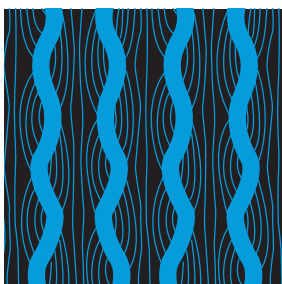
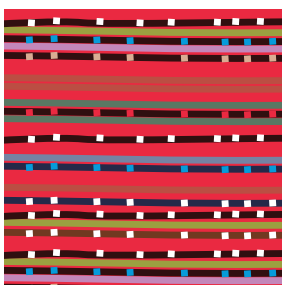
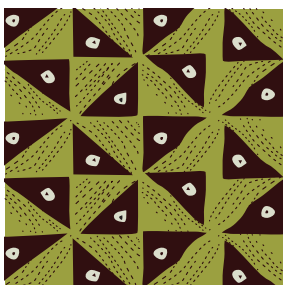


Pamphlet



# Evaluation of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women



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United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)  
304 East 45th Street, New York, NY. 10017, USA.

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## I. BACKGROUND

Violence against women and girls is a global pandemic of alarming proportions. Between 15 and 76 per cent of women are targeted for physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime, according to the available country data<sup>i</sup>, with the abuser usually being someone known to her.<sup>ii</sup> Perhaps the most pervasive human rights violation in the world today; it devastates lives, fractures communities, and constitutes a significant impediment to reducing poverty and furthering gender equality and development.

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) was established within the mandate, structure, and management of UNIFEM by UN General Assembly resolution 50/166 in 1996, and is administered by UNIFEM on behalf of the UN system. It provides technical and financial assistance in support of country and local action to “advance the development of innovative models and strategic interventions in the area of violence against women.” A consultative mechanism in the form of an inter-agency Programme Appraisal Committee (PAC) was established with UN sister agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and experts to guide the UN Trust Fund activities and strategic priorities.

Each year, the UN Trust Fund provides grants to governments, non-governmental organizations and, more recently, to United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) on an open, transparent and competitive basis. Since its establishment, a total of 304 UN Trust Fund grants have been awarded to 121 countries and territories for a total value of over US \$50 million.

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i 'UNIFEM Fact Sheet, 2010 – forthcoming' Figures are based on data from 40 countries obtained through the three leading international surveys on prevalence, with most survey sites reporting that between 20 and 60 percent of women had experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime. Adapted from WHO, 2005. *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women*. 46 WHO, Geneva: Johnson, H., N. Ollus and S. Nevala. 2008. *Violence against Women: An International Perspective*. 39. (International Violence against Women Survey-IVAWS), New York: Springer Science + Business Media and *Demographic and Health Surveys-DHS*, ORC Macro, Calverton, Maryland. [http://www.measuredhs.com/Topics/gender/dv\\_surveys.cfm](http://www.measuredhs.com/Topics/gender/dv_surveys.cfm).

ii General Assembly. *In-Depth Study on All Forms of Violence against Women: Report of the Secretary General*, 2006. A/61/122/Add.1. 6 July 2006.

In 2004, the UN Trust Fund launched a strategy covering the period from 2005 to 2008, which aimed at strengthening the UN Trust Fund in five main ways:

1. It intended to enhance *impact* by focusing on ensuring the due implementation of the vast array of laws and policies that have been instituted to address the multiple forms of violence against women.

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2. It planned to deepen the *involvement* of stakeholders – including UN organizations, governments, men’s advocacy groups, and grantees at the regional level.

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3. It sought to adopt measures to enhance the *efficiency* of the selection and management of grants.

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4. It aimed to enhance *sustainable knowledge and capacity* of innovative and strategic interventions to end violence against women.

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5. It sought to intensify efforts to *mobilize resources* from non-traditional donors, including through UNIFEM national committees, the UN Foundation, and the private sector.

## II. THE EVALUATION

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Between December 2008 and November 2009, the UNIFEM Evaluation Unit commissioned an external and independent evaluation of the UN Trust Fund to assess the overall implementation and effectiveness of its 2005-2008 strategy; identify strengths and weaknesses that have implications for its future managerial, programmatic, and funding directions, and provide forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation criteria used to assess the UN Trust Fund included relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

The evaluation team held consultations with over 300 individuals. It collected data through face-to-face and telephone interviews, group interviews/focus groups, observation, document review, email correspondence, and through an on line survey of grantees. The team also undertook visits to Bulgaria, Cameroon, Ecuador, Haiti, India, Nepal, Rwanda, and Ukraine to evaluate UN Trust Fund projects in the field. The Evaluation furthermore

piloted the *Draft Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality Perspectives in Evaluations prepared by the United Nations Evaluation Group*.

## III. FINDINGS

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### Strategy Implementation

The evaluation concluded that the UN Trust Fund has generally strengthened itself in line with the five elements of the 2005-2008 Strategy:

**1. Impact** – The UN Trust Fund Secretariat enhanced the UN Trust Fund’s impact in two main ways. First, by securing larger donations which made the total annual sum available for grants rise from \$2 million to \$21 million. This, in effect, doubled the number of countries and territories covered by grants. Secondly, emphasis was shifted towards supporting projects that focused on the implementation of existing policies and laws to eliminate violence against women and girls, which broadened the potential effects of the support.

**2. Involvement** – The UN Trust Fund has deepened and widened involvement by stakeholders in a number of ways. To begin with, it has diversified the types of organizations eligible for grants to include governments, NGO-government partnerships, and UNCTs in partnership with governments and civil society organizations. In addition, by encouraging grantees to specifically engage men and boys, targeting of both sexes as active agents for change has improved. Furthermore, the UN Trust Fund Secretariat has also sought to expand involvement among grantees through regional and cross-regional projects and learning initiatives, although efforts were not consistent over the last four cycles and it is too early to assess results. Lastly, involvement has been enhanced by mirroring the global inter-agency Programme Appraisal Committees (PAC) structure at the subregional level as a mechanism for consultation and coordination in the field of ending violence against women and girls.



**3. Efficiency** – Most projects funded were completed within the allocated budget and within a reasonable time frame. Furthermore, several measures have been adopted to enhance the UN Trust Fund's efficiency – including streamlining the pre-selection process; decentralising decision-making to subregional inter-agency PACs; and, increasing the size and implementation period of grants. These measures are seen as promising but it is too early to fully measure their results. The UN Trust Fund's operational costs have not grown in proportion to the significant increase in grants in the period 2005-2008. This has an affect on the Fund's ability to fully achieve its objectives, particularly in knowledge management.

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**4. Knowledge management** – Projects supported by the UN Trust Fund have contributed to knowledge of how to end violence against women and girls, but the Fund has been less successful in managing and disseminating knowledge. The UN Trust Fund is working to improve its knowledge management effort, but has yet to dedicate adequate attention and resources into generating that knowledge, including by strengthening its monitoring and evaluation systems.

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**5. Resources** – Funding for the UN Trust Fund increased dramatically (780%) between 2005 and 2008 due to the sustained efforts of the Fund itself and a combination of enabling factors related to the global policy momentum in this field—also as reflected in General Assembly Resolutions and the launch of the UN Secretary-General's campaign. The UN Trust Fund diversified its sources of funding and increased its number of donors. Efforts are underway to develop a more robust approach to mobilise resources and enhance long-term sustainability, tied to the Secretary-General's Campaign benchmark of reaching \$100 million in annual contributions to the UN Trust Fund by 2015.

## **Project Implementation**

In all projects reviewed, the evaluation team deemed that capacities of both duty bearers and/or rights holders were strengthened through UN Trust Fund support. One quarter of the projects contributed to changing or implementing legal or policy frameworks at country and local levels; some projects contributed to innovations in eliminating violence against women and girls – particu-

larly in programming in the intersections between HIV/AIDS and violence against women. The majority of the reviewed projects integrated human rights and gender equality approaches and perspectives. The UN Trust Fund responded to the needs of women affected by or survivors of violence and contributed to increased awareness of the gravity of violence against women and girls. Where additional advances can be made include various aspects of rights-based approaches – systematically including men, marginalised and vulnerable groups, applying participatory processes, and using human rights and gender equality monitoring reports.

The evaluation observed that the sustainability of results – essential to long-term development effectiveness – depends on a variety of factors (local ownership, multifaceted approach, legal and institutional frameworks, institutional stability, grantee capacity, project size). While UN Trust Fund projects contributed to strengthening capacities of grantee organizations, grantees were not always able to continue the activity after the funding ended due to their limited resources. Moreover, grantees have limited capacity in monitoring and evaluation, reporting, and in establishing partnerships with governments. The UN Trust Fund is addressing these needs by placing greater emphasis on demonstrating explicit strategies with regard to capacity development and sustainability. The UN Trust Fund also requests from applicants that synergies and coordination with existing initiatives are described in the proposal to show how achievements will be sustained once the grant has ended.

## **Management & Governance**

The evaluation team found that the global inter-agency PAC, which serves as the UN Trust Fund's governance structure, is valued by stakeholders for its composition of UN agencies and NGOs with expertise in ending violence against women and girls. The global and subregional inter-agency PACs directed most of their efforts to project selection. However, it is expected that the decentralization and simplification of the Call for Proposal process will allow the global inter-agency PAC to assist the UN Trust Fund more in relation to strategic priorities and outreach – which will be particularly important in view of the expected growth of the Fund to \$100 million by 2015.



The team assessed that UNIFEM has undertaken its fiduciary responsibilities for the UN Trust Fund and is perceived to add value. The management of the Fund worked well during the period, although roles and responsibilities between the Secretariat at HQ and focal points at UNIFEM Subregional Offices were not well defined, which led to some inefficiency and frustration. The UN Trust Fund is in the process of clarifying these. The management of grants to fragile states was generally weaker since it was not sufficiently adapted to the difficult conditions for effective implementation in such countries.

The UN Trust Fund is managed frugally, has a very lean structure and very low overhead costs. This allows most of the resources to be channelled to projects. The UN Trust Fund staff is dedicated, committed and hard-working and praised by all stakeholders. However, the evaluation found that the present staffing composition does not match the Fund's ambitious growth plan for the future. The lean structure is furthermore causing staff fatigue, and some functions, such as monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management, are not being undertaken effectively.

#### IV. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

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The UN Trust Fund is regarded by the evaluation as a relevant mechanism to tackle violence against women and girls: it addresses a gap that is seen as important by all stakeholders, is aligned with the priorities set out in the Millennium Development Goals, and is seen as meeting the needs of both grantees and beneficiaries. The UN Trust Fund experienced phenomenal growth between 2005 and 2008 due to the increase in total donor contributions. The grants provided during this period achieved numerous short-term results that were important to beneficiaries. While some supported projects contributed to significant macrolevel changes, there is generally less evidence of long-term results. While longer-term results take time to become visible, they also require interventions that are sustained over time and that are multifaceted (i.e., that target people, organizations and institutions). Most UN Trust Fund project results were very positive, but the project activities could seldom be pursued once the funding ended.

The evaluation concluded that the UN Trust Fund has done well given the resources it has had. In other words, results achieved were commensurate with resources invested. However, the future is of some concern, primarily in terms of how the UN Trust Fund will meet growing expectations and manage a much larger programme. While steps have already been taken to scale up, they can only go so far within the existing structure and staff.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

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The evaluation proposes that UNIFEM and the UN Trust Fund Secretariat should:

1. Finalise its forthcoming strategy as soon as possible and allocate resources to make it operational.
2. Complete its fund-raising strategy as soon as possible and engage UN sister agencies in its implementation.
3. Consider the staffing structure (number of staff, types of skills), the management costs required to carry out its new plan, and the criteria for project selection.
4. Looking to the future, strengthen its monitoring and evaluation capacities at the global and subregional levels.
5. Clarify some roles and responsibilities and review the composition of the global inter-agency PAC.
6. Decide if and how it will build the capacities of grantees.
7. Monitor the quality and implementation of project sustainability plans that are a newer requirement of the UN Trust Fund.
8. Ensure better integration of human rights and gender equality considerations in its projects, by requiring that all projects include plans for their integration in the project design.
9. Consider aspects of project design that emerged from this evaluation, as it deliberates the characteristics of the projects it supports.
10. Manage its grants in Fragile States using the DAC principles.

## VI. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE EVALUATION

- ▶ UNIFEM and the UN Trust Fund Secretariat appreciate the guidance provided by the evaluation and agree with the vast majority of its findings and recommendations. At the time of the evaluation, the UN Trust Fund Secretariat and UNIFEM were addressing many of the limitations found, having made progress in 2009, including by: strengthening (i) quality assurance efforts through detailed feedback to applicants as well as increasing technical expertise at the subregional level, (ii) monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management initiatives through standardised reporting, monitoring missions, collection of case studies and knowledge products, and (iii) capacity of grantees through workshops on evidence-based programming and monitoring and evaluation.
- ▶ In response to the evaluation, UNIFEM and the UN Trust Fund will undertake a number of initiatives. First and foremost, this involves the preparation of its new Strategy (2010 – 2015) which is expected to be consulted and finalised in early 2010. Its content addresses capacity development, sustainability, knowledge generation and dissemination, resource mobilization, and partnership-building. In parallel, a fund-raising action plan is being formulated, in consultation with key stakeholders.
- ▶ The UN Trust Fund is also aiming to strengthen its staffing structure, which includes improving the monitoring and evaluation capacities and the knowledge management functions. Furthermore, the UN Trust Fund Secretariat and UNIFEM have been rolling out a staffing plan on a cost-sharing basis at the subregional level to recruit subregional experts on ending violence against women who will provide technical oversight to grantees, facilitate synergies with UN agencies, and support the documentation of lessons learned and good practice.
- ▶ The UN Trust Fund Secretariat is planning and developing various initiatives, systems and instruments to improve effectiveness. This includes establishing a standardised results-based reporting system, an M&E system, an evaluation policy and related tools for grantees, capacity development workshops for grantees, systems to collect case studies of successful grantee projects, and workshops on monitoring and evaluation, evidence-based programming and documentation of lessons learned.

- ▶ Finally, to consolidate the strategic potential of the UN Trust Fund, UNIFEM, in consultation with the inter-agency Global PAC, will be revamping its consultative and governance structure, and clarifying roles and responsibilities, including through a set of new Terms of Reference and Operational Guidelines.

The full report and management response to the evaluation are available on the UNIFEM website, [www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org). UNIFEM's Evaluation Unit is interested in your feedback on the use of the evaluation results in supporting initiatives to end violence against women. Please send your feedback to [unifem.eval@unifem.org](mailto:unifem.eval@unifem.org)

