

The Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund

Operations Manual

This Operations Manual is not a legally binding document. It describes the governance structure and establishes the operating principles, guidelines, and procedures for day-to-day operations of the MPTF.

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1. Fund's objectives and principles

The Western Balkans Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund is set up to support the implementation of the [Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024](#) (the Roadmap).

While significant progress has been made in recent years, accumulation of SALW and ammunition, inadequate storage conditions, widespread illicit possession and gaps in implementation continue to limit the effectiveness of firearms/SALW control efforts in parts of the Western Balkans. Additionally, the region remains one of the sources of illicit arms trafficking.

To address these challenges, the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans was developed as a follow up to the High-Level Meeting on SALW control in South East Europe held on 1 February 2018 in Podgorica, Montenegro. The Roadmap was developed by the SALW commissions of the Western Balkans in the framework of the Franco-German donor coordination initiative on illicit firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans and with the technical assistance of the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC). The Roadmap was finalized at the Regional meeting of SALW commissions on 29 of May in Tirana and adopted on 10 July 2018 at the 5th Western Balkans Summit in London. It provides an overall platform for commonly agreed levels of performance, and outlines the commitment required at the strategic, policy and operational level amongst the beneficiaries, building on the political commitment to the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as well as legal obligation stemming from the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted on 25 September 2015, affirmed that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security and that illicit arms flows are amongst the factors which give rise to violence, insecurity and injustice. The UN Member States undertook to strengthen partnerships and cooperation at all levels in preventing and combating the illicit trade in SALW, and to promote and strengthen border cooperation and regional and sub regional coordination at the third UN conference to review progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in June 2018. The implementation of the Roadmap will directly contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, with a specific focus on Target 16.4 that aims to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows by 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.

The Fund's primary objective is to contribute to a donor coordinated approach in the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo* , Montenegro, Republic of Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia. It will enable a platform to strengthen coordination, planning and communication among the donors, implementing partners and national authorities, and develop synergies among different players involved in this programmatic area. It also reduces risks to governments and financial contributors through a comprehensive risk and results-based

*References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

management system that is ensured by the trust Fund, focusing on the actions to be implemented through the MPTF.

2. Overview of the MPTF

Table 1. The MPTF structure

The Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap MPTF	
Focus	To support the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024 . The primary objective is to contribute to a coordinated approach in the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition.
Geographical Scope	Western Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia
Governance and Administration	The fund governance will consist of a Steering Committee (SC) and a Secretariat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SC will be chaired by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub Manager and will consist of Representatives of the Participating UN Organizations, France and Germany (as co-chairs of the donor coordination initiative on illicit firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans) and other top 3 donors to the Fund. The SC will provide general oversight and exercise overall accountability of the Fund; The SEESAC will function as the Secretariat of the Fund, responsible for the programmatic coordination and monitoring the activities of the Fund, providing technical and management support to the Fund. The Fund is administered by the MPTFO in its capacity as Administrative Agent (AA) under the pass-through management modality.
Delivery modalities (Participating Organizations)	Participating UN Organizations that have signed the MoU with the AA are eligible to receive funding, assuming full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the AA. Funding may be provided to other entities as implementing partners of the recipient UN agency, based on rules and regulations of the participating UN Organizations.

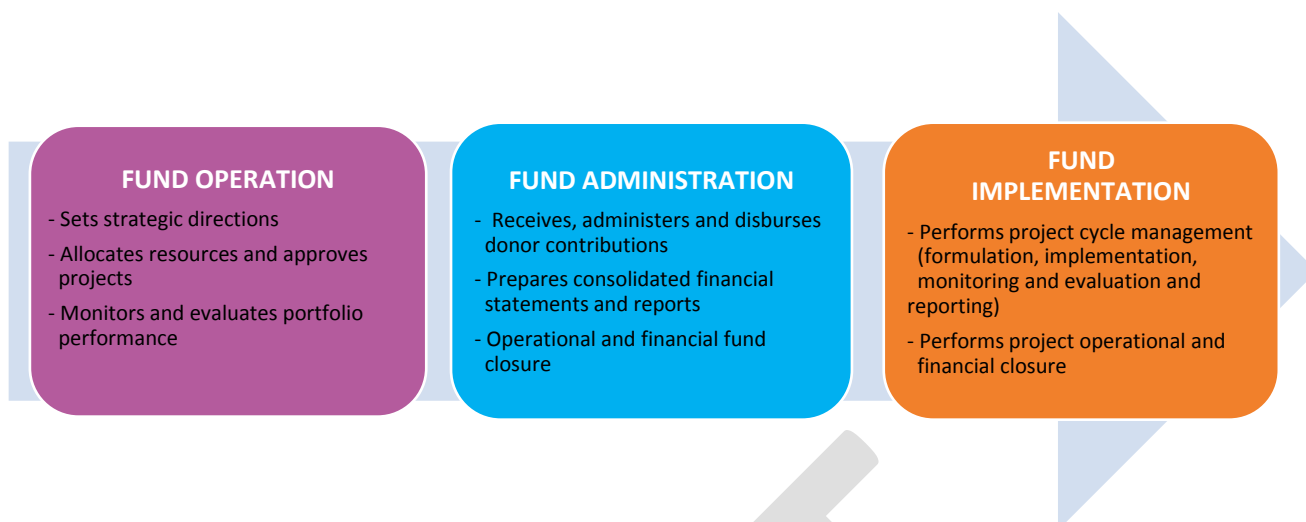
3. Governance of the Fund

3.1 Overview

The Terms of Reference of the Fund (TOR) describe the governance structure and management of the Fund, which consists of three levels:

- Fund **operation**, involving the coordination and operation, performed by the Steering Committee and the Trust Fund Secretariat;
- Fund **administration**, performed by the Administrative Agent (MPTF Office);
- Fund **implementation**, performed by the Participating Organizations.

Figure 1: Three levels of the Fund's management chain



3.2 Fund Operation

3.2.1. Steering Committee

Description

The Steering Committee is the guiding, decision-making and supervisory body for the Fund activities. It shall set strategic guidelines, approve project proposals, and monitor the Fund's overall performance.

Composition

The Steering Committee is chaired by the UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub Manager and consists of:

- Representatives of all Participating UN Organizations;
- France and Germany (as co-chairs of the donor coordination initiative on illicit firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans);
- Other top 3 donors to the Fund (i.e. the donors who have amounted the biggest contributions to the MPTF at the moment a SC meeting is convened)
- The MPTFO as the AA and ex officio member without the right to vote.
- All other donors (except of the top 3 who enjoy full membership rights) are granted the observer status (with no voting right) for increased transparency, access to information and provision of inputs.
- EU is granted the ex-officio membership with full voting rights, considering the political and financial support provided for the Roadmap implementation.
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Representatives of the Secretariat should attend the SC meetings but do not have the right to vote. The Head of the Secretariat (the SEESAC Project Manager) should serve as Secretary of the SC in the capacity of rapporteur.

Responsibilities

In order to successfully fulfil its mandate, the SC shall have the following specific duties:

1. Provide general oversight and exercising overall accountability of the Fund;
2. Provide policy and strategic guidance;
3. Approve the strategic direction of the Fund and its overall results framework;
4. Approve the Terms of Reference (TORs) of the Fund, as well as its revision when deemed necessary.

- The SC will validate and approve the Terms of Reference of the Trust Fund at its first meeting. Any revision of the ToRs shall be of a substantive nature and shall only be carried out on the basis of a decision of the SC. The Secretariat will be responsible for carrying out the review, in consultation with the relevant stakeholders, which will then be submitted to the SC for its approval.
5. Approve the Fund's Operational Manual as prepared by the Secretariat and update it as necessary to incorporate lessons learned or operational requirements;
 - The SC will review and approve the Fund's Operational Manual. If, during the implementation of the Fund, the Manual needs to incorporate a substantive change (i.e. change in the scope of the Fund, new Participating Organizations, etc.), it will commission the revision of it to the Secretariat, based on the lessons learned during the period in question. Non-substantive changes of the Operational Manual (such as edit changes brought to certain provisions that are meant to clarify the respective provisions) will be incorporated by the Secretariat and the SC will be informed accordingly.
 6. Review Fund status and oversee the overall progress against the results framework (attached to this ToRs) through monitoring, reporting and evaluation;
 7. Approve Fund risk management strategy and regularly review risk monitoring matrix updated by the secretariat;
 8. Review and approve proposals to be funded by the Trust Fund;
 - The Steering Committee will analyse the programmatic and financial aspects of project proposals based on the recommendations submitted by the Secretariat and will approve or reject the proposals.
 9. Approve allocations by requesting fund transfers to the Administrative Agent, through the support of the Secretariat:
 - Depending on the availability of resources, the SC will request the AA, through the support of the Secretariat, to transfer funds to approved projects according to the Fund's priorities and allocation criteria.
 10. Approve direct costs related to the fund operations support by the Secretariat, including the staff costs:
 - The Secretariat shall prepare a proposed budget for its direct costs and submit it to the SC for approval. The organigram and its related budget will be annually reviewed and adjusted by the SC as needed.
 11. Commission mid-term and final independent evaluations on the overall performance of the Fund.
 - The SC will commission two independent (mid-term and final) evaluations of the overall performance of the Fund and its impact in relation to the Fund's objectives. The procurement of the evaluation services will be carried out through the Secretariat.
 12. Approve the extension of the MPTF duration, as needed;
 - Based on consultations with the relevant partners, the Secretariat will prepare proposals for Fund extension, as needed, and submit to the SC for its decision.
 13. Guide the Trust Fund's resource mobilization actions.

Meetings and decision making

The Secretariat will convene the meetings of the SC, at the proposal of the SC Chair. The Secretariat will send a communication to the members of the SC (ex officio members included), at least 15 working days before the date of the meeting, inviting them to appoint their representative. The proposed agenda, supporting documents, minutes of the previous meeting (when the case) and a note on the progress made in implementing the projects financed by the Fund (if applicable) should be sent out to the SC members at the same time with the meeting communication.

The SC will make its decisions by consensus. If, in particular cases, consensus cannot be reached, the qualified majority rule will apply. Amendments to the ToRs, however, can only be decided upon by consensus. Decisions can only be made when a quorum of at least two thirds of the members is present. On an exceptional basis, external participants may be invited to attend when any matter requires external technical advice, clarification or opinion. Such participants will not be involved in decision making. In case the SC cannot physically meet, the decisions will be taken by virtual vote, through email, and the same norms of consensus will apply. The Secretariat will coordinate the communications with the SC members.

The SC will meet at least once a year for the review the TF implementation progress and provision of strategic direction to the Fund, and, additionally, upon SC Chair request, as many times as needed for various decision making purposes (assessment of project proposals, emergency situations, etc.).

3.2.2. Secretariat

Description

The SEESAC will function as the Secretariat of the Trust Fund. The Secretariat is responsible for the overall coordination and monitoring of the Fund, providing technical, management, planning and programming support to it. The Secretariat shall serve as Rapporteur of the SC and contact point of the AA (MPTF Office).

Composition

The Secretariat is comprised of the necessary technical personnel to manage the Trust Fund, as follows:

- Head of Secretariat (the SEESAC Project Manager)
- Monitoring and reporting consultant / quality assurance
- Partnerships consultant
- Finance Officer
- Chief Technical Adviser

The above Secretariat staff composition is indicative and will depend on the needs and availability of funding. The Secretariat's organigram and budget are submitted to the SC for approval on a yearly basis or whenever amendments are necessary. Depending on the nature of the task, the Head of the Secretariat may decide to allocate additional SEESAC human resources and expertise on an ad-hoc basis, which might have costs implications. E.g. for the assessment of the projects submitted under the Trust Fund funding allocation modalities, the Head of the Secretariat may appoint various SEESAC thematic experts or external experts as part of the selection panel to: (for quality assurance)

- Assess the technical quality of the proposals,
- Ensure the relevance of the proposed intervention;
- Ensure that projects submitted are aligned with the priorities and objectives of the Roadmap (as specified in the proposal submission requests),
- Ensure coordination with other existing and planned activities, etc.

Responsibilities

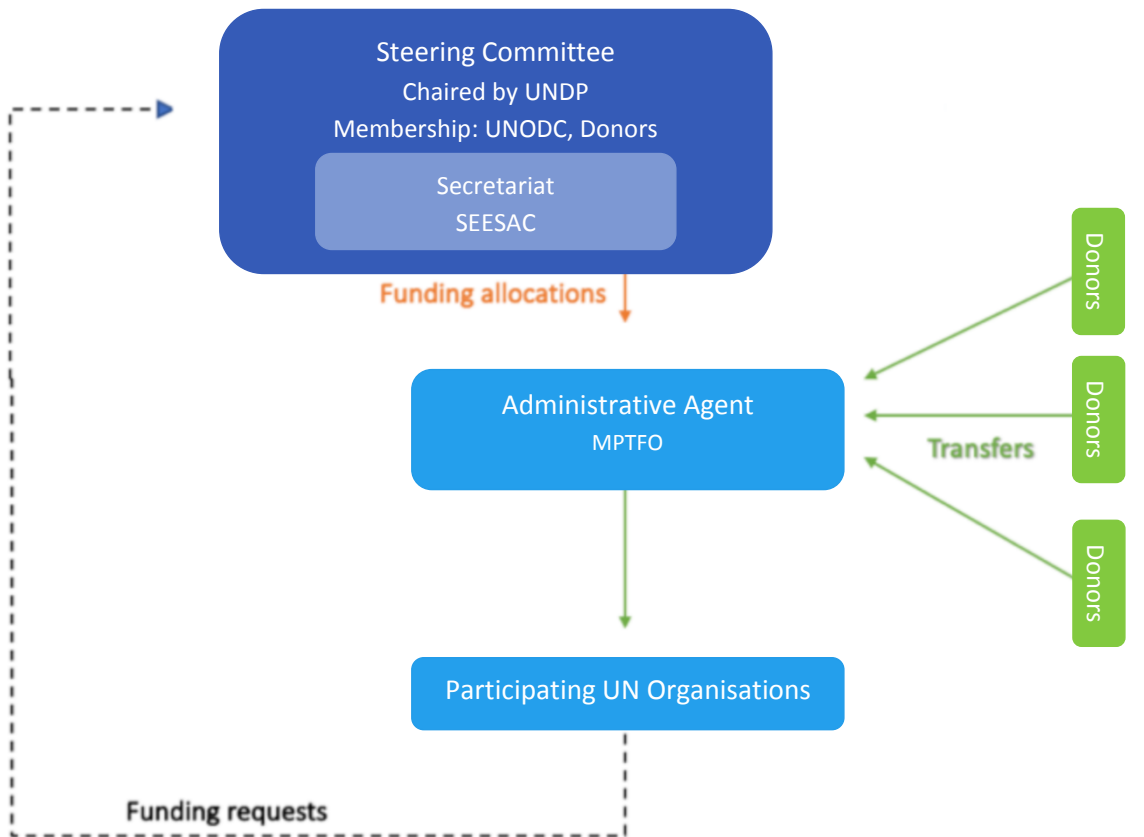
1. Technical advice
 - a. Advise the SC on strategic priorities, as well as programmatic and financial allocations;
 - b. Advise and support entities that submit concept notes and project proposals on programmatic and operational issues related to the Fund;

- c. Conduct knowledge management for the Fund, including codification of knowledge, generation of good practices and lessons learned and proposals for recommendations;
 - d. Develop the Fund's communication strategy;
 - e. Develop the Fund's resource mobilization strategy.
2. Management of the Fund's operational activities
- a. Coordinate and manage all the daily activities necessary for the proper functioning of the Fund;
 - b. Ensure compliance with the rules and procedures of the Fund;
 - c. Organize the meetings of the SC: prepare and circulate the meeting agenda, document the conclusions, decisions and follow up points and distribute the minutes to all SC Members;
 - d. Conduct follow-up meetings on the SC decisions to ensure proper implementation when needed;
 - e. Regularly circulate information on the activities of the Fund to all interested parties;
 - f. Liaise with the Administrative Agent's office;
 - g. Prepare and submit the Fund Transfer Request (FTR) to the Administrative Agent, according to the decisions made by the SC.
3. Planning, programming, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the Fund portfolio
- a. Draft the proposal submission requests, ensure wide dissemination to all eligible entities and organize the project selection process;
 - b. Ensure that Participating Organizations have provided all necessary documentation in relation to the concept notes and project proposals submitted for funding;
 - c. Conduct the assessment of the projects submitted under the Trust Fund funding allocation modalities to ensure technical quality of the proposals, the relevance of the proposed intervention; ensure that projects submitted are aligned with the priorities and objectives of the Roadmap (as specified in the ToRs of the funding allocation modalities), ensure coordination with other existing and planned activities, ensure the inclusion of all cross-cutting issues and risk management elements in the project proposals submitted, etc.
 - d. Monitor the implementation of the funded projects through quarterly reports prepared by the Participating Organizations and provide planning and M&E support to Participating Organizations when required;
 - e. Facilitate collaboration and communication between Participating UN Organizations to ensure programmes are implemented effectively and in close connection/complementarity;
 - f. Develop the Fund Risk Management Strategy and ensure the risk monitoring and management;
 - g. Liaise with the Administrative Agent on fund administration issues, including issues related to project/ fund extensions and project/fund closure;
 - h. Consolidate annual and final narrative reports provided by the Participating Organizations and submit them to the SC for approval;
 - i. Carry out the process of the independent evaluations of the Fund.

Costs

The operating costs of the Secretariat will be charged to the Fund as direct costs. A workplan with a budget will be annually submitted to the SC for approval and whenever substantive revisions of the budget are needed. The operating costs may cover both salaries of the Secretariat staff and other costs directly related to the functions of the Secretariat (travel costs for field missions, monitoring, etc.). Over the lifetime of the Fund, the Secretariat budget should not exceed 3% of the total contributions received. If necessary, the SC may assign additional specific functions to the Secretariat. Such decision shall be duly documented.

Figure 2: Fund Governance Structure



3.3 Fund Administration

The Fund Administration function is performed by the trustee - the Administrative Agent. The MPTF Office has been appointed the Administrative Agent (AA) of the Fund and will use the pass-through modality. The AA services include:

- 1) The establishment of the Fund: support for the design of the Fund (Terms of Reference and Operational Manual), and development of legal instruments; and
- 2) Administration of the Fund: receipt, administration and disbursement of funds to Participating Organizations in accordance with the decisions of the SC, and consolidation of financial reports.

Responsibilities

- A. Provide support in the design of the Fund
 - o The MPTFO will provide substantive support in the design phase of the fund, including the development of the TOR and the Fund Operational Manual. To this end, the Office will work

jointly with the Secretariat, providing standard formats and examples of other funds as well as sharing good practices.

- B. Signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the UN Participating Organizations.
 - This agreement, which uses a standard language, establishes the legal framework of the relationship between the Participating Organizations and the AA.
- C. Conclude a Standard Administrative Agreement (SAA) with each donor who wishes to provide financial support the Fund.
 - Each SAA shall specify the total amount of funding, the deadlines for payment of instalments, and all conditions for the disbursement of funds.
- D. Receive financial allocations from donors and deposit them into the Fund's account
 - Once contributions are deposited into the account and recorded in the AA's accounting system, the AA's website (Gateway) reflects these contributions automatically.
- E. Administer the resources received, in accordance with UNDP rules, procedures and policies
 - Administration includes investing and reinvesting the Fund's resources, in accordance with its investment policies, practices and procedures. Any gain will be added to the resources of the Fund and will not be credited to the contributions of a particular donor. The Fund's website will display financial information in real time, including fees and expenses, interest rates applied, AA fees and direct costs.
- F. Provide updated information to the SC on the availability of resources on a regular basis.
 - Based on the information gathered in the financial system, the AA will periodically report on the financial status of the Fund and the balance available for programming to the SC through the Secretariat.
- G. Subject to the availability of resources, make transfers to Participating Organizations, in accordance with the decisions of the SC:
 - Based on the decisions of the SC, the AA will be requested by the Secretariat to disburse the corresponding resources. The request for transfer, addressed to the Executive Coordinator of the MPTFO, will be done through electronic means and will be sent to the Fund responsible officer in the MPTFO. This application shall include the standard format for requesting funds, signed by the Chair of the SC, and the necessary accompanying documents (see details in section 5).
 - The AA will generally disburse each payment to the Participating Organizations within three to five business days after receipt of the request for transfer of funds with all necessary approved documents. The AA will review all documents submitted and ensure that they have been duly signed and will verify the consistency and conformity in the budgets.
 - In order to disburse funds to the Participating Organizations, the AA must have signed an agreement (MOU or MOA) with the entity in question.
 - The AA shall ensure that funds are available and disburse them based on the budget provided.
 - When making the transfer, the AA will notify the receiving entity with a copy to the Secretariat electronically, including the following information: (a) the amount transferred; (B) the reference date of the transfer; and (c) a note stating that the transfer has been made from MPTFO, and on behalf of the Fund.
- H. Disburse funds to the Secretariat, as approved by the SC, to cover additional costs associated with operational activities and operations of the Fund executed by the Secretariat.
 - The decision of the SC will be communicated to the AA by the Secretariat and will be accompanied by the approved annual work plan and budget. The AA shall notify the SC annually of the amounts used for such purposes.
- I. Consolidate the annual and final financial reports of the projects.
 - The annual and final projects' financial reports are submitted to the AA by the Participating Organizations, as described in the legal agreements. The AA shall consolidate the reports and submit the consolidated report to the SC and to the donors (see details in Section 7).
- J. Provide the annual and final certified financial reports of the activities of the AA ("source and use of the Funds") of the Fund.

- K. Provide tools to ensure the transparency of the Fund.
 - These tools include the maintenance of the Fund's website, including all real-time periodic financial and narrative information and all decisions made by the governance structure of the Fund.
- L. Carry out the operational and financial closure of the Fund (see details in section 9).

Costs

The costs of the AA's functions comprise 1% of the contributions received and are charged when the contribution is received. The AA shall be entitled to charge the Fund a direct cost charge to cover the cost of continuing to perform the duties of AA, provided that the Fund is extended beyond the date of termination and no more contributions are received.

3.4 Fund Implementation

3.4.1. Participating Organizations

Fund implementation will be performed by the offices of the Participating UN Organizations that have concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Administrative Agent. The Participating Organizations will be directly responsible for:

- the implementation of projects,
- meeting delivery rates,
- achieving the planned results of their proposed projects.

The Fund's flexible implementation architecture would enable the different Participating Organizations to operate under a common strategic governance structure yet in accordance with their distinct policies and procedures.

The Participating Organizations will assume full programme-related and financial accountability for the funds transferred directly to them by the AA and implement the approved activities according to their own regulations, rules, policies and procedures, including those related to public procurement, as well as recruitment and evaluation of executing partners, provided that the minimum requirements established by the Fund are complied with, in terms of fiduciary securities and principles. Whenever the case, the Participating Organizations shall send reports of their audits to the Steering Committee.

When funds are transferred to a UN entity, it must create a separate ledger account, in accordance with its procedures and financial regulations, for the receipt and administration of funds released from the Fund account by the Administrative Agent. This ledger account shall be administered by the organization in accordance with its own rules and procedures. Indirect costs of the Participating UN Organizations recovered through programme support costs will be maximum seven percent (7%). Implementing Partners, consisting of Government institutions and NGOs, can receive funding from the Fund through Participating UN Organizations.

For each project approved for financing from the Fund, each Participating Organizations must provide the Secretariat with the quarterly, annual and final narrative (including visibility) and financial reports as defined in chapter 7. Reporting.

While implementing the project, Participating Organizations may select a variety of partners to work with, including NGOs, foundations, state institutions, etc.

Communication and visibility

The Participating Organizations will take the appropriate measures to ensure the communication of their project results and activities, as well as the visibility of the donors and other partner organizations of the project.

As part of the project proposal, applicants are required to prepare a brief project visibility plan that should concisely elaborate the key visibility and communications materials, lay out key audiences, strategic objectives, key messages and expected deliverables throughout project implementation. Implementing organizations will report on the implementation of the visibility plan.

Generally, all the communication materials prepared within the project will display the following logos, as appropriate²:

- Logo of the implementing organization, following their specific visibility guidelines;
- Logo of the MPTF donors, as provided by the donors through the MPTF Secretariat;
- Logos of other partners.

Participating Organizations are requested to confirm with the Secretariat the correct use of the logos, prior to the launch of a publication.

Participating Organizations are also requested to inform the Secretariat in advance of any events to be organized and consult with the Secretariat on the appropriate level of representation of the donor and other partners.

Participating Organizations will share with the Secretariat visibility and communication materials that can be further distributed with traditional and social media.

Participating Organizations will maintain a close communication and will consult with the Secretariat on any sensitive issues that require particular attention. The Secretariat is responsible to provide advice and refer the issue to the SC, if necessary.

3.4.2. Funding allocation modalities

The WB SALW Control Roadmap MPTF will use a mix of three (3) funding allocation modalities (to be detailed in Section 4 – Project Approval Cycle)

- a. Time-bound calls for proposals;**
- b. Year round open calls for proposals;**
- c. Direct solicitation of proposals.**

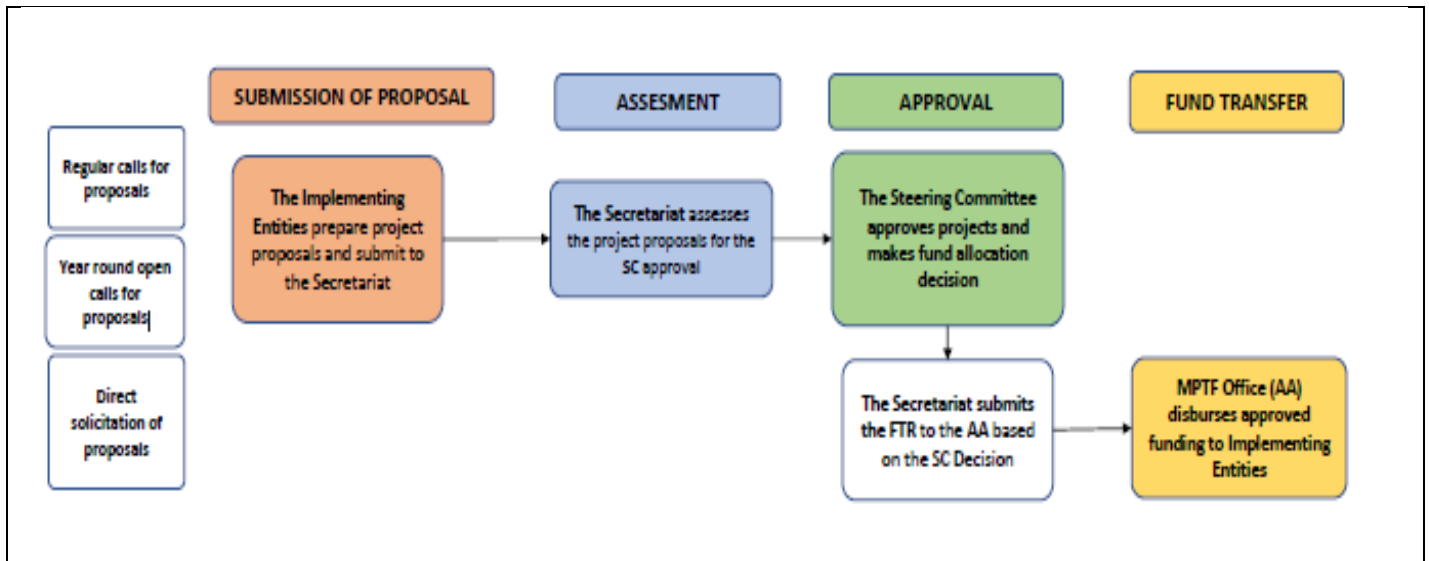
The selection of the most appropriate funding allocation modality will be regularly made by the Steering Committee. The decision is made based on the availability of funding and programmatic considerations.

4. Project approval cycle

The project approval cycle includes the following phases: project identification, review and approval.

² Please see the following publication, as an example of how to best place donors' logos:
<http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/19902>

Figure 3: Project Approval cycle



4.1 Time-bound calls for proposals

4.1.1 Project identification, design and submission

The Secretariat, based on Steering Committee’s decision, will request Participating Organizations to submit project proposals for funding. The Secretariat will use electronic media (SEESAC website and notice by electronic mail to relevant entities) to publish calls for proposals. The calls will include selection criteria (eligibility, as well as technical quality criteria) and information on the steps to be followed in submitting a proposal to the Fund. Proposals will be requested in a template to be developed by the Secretariat prior to the issuance of the call. The closing date of the call and full requirements to submit the proposals will be specified in the call.

The design of the project proposals will be the responsibility of the Participating Organizations and shall also include consultations with the relevant stakeholders. Project proposals will be developed in close cooperation with the relevant local authorities. The proposals will be assessed against the eligibility criteria, as well as technical quality criteria (sound results and resources framework, relevance and alignment of the proposed intervention to the Roadmap goals; inclusion of all cross-cutting issues and risk management elements, etc.). The Secretariat can come back to Participating Organizations for substantive revisions to improve quality. The Secretariat will submit both the validated and rejected project proposals to the SC for its final approval. Once informed on the funding award, the Participating Organizations will develop project documents as per the templates of that Participating Organizations.

4.1.2 Assessment and approval of project proposals

The Secretariat, with the support of its relevant sector experts, will conduct a substantive and rigorous assessment of the project proposals. The evaluation criteria will be provided to the eligible Participating Organizations in the 6 jurisdictions as part of the relevant call for proposals. All projects will be guided by the following overarching principles and criteria:

1. contribute to the achievement of one or more Goals of the WB SALW Control Roadmap;

2. demonstrate strong national ownership, developed in close cooperation with the relevant national authorities, and be in line with country priorities including Country Programme Documents (CPDs) agreed with national partners;
3. demonstrate complementarity with other relevant initiatives in the field of SALW control;
4. adhere to corporate quality standards, which include strong results frameworks, social and environmental standards, as well as gender mainstreaming;
5. demonstrate sustainability of results;
6. prove an efficient and effective allocation of resources;
7. integrate the gender perspective;
8. observe risk management strategy;
9. preference will be given to joint programmes which bring together multiple Participating Organizations. They must demonstrate a genuine partnership between participating organisations, a coordinated management structure, and joint responsibility for results and cost effectiveness;
10. wherever possible, projects are encouraged to accommodate technical assistance from South-South Cooperation;

Reference to compliance by the authorities with related international obligations should be mentioned in the project proposal.

The project proposals assessment is conducted through two rounds of review:

A. Secretariat Review

The Secretariat receives the proposals submitted by the Participating Organizations and conducts an administrative review (to ensure observance of the eligibility criteria and administrative completeness of the submission, i.e. all supporting documents and required information is included in the package), as well as technical review (a programmatic quality control of the proposal to ensure relevance and alignment to the Roadmap strategy and priorities, RBM quality standards, which include strong results frameworks, social and environmental standards, as well as gender mainstreaming, etc.).

The review panel will include minimum 3 technical experts, 1 Chair and 1 Secretary, all part of the SEESAC team. Additionally, external experts may also be invited for provision of technical advice. Its composition may vary according to the availability and type of expertise needed for each proposals and will be determined no later than five (5) days before the meeting. To avoid conflicts of interest, all members of the review panel must declare any conflict of interest that may exist.

Once the composition of the review panel is established, the Secretariat will be responsible for convening the meeting. The review panel will receive the project proposals and related annexes for analysis and will have the prerogative to make recommendations to be submitted to the Steering Committee (through the Secretariat).

B. Steering Committee Review

The Steering Committee will review the project proposals that were both recommended as validated and rejected by the Secretariat and will have the final decision in allocating the funds.

The Secretariat's project proposal recommendations are reviewed by the Steering Committee either in physically convened meetings or individually, through electronic means. At the end of the review, the SC, with the support of the Secretariat, will prepare a note summarizing the technical review process and the project evaluation based on the review criteria with:

- (i) recommendation for approval; or
- (ii) recommendation for rejection.

Both types of recommendation must be clearly detailed in the note. The Secretariat shall send the consolidated package of all submitted proposals to the Steering Committee 15 days prior to the date of the scheduled meeting.

Within ten working days after the Steering Committee meetings, the Secretariat will:

- Finalize and electronically share the minutes of meeting with the SC members;
- Provide information to all Participating Organizations on the decisions of the SC and indicate the following stages of the actual implementation of the project and launch of its activities;
- Send to the Administrative Agent the details of the projects with funding approved by the Steering Committee so that the funds can be transferred in accordance with the procedures detailed in this manual.

4.2 Year round open calls for proposals

Based on the availability of funding and programmatic considerations, the Steering Committee may decide that a year round open calls for proposals should be used in certain circumstances. This type of calls will use the same methodology and stages of appraisal as the time-bound calls for proposals, with the following notable difference: The year round open calls are not time-bound, so the project proposals can be submitted on a rolling basis. The proposals can be approved for funding provided that they meet all eligibility and quality criteria stipulated by the Call for Proposals and that resources are available.

4.3 Direct solicitation of proposals

Based on a strategic consensus and justified rationale, the Steering Committee may also solicit proposal/s from individual Participating Organizations directly. This includes (but is not limited) situations when the SC would want to target a particular geographical area or type of expertise/experience. In such instances, the SC may directly solicit a project proposal to a specific implementing entity, which will follow the same approval cycles with regard to proposal quality criteria as in the case of the calls for proposals. The project proposals need to demonstrate that the targeted results are in line with the beneficiaries' priorities and have to prove strong national ownership (e.g. through exchange of letters between the Participating Organizations and relevant authorities).

5. Transfer and receipt of Funds

Following the approval by the Steering Committee, and the signature of the programme documents by the duly authorized parties, (Government included, as relevant) the Secretariat request the Administrative Agent to transfer the funds allocated to the Implementing Organization(s). The Secretariat shall prepare a Funds Transfer Request (FTR form, **See Annex XXX**) for each project and budget allocation approved by the Chair of the Steering Committee. In case a project involves higher risks, the Steering Committee may decide to transfer resources in tranches.

The Administrative Agent ensures that the submitted documents are consistent with the applicable provisions of the Standard Administrative Agreement. The MPTFO will carry out transfers approved by the Steering Committee to Participating Organizations no later than five working days after the receipt of the FTR and supporting documents. Upon completion of the transfer, the representative of the implementing entity and the Secretariat will be notified through electronic mail.

The Participating Organizations shall acknowledge receipt of the funds to the Secretariat within five working days from the receipt. The date of the initial transfer of the funds shall then be adopted as the project's start-

up date. This date will be reflected on the project's Gateway page. The organization shall note the project number allocated to the project by the MPTF Office; this number must be included in all reports and communications concerning the project.

6. Project revisions

Fund procedures include three (3) types of projects revision that require the approval by the Steering Committee:

- Programmatic Review: includes any modification of the Results Framework or project intervention area. The corresponding request shall be justified either by recommendations of an external evaluation or upon the proposal of the beneficiaries.
- Budget Review: If a revision is made to the project budget to (i) increase the budget costs; (ii) to introduce variations between the different UN budget categories by more than 15%³; and/or (iii) to change the total budget of any outcome by more than 15%.⁴
- Temporary Revision: in the event that no-cost extension is needed longer than 3 months, a formal extension of the project will be required.⁵

In case an ongoing project requires changes in one or more of the categories described above, the implementing entity must submit a request for review by email to the Secretariat for processing. The Secretariat will inform the Steering Committee who will review the request and take a decision by consensus. This decision may be: (i) approval, (ii) approval with modifications / conditions; and (iii) non-approval. Once this decision is made, the Secretariat will inform the concerned entity and the Administrative Agent.

The steps of the review process are:

1. Electronic request submitted by the implementing entity;
2. Review of the Secretariat;
3. Secretariat obtains decision of the Steering Committee;
4. AA: revision in the System - Atlas and Gateway

7. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

7.1 Monitoring

Internal and external mechanisms will be used to monitor the performance of the Fund and its project portfolio.

A. Project-level monitoring mechanisms

The Fund shall adopt an RBM approach which will be used for monitoring projects to achieving results, improving performance and integrate lessons learned into the Steering Committee's decisions and actions on performance. While the Secretariat shall be responsible for coordinating the production and consolidation of all project reports, the prime responsibility for collecting data within the project implementation area lies with the Participating Organizations.

Project performance indicators will be monitored at the outcome and output levels (fund and project level), to ensure that all projects are contributing directly or indirectly to achieving predetermined Roadmap Goals.

³ In case the change is below 15%, the implementing agencies through the Secretariat will inform the Steering Committee.

⁴ Same as above.

⁵ If a temporary extension is for less than 3 months, the Secretariat may approve the extension, then will inform the Steering Committee and the Administrative Agent.

Every project will monitor the outcomes and outputs, by the project indicators presented in the RRF. Each project will have specific output level indicators leading to specific Roadmap Key Performance Indicators (the outcome indicators).

- Output level: The output indicators would be specific to each project and reflect changes in skills or abilities, or the availability of new products and services that have been achieved with the resources provided by the Fund.
- Outcome level: The outcome will reflect changes in indicators and will form the basis of the Fund level reporting and evaluations.

The projects will have to explain how the outputs and outcomes contribute to the TF outcomes / Roadmap goals.

The Secretariat will be responsible for consolidating all the reports both financial and narrative by the Participating Organizations into a single format. This will enable the Steering Committee to review the overall progress against expected results and assess the achievement of performance indicators.

B. Trust Fund-level monitoring mechanism

Trust Fund-level monitoring mechanism will focus on both financial and programme-related aspects, with emphasis on the good governance of all projects. It is important to note that, with regards to the UN entities, external audits will be conducted in accordance with their rules and procedures, but the audit reports will nevertheless be shared with the Steering Committee. The TF monitoring, against the TF RRF, will be performed by SEESAC. SEESAC will also collect KPI-related data from the national authorities regularly, which will further contribute in reflecting the progress made through the implementation of the Trust Fund.

7.2 Evaluation

The Steering Committee will commission two external (independent) evaluations on the overall performance of the Fund through the Secretariat. These evaluations will take place at mid-term and at the operational closure of the Fund. The aim is to examine the various performance measurements of the Fund. The data collected by the various monitoring and evaluation tools will be consolidated to provide an overview of the performance of the Fund and the level of its contribution to the positive or negative impact observed. The mid-term evaluation will consist of specific recommendations to the Steering Committee, including the review of the Fund's results areas and following adjustments if necessary.

The costs of these evaluations will be charged as direct costs to the Fund. The Secretariat will include such costs into the work plan and budget, which must be approved by the Steering Committee.

7.3 Reporting

7.3.1. Narrative Reports

For each project approved for financing from the Fund, each Participating Organizations must provide the Secretariat with the following narrative reports:

- Quarterly progress reports, to be provided within a maximum of one month after the end of the quarter;
- Annual progress reports, to be provided within a maximum of three months after the end of the calendar year (i.e. by 31 March of the following year);
- A final narrative report at the end of the Project's activities, to be provided within a maximum of three months after the end of the final year, following the operational closure of the Project. The final report provides a summary of the results and achievements compared with the Project's targets and objectives;

- Additional progress reports may be requested to Participating Organizations based on the decision by the Steering Committee.

The reports of Participating Organizations will include:

- Summary of progress achieved;
- Actual results: an updated table based on a logical framework matrix as measured by indicators, agreed baselines and targets, and relevant data sources;
- Activities implemented in the reporting period;
- Information on the difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome problems and eventual changes introduced;
- Information on the implementation of Visibility and Communications plans;
- Information on costs incurred as well as legal commitment entered in to by the entity in the reporting period;
- Financial report in accordance with the Financial Report Template (to be provided)
- Where applicable, a request for payment;
- Work plan and forecast budget for the next reporting period.

The Project’s reports shall contain the following elements:

- A summary and analysis of the results produced and their contribution to the anticipated outcomes of the Fund as defined in the RRF;
- Analysis of the external risks and various internal operational factors;
- The principal challenges and lessons learned during implementation, and analysis of the actions taken to incorporate them;
- Photos, videos, and other communication-related materials;
- Status of the financial implementation.

The Secretariat shall prepare a single consolidated annual and final narrative reports⁶, based on the quarterly and annual narrative reports submitted by the Participating Organizations. This consolidated annual report will pay attention to the analyses of Fund performance in terms of outcome and immediate results by taking into consideration the cumulative impact of the results achieved by all projects.

The consolidated annual narrative report shall be submitted by the Secretariat to the AA no later than 25 May each year. In accordance with the schedule established in the MOU or the MOA, the AA shall submit the consolidated annual narrative and financial report to the Steering Committee and the contributors to the Fund on 31 May each year.

Table 2: Narrative Report Schedule

Report	Prepared by	Submitted to	Date
Quarterly reports	Participating Organizations	Secretariat	Within one month after the end of the quarter
Annual Project Narrative and Visibility Report	Participating Organizations	Secretariat	31 March (every year)
Consolidated Annual Narrative and Visibility Report	Secretariat	Administrative Agent	25 May (every year)
	Administrative Agent	Steering Committee and fund contributors	31 May (every year)

⁶ Final in the case of closure of the Fund.

Final Project Narrative Report	Participating Organizations	Secretariat	Within 3 months from the project closure date.
Consolidated Final Narrative, Visibility and Financial? Report	Secretariat	Administrative Agent	Within 5 months from the project closure date.
	Administrative Agent	Steering Committee and fund contributors	Within 6 months from the project closure date.

7.3.2 Financial Reports

All the financial reports shall be submitted in accordance with the format of categories used by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

The Participating Organizations shall submit quarterly and annual financial reports (as of 31 December) for each project financed by the Fund, in respect to the funds received. The quarterly financial report should be submitted to the Secretariat one month after the end of the quarter and the annual financial reports to the MPTFO by 30 June.

The final certified financial statements and the final financial reports upon completion of the project activities will be provided by the AA to the Donors and SC within a maximum period of 5 months (31 May), after the end of the year of the project's operational closure.

The Administrative Agent will receive from Participating Organizations and consolidate the different financial reports and products of the consolidated financial tables and submit to the Secretariat. This will include the following financial tables, in US dollars:

- General financial overview;
- Contributions by donors;
- Net value of funding by specific objective / result;
- Net value of funding by project objective;
- Net value of funding per participating organization;
- Total financial execution rate by category;
- Financial execution rate by specific objective / result;
- Financial execution rate per project; and
- Financial implementation rate per participating organization.

These tables allow the measurement of the performance of the financial indicators in the preceding year or cumulatively in relation to each level of results, as previously described in the different sections related to the Fund's strategic framework and the monitoring and evaluation activities.

The Administrative Agent will also provide donors and the Steering Committee with a certified annual financial report of its activities as an Administrative Agent ('Report on the sources and uses of funds') within a maximum period of five months (31 May) as of the end of the calendar year, and a final financial report certified within a maximum period of five months (31 May) after the year in which the Fund's account is closed.

Table 3: Financial Report Schedule

Report	Submitted by	Submitted to	Date
Quarterly Project Financial Report	Participating Organizations	Secretariat	Within one month after the end of the quarter

Annual Project Financial Report	Participating Organizations	MPTF Office	30 April (every year)
Annual Consolidated Financial Report	MPTF Office	Secretariat	15 May (every year)
Annual Consolidated Financial Report	MPTF Office	Donors and SC	31 May (every year)
Final Project Financial Report (certified by Comptroller of respective UN Agencies)	Participating Organizations	MPTF Office	31 May (after the year of Operational Closure)
Final Consolidated Financial Report	MPTF Office	Donors and SC	31 May (after the year of Fund Operational Closure)
Certified annual financial statement of AA activities (signed by UNDP Comptroller)	MPTF Office	Donors and SC	31 May (every year)
Certified final financial statement of AA activities (signed by UNDP Comptroller)	MPTF Office	Donors and SC	31 May (after the year of Fund Financial Closure)

The Secretariat will consolidate the annual narrative and financial reports into a single document and will transmit them to the Administrative Agent, no later than May 25 of each year. In accordance with the schedule established in the legal framework of the Fund, the Administrative Agent shall transmit the consolidated report to the Fund's donors, the Steering Committee and the general public on May 31 of each year.

8. Risk Management

The Secretariat will develop a risk management strategy whose main objectives are to:

- i) Accelerate Fund implementation and increase the impact of the Fund activities; and
- ii) Verify that resources are used for foreseen purposes and improve the risk management capacity of national institutions.

The Fund's risk management strategy will encompass the following tasks:

- Develop shared understanding of risks faced by the Fund;
- Define risk appetite or tolerance of the Fund;
- Establish the Fund's policies regarding identified risks;
- Identify or clarify potential compensation from risk taking and seek consensus among stakeholders regarding its management;
- Determine risk treatment through measures of mitigation or adaptation;
- Identify risk holders, control its spreading and define follow-up measures; and
- Establish information strategies and common messages about the risks.

Every program or project approved by the Fund will need to comply with the risk management strategy. The observance of such strategy will be one of the selection criteria during the process of project evaluation. The Fund's risk strategy will be developed within three months after the approval of this manual.

9. Fund closure

The Fund closure requires that all projects financed by the Fund have been closed both operationally and financially.

9.1. Project Closure

For the closure of projects, Participating Organizations must follow the following steps:

1. Report to the Secretariat and the Administrative Agent the operational closure of the Project;
2. Present the final narrative report no later than March 31 of the following year after the operational closure of the project;
3. Upon receipt of the final narrative report, the Administrative Agent will close the operation of the project management system;
4. Return any balance available to the Administrative Agent by bank transfer to the Fund; and
5. Provide certified financial statements to the Administrative Agent within a maximum period of six months (June 30) days from the end of the year following the operational closure of the Project.

Upon notification by the relevant authority, the Administrative Agent will perform the financial closure of the project in the system and inform the Steering Committee through the Secretariat.

9.2. Fund Closure

The closing of the Fund is carried out by the Administrative Agent and it encompasses the following steps:

1. Verify that all projects have been financially closed;
2. Verify that all fund direct costs projects have been financially closed;
3. Verify that all interests have been received;
4. Refund the balance of the account (including interest) to donors;
5. Issue the certified final report of the activities of the AA; and
6. Closure of the Fund in the system.

10. Amendments to the Operational Manual

Amendments to this Operational Manual may be suggested by the Secretariat if/whenever needed and approved by the SC, provided that such amendments are not substantive and are consistent with the mandates, policies and procedures of the United Nations, as well as agreements contribution signed with donors.

Ordinarily, the Operational Manual will be reviewed every two years to ensure the relevance and appropriateness of procedures regarding the context.

Extraordinarily, the SC may approve a substantive revision of the Operational Manual when circumstances require an adjustment of procedures, for example, if the terms of reference are revised and the changes affect the operational aspects of the Fund.

11. Transparency

The MPTFO keeps the GATEWAY website (<http://mptf.undp.org>), a knowledge platform that provides regular data on implemented projects and financial information in real time, refreshed every two hours and from the MPTFO accounting system - ATLAS - on contributors commitments and deposits, approved project budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by Participating Organizations, interest income and other expenses.

The Secretariat will ensure that the project approvals decision, the project documents, the reports on projects and associated external evaluations are made available to the public through the Fund website of the Gateway (<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/GLR00>). The MPTFO will ensure that the financial

information (contributions, approved funds, funds transfers and expenses), as well as periodic financial reports at Project and Fund levels are published on the website.

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