

Bangladesh



gnwp Global Network of Women Peacebuilders



ICAN International Civil Society Action Network
For women's rights, peace and security



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Permanent Mission of Sweden
to the United Nations, New York



The High-Level Meeting on Innovative Solutions for Feminist Financing for Peacebuilding

Concept Note

26 April 2022, 1:15pm-2:45pm EDT

Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations,
1 Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, New York, NY 10017

Participation is also available Via Zoom Online Platform at: <https://bit.ly/Feminist-Financing>

**Organised by the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP),
Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC),
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), Kvinna till Kvinna,
Permanent Missions of Bangladesh, Ireland, Sierra Leone and Sweden to the United Nations,
UN Women, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and
the Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action (WPS-HA) Compact**

Background

The lack of adequate, flexible, predictable, and sustainable financing for peacebuilding work continues to be a major challenge to inclusive and sustainable peace and the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. The challenge to women peacebuilders attempting to access resources is two-fold: insufficient resourcing and limited quality of available funding.

First, there is *insufficient resourcing* of women-led peacebuilding. Of the available funds for peacebuilding, only a small percentage goes towards gender-inclusive peacebuilding and the work of women peacebuilders. The proportion of bilateral aid to conflict-affected countries that has gender equality as the primary objective has been stuck at only 5% since 2010, and only 0.2% of this goes directly to women's organisations.¹

This data does not take into consideration the fact that peacebuilding takes place across the peace continuum. Women lead peacebuilding action to prevent violence in countries that may not yet be considered to be affected by conflict; however, women rarely have the opportunity to access peacebuilding resources. Women also respond to the violence associated with shrinking civic space, political crises and takeover of power, where donors are likely to freeze resources until a stable government is established.

¹ Jen Ross, "Chronically underfunded, women peacebuilders need support more than ever", UN Women, 29 October 2020, <https://data.unwomen.org/features/chronically-underfunded-women-peace-builders-need-support-more-ever>

Second, *the quality of available financing* remains an extraordinary barrier. The majority of existing mechanisms of channeling money to local women peacebuilders require further inquiry into their ability to achieve meaningful impact. There are several reasons for this, including the perception of incapacity of local women peacebuilders and resulting high transactional costs, the lack of flexibility and resulting limitations on women's ability to adapt to changing situation on the ground, increased projectisation of peacebuilding and resulting lack of institutional long-term institutional support, and other challenges. Without ensuring that available resources produce meaningful impact on the ground are structured to optimise meaningful impact on the ground, the WPS Agenda will neither be realised nor achieve its intended goals.

Despite the challenges, there are *numerous efforts* by Member States, multilateral partners, private sector and civil society to ensure that needed resources are available and meaningfully support feminist peacebuilding action at the country level. While donors face internal limitations connected to financing mechanisms for women-led peacebuilding, there are examples of commendable efforts by the donor community efforts to overcome obstacles to strengthen the impact of financing. The Women, Peace and Security – Humanitarian Action (WPS-HA) Compact Framework provides a clear path to take concerted action on WPS, including on financing the WPS and improving women's access to resources. Specific commitments include *1) investing in system-wide gender capacity; 2) including local women and women's organisations in decision-making related to peacebuilding; and 3) providing funding for comprehensive, non-discriminatory services and protection, as well as for gender capacity in investigation and accountability mechanisms, to name a few*. To operationalise these commitments, donors continue to consider various tools such as, direct funding for local women peacebuilders, the creation of pooled funds, revisiting their relationships with intermediaries towards more authentic partnerships and continuing to explore other meaningful and innovative tools.

About the roundtable

To support continuous exploration of more impactful tools to support women-led peacebuilding, the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), Kvinna till Kvinna, MADRE, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) have developed a background paper titled [“Feminist Solutions for more Impactful Financing for Peacebuilding”](#).² This background paper outlines the existing best practices in feminist financing and outlines seven recommendations for consideration by the donor community. These recommendations were discussed in a series of informal roundtable discussions leading to the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding.

This roundtable will provide an opportunity for the Member States, multilateral partners, private sector, and civil society to identify concrete actions needed for more inclusive, impactful and fit-for-purpose financing in the follow-up of the High-Level Meeting. Specifically, the participants are invited to share how the institutions they represent can commit to enhancing current financing mechanisms by drawing upon some of the recommendations from the [“Feminist Solutions for more Impactful Financing for Peacebuilding”](#) paper. Furthermore, the participants are welcome to jointly reflect on the possibility of ensuring that such efforts take into consideration principles of quality financing and are implemented to ensure the highest possible impact at the country level.

² The Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), Kvinna till Kvinna, MADRE, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), 2021, Fund Us Like You Want Us To Win: Feminist Solutions for more Impactful Financing for Peacebuilding Background Paper for the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding, accessible at: <https://gnwp.org/fund-us-like-you-want-us-to-win/>

The discussion will be guided by the following questions:

1. What type of mechanisms work for women peacebuilders operating on the ground? What are the key principles donors should take into consideration to maximise the impact of funding? How can this be supported by donors, host countries and other actors?
2. What are some examples of concerted action on Women, Peace and Security, including on financing the WPS agenda and ensuring women's access to resources? What are the potential and/or evident benefits of such financial mechanisms? How can the existing commitments to financing for women peacebuilders be materialised?
3. How can the donor community capitalise on the opportunity presented at the High-Level Meeting on Financing for Peacebuilding? How can civil society and the WPS-HA Compact support further efforts to encourage the thinking and action towards more impactful and feminist financing for peacebuilding?

The agenda of the roundtable is as follows:

Opening and framing remarks will be offered by:

- **Mr. Carl Skau**, *Deputy Director General and Head of Department for UN Policy, Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs*
- **H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima**, *Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations*

The discussion will be opened by:

- **Ms. May Sabe Phyu**, *Director, Gender Equality Network (GEN), Myanmar*
- **Ms. Olha Zaiarna**, *Regional Coordinator for Eastern European Network of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC), Ukraine*
- **Ms. Petra Tötterman Andorff**, *Secretary-General, Kvinna till Kvinna*
- **Ms. Åsa Regnér**, *Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women*

The reflections and comments by registered participants will follow.

- We invite you to keep your interventions to maximum of 3 minutes.

Concluding remarks will be offered by:

- **Sanam Naraghi-Anderlini**, *Founder and CEO, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)*

The discussion will be moderated by Mariska van Beijnum, Senior Adviser on Financing for Peacebuilding, Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) & Head of Conflict Research Unit at the Clingendael Institute