, and in this Strategic Plan, the UN Trust Fund includes violence against girls in the definition of violence against women (see above).
Women-led organizations (WLOs)	To be considered a "women-led organization", an organization must demonstrate that it is governed and led by women. This requires evidence that a minimum of 51 per cent of leadership positions across various decision-making levels in the organization, including at management, senior management and board levels, are held by women.
Women's organizations	For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, the term "women's organizations" (sometimes referred to as WOs) refers to organizations whose core mission is to advance women's rights and gender equality. This includes self-identified women's rights organizations (WROs), constituent-led groups (e.g. survivor, youth, Indigenous, Afrodescendent, disability-led, girl-led), other civil society organizations (CSOs), and community-based groups. While the UN Trust Fund prioritizes women's organizations, it may also resource a wider ecosystem of CSOs and, where this extends reach and impact, other partners, in line with its General Assembly mandate. This also reflects the reality that some organizations cannot self-identify as feminist and/or human rights-focused due to context-specific risks. In all cases, the UN Trust Fund prioritizes women-led organizations (WLOs), irrespective of partner type, with a clear focus on those dedicated to – and experienced in – ending violence against women and girls.
Women's rights organizations (WROs)	WROs are organizations whose core work is in the field of women's rights, gender equality, the elimination of violence against women and girls and/or sexual and gender-based violence. To be considered a "women's rights organization", an organization must demonstrate that its core work is in the field of women's rights, gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and sexual and gender-based violence. The organization's official mission and vision statements must reflect its commitment to pursuing gender equality and empowering women and girls.

Annex D: Overview of the UN Trust Fund grant-making and support model

Grant-making and support steps	Key features
1. Setting and adapting funding priorities *The UN Trust Fund decides what to fund by listening to women's organizations, analysing evidence and responding to demand.*	• Global data, trends and analysis, including UN Trust Fund portfolio-wide data, humanitarian and crisis risk signals, and emerging forms of violence • Annual analysis of application demand, disaggregated by region, population group, form of violence and operating context • Regional hubs bring local perspectives through partner consultations, including with women's organizations and UN Women regional and country offices • Priorities validated by UN Trust Fund governance mechanisms, including CSO Advisory function and Programme Advisory Committees • Annual Funding Priorities Note/Scoping Study prepared to inform Calls for Proposals, articulating strategic focus areas, trade-offs and risk considerations • Feedback and input from Member States and key donors, balanced with the UN Trust Fund's independent mandate and feminist, demand-driven approach • Rapid Reviews during the year to inform ad hoc Calls for Proposals or adaptive funding adjustments in response to crises, backlash or emerging risks
2. Predictable Calls for Proposals and strategic thematic windows *The UN Trust Fund provides open, regular entry points for funding while staying flexible to respond to emerging needs.*	• Demand-driven annual or biennial open, global Calls for Proposals as the core grant-making modality (if biennial, applications will be retained – with consent – for grant-making consideration in the following year) • Strategic thematic funding windows targeting underserved groups, contexts or forms of violence (e.g. women and girls with disabilities, Indigenous women, climate-risk contexts, technology-facilitated violence against women and girls) • Ad hoc Calls for Proposals, simplified or invitation-only processes, and grant top-ups used where speed, targeting or continuity of support is essential
3. Transparent, strategic prioritization *The UN Trust Fund is explicit about who it funds, what it funds and where it funds, guided by a clear framework.*	• A prioritization framework that applies consistent criteria to ensure fairness, while intentionally directing a greater share of resources towards the Strategic Plan's priorities – particularly the Leave No One Behind principle; crisis-, conflict- and climate-affected settings (i.e. complex settings); technology-facilitated and other emerging forms of violence; adolescent girls; and women's economic empowerment as a prevention pathway – supported, where relevant, through strategic thematic funding windows • Who is funded: Women's organizations at the centre, inclusive of WROs, CSOs and constituent-led groups; primarily women-led, with scope to fund other partners where strategically justified; supporting a diverse mix of small, medium and larger women's organizations • What is funded: Prevention, services and accountability interventions, with organizational resilience embedded across all grants; focused on ending all forms of violence against structurally marginalized women and girls; balancing innovation with the scaling up of proven approaches • Where funding flows: All Development Assistance Committee ODA-eligible countries are eligible; aiming for balanced geographic distribution across regions and across the humanitarian, development and peace contexts, while ensuring resources reach underserved regions and contexts *The above primarily applies to open Calls for Proposals, which are designed to achieve a diversified, risk-balanced portfolio aligned with the Strategic Plan. Strategic thematic funding windows enable targeted resource mobilization and grant-making for specific priority groups, contexts or forms of violence within this overall framework.*

Grant-making and support steps	Key features
4. Accessible application and fair review *The UN Trust Fund ensures that all grant-making processes are transparent, accessible, and fair, while applying rigorous and proportionate review standards.*	• Targeted multilingual tools, webinars and guidance to support applicants – particularly small and first-time United Nations grant applicants – to navigate requirements and strengthen submissions • A staged, independent review process using standardized appraisal criteria and scoring tools, ensuring consistency, comparability and fairness across all applications • Second-round review of applications receiving a positive initial recommendation, enabling the UN Trust Fund to identify and maintain a robust pool of high-potential or fundable proposals, independent of immediate resource availability • Expert and context-informed reviewer assignment, matching applications as closely as possible to relevant thematic, regional and contextual expertise, while applying measures to enhance comparability across organization size, region and form of violence • Strong governance and assurance measures throughout the review process, including confidentiality, data protection and conflict-of-interest safeguards, with final grant decisions guided by the agreed strategic prioritization framework and calibrated consideration for the realities of small and newer organizations
5. Quality funding *Every grant combines programmatic and organizational support, with flexibility built in to enable adaptation and resilience.*	• Hybrid grants that integrate programmatic and organizational funding, including flexible resources to support resilience, care and adaptation • Standard four-year grant duration, with ambition to expand to six-year grants where strategic, feasible and adequately resourced • Expanded access to hybrid funding through a simplified budget line to support self- and collective care, capacity development, security, accessibility, and other organizational priorities, in addition to contingency and indirect costs • Built-in budget flexibility allowing partners to adjust allocations in-year in response to evolving contexts and needs An accessible, multilingual grants management system, accompanied by technical support to enable effective application, reporting and grant management
6. Comprehensive, tailored support, including global evidence generation and strategic advocacy *The UN Trust Fund is more than a donor: every grant is accompanied by comprehensive support, learning, evidence generation, opportunities for advocacy and influence.*	• Tailored accompaniment from Portfolio Managers through regional hubs, ensuring context-sensitive, relationship-based support • Capacity development on operational and programmatic skills, including ending violence against women and girls programming principles, feminist and practical tools, and peer learning across regions • Embedded funding and guidance for self- and collective care, alongside contingency resources to adapt to crises and shocks • Support to mobilize additional resources, including referrals to other donors, as well as visibility and advocacy platforms to amplify grantee voices • Cohort-based learning and knowledge exchange, including facilitated peer learning, webinars and communities of practice to strengthen effective approaches across contexts • Knowledge co-created with partners is curated and elevated into global evidence and policy spaces, including intergovernmental reporting and advocacy, informing standards, financing and accountability, while systematically feeding insights back into Step 1

Endnotes

[1] Regional instruments adopted or ratified include: the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Convention of Belém do Pará, 1994) in Latin America and the Caribbean; the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention, 2011) in Europe; the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol, 2003); and the African Union Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU-CEVAWG, 2025), the continent's first dedicated legal treaty on ending violence against women and girls.

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[23] A. Erikson, S. Majumdar, *Beyond backlash: Advancing movements to end violence against women and girls; Insights from grantee partners of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women* (New York, UN Women, 2025).

[24] The Equality Institute, The Accelerator for GBV Prevention, *What counts?*; Count Me In! Consortium, "Open statement regarding accessibility of Spotlight Initiative funding", *Mama Cash* (2020); and What Works to Prevent Violence, *Preventing violence against women and girls in 2022: Listening and learning from the sector* (London, 2022).

[25] S. Guizzardi, *Unlocking potential and supporting resilience: A look at the growing evidence for unrestricted funding*, Blog, 25

February 2025 (Cambridge, Center for Effective Philanthropy).

[26] For a discussion of "quality funding" in the humanitarian context, see B. Willitts-King, V. Metcalfe-Hough, "Improving quality humanitarian funding through the Grand Bargain 2.0", Comment, 14 June 2021 (London, Overseas Development Institute).

[27] African Women's Development Fund (AWDF), Raising Voices, Preventing violence against women: A primer for African women's organisations (Accra, AWDF, 2019); and Raising Voices, "Nurturing & elevating practice-based learning", Learning from Practice Series No. 8: Organizational Perspectives (Kampala, Raising Voices, 2022).

[28] For example: Alliance for Feminist Movements, "Hey funders: Here's what young feminist leaders need from you!", Webinar Brief (20 February 2024).

[29] In the 2021–2025 Strategic Plan, the UN Trust Fund counted the number of organizations by their own self-identification. In this case 70% self-identified as "WROs". In applying the definition used in this Strategic Plan (see Annex C), 100% of CSOs funded would also be classified as "women's organizations".

[30] For the UN Trust Fund (in 2025), "small organizations" are those with an annual organizational budget lower than US$ 200,000 (on average) in the past three years.

[31] UN Trust Fund, Mid-term review.

[32] AWID, *Toward a feminist funding ecosystem*.

[33] "Leave No One Behind" means an intentional focus on addressing multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination, including on the basis of age, sex, race, ethnicity, disability, location, migration and displacement, Indigenous, socioeconomic and other status. UN Women tackles persistent structural barriers, unequal power relations, and discriminatory laws and practices, which perpetuate inequalities across generations.

[34] Ensuring that survivors and those at risk can access coordinated health, justice, police, and social support services that are safe, high-quality, and survivor-centred – aspiring to deliver these in line with the United Nations Essential Services Package standards.

[35] Practice-based knowledge is the cumulative knowledge acquired from designing and implementing ideas and methodologies over a sustained timeframe, including insights gained from observation, direct experiences, and programme monitoring. *Definition inspired by Raising Voices and the African Women' Development Fund (AWDF)*.

[36] UN Women, *Gender Equality Accelerators* (New York, 2024).



UN TRUST FUND TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS



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