



United Nations
MPTF Office

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2020 Annual Report

UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office

The UN Center of Expertise on pooled financing
instruments for the Sustainable Development Goals



2020 Annual Report

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office

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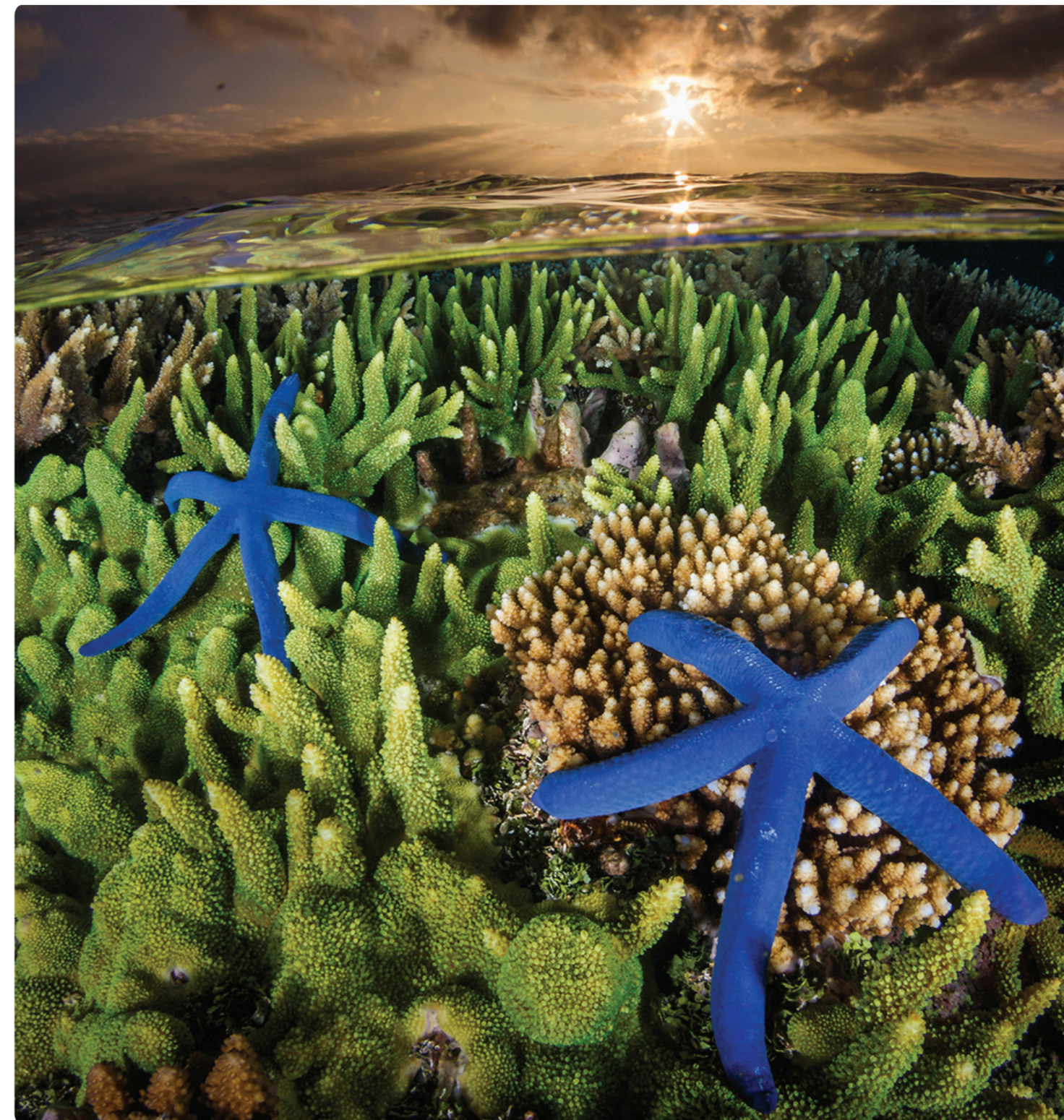
Peace rally in Liberia. **The Peacebuilding Fund's Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative** supports the empowerment of gender equality and recognizes the important role young people play in peacebuilding. In 2020 it included activities tied to the Call to Action for Human Rights by the UN Secretary General. In addition, in order to foster more equal partnerships between the UN and civil society organizations, the Fund also approved \$12 million in joint United Nations-civil society initiatives.
© Peacebuilding Fund

Acronyms

This year we are adding acronyms for easier reference

Administrative Agent
 Central African Forest Initiative
 Chief Executives Board for Coordination
 Country-based pooled funds
 Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General
 European Union
 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
 Fund administration system
 Gender equality marker
 International Aid Transparency Initiative
 International Organization for Migration
 Joint Programme
 Key performance indicator
 Management and Accountability Framework
 Memorandum of understanding
 Multi-Partner Trust Fund
 Non-governmental organization
 Non-UN entity
 Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
 Office of Audit and Investigations
 Participating UN Organization
 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
 Results-based management
 Sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment
 Socio-economic Response Plans
 Standard administrative agreement
 Sustainable Development Goals
 Terms of reference
 United Nations
 United Nations Children's Fund
 United Nations Country Teams
 United Nations Development Coordination Office
 United Nations Development Programme
 United Nations development system
 United Nations Evaluation Group
 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
 United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
 United Nations Partnership for Persons with Disabilities
 United Nations Population Fund
 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
 United Nations Sustainable Development Group
 United Nations Volunteers
 World Health Organization

AA
 CAFI
 CEB
 CBPFs
 EOSG
 EU
 FAO
 FAS
 GEM
 IATI
 IOM
 JP
 KPI
 MAF
 MoU
 MPTF
 NGO
 NUNO
 NORAD
 OAI
 PUNO
 QCPR
 RBM
 SEAH
 SERPs
 SAA
 SDGs
 ToR
 UN
 UNICEF
 UNCTs
 UNDCO
 UNDP
 UNDS
 UNEG
 OHCHR
 OCHA
 UNPRPD
 UNFPA
 UNSDCF
 UNSDG
 UNV
 WHO



A coral reef in Indonesia. The new **Global Fund for Coral Reefs** is a blended finance instrument to mobilise action and resources to protect and restore coral reef ecosystems. It is the result of an alliance between philanthropy, financial institutions and United Nations agencies, who are collaborating to establish a new paradigm for coral reef conservation.

© Grant Thomas / Coral Reef Image Bank

Foreword

As experienced around the world, 2020 proved to be a watershed year sparing no one. It was also a year when collaboration through inter-agency pooled funding was brought to the forefront of United Nations responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the course of the year, the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office kept pace with growing demand for pooled financing and trustee services that could simultaneously support progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, broadly, and pandemic response, specifically. The MPTF Office invested heavily in the digitalization of its operations and in efficiency improvements that expanded and improved the services it could offer as a unique asset of the UN development system (UNDS).



Jennifer Topping
Executive Coordinator
UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office

Hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the MPTF Office is the only United Nations unit exclusively dedicated to the design and administration of multi-stakeholder pooled financing instruments. Since 2003, it has supported 216 UN-backed pooled funds, providing an integrated platform of inter-agency pooled fund services to help UN organizations and partners make fast and efficient progress towards collective outcomes, like the 2030 Agenda.

This annual report summarizes key results from 2020. It illustrates the ways in which well-designed and professionally managed pooled financing instruments and collaborative, dedicated networks of partners can overcome all manner of development, humanitarian, conflict-related, and environmental challenges.

Over the course of 2020, five trends characterized the direction of the MPTF Office:

1 Enabling fast, flexible, and integrated United Nations responses to tackle COVID-19.

Pooled funds played a critical role in enabling joined up and coherent responses on the ground. Existing global pooled funding instruments (Peacebuilding Fund and Joint SDG Fund) plus country-level instruments (humanitarian and sustainable development funds) were inherently flexible, which made it possible for stakeholders to quickly pivot activities and reprogram resources. In the spring of 2020, a complementary, specific socio-economic response instrument was launched: the UN Secretary-General's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. Operational in a matter of weeks and with the support of 21 contributors, the Fund supported 80 low- and middle- income programme countries in overcoming the health and development crises caused by the pandemic. Not only have these instruments brought together the expertise and delivery capacities of the UN, but ongoing investment in lessons learned from their use will improve existing and future pooled funds by further enhancing their ability to meet quality commitments and expectations.

2 Strong portfolio growth and diversification.

In 2020, the total capitalization of the MPTF portfolio was over US\$1.5 billion. This represented an increase of 20% from 2019 and was the highest level of capitalization since the establishment of the MPTF Office. Beneath the aggregate financial picture, there was a diversified, innovative, and well-distributed portfolio of funds across the UNDS and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): 35% of deposits last year were for peace/transition funds, 32.5% were for development-related funds, 22.5% were for humanitarian funds, and 10% went to a growing climate portfolio. Furthermore, the contributor base expanded and became less concentrated, with close to 20 contributors each providing over US\$10 million in contributions last year. The number of contributing Member States also increased from 34 in 2019 to 50 in 2020. Partner expansion included greater engagement of private stakeholders with philanthropists, corporations, and non-governmental organizations working alongside core UNDS entities in trust fund-supported coalitions.

3 Operational effectiveness across the portfolio.

The MPTF Office made advances on the digital transformation of fund management and administration systems and strong operational effectiveness performance against key performance indicators (KPIs). Trust fund managers were able to support quick demands for reprogramming in the face of COVID-19. They quickly responded to the needs of UN country teams (UNCTs). The quality and effectiveness of services provided by the MPTF Office were confirmed by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) in its May 2020 publication of the Audit of MPTF Office function. It noted that the MPTF Office achieved the highest rating of "satisfactory," with no direct implementation recommendations. The MPTF Office also finalized the design of its new fully integrated and end-to-end digitalized Gateway platform, which incorporates novel fund management features that will enable the UNDS to meet its Funding Compact commitments for pooled funding. It piloted this new platform with the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and included the successful integration of a gender marker enabled by new Gateway functionalities.

4 Serving as the United Nations pooled funding trustee of choice.

Pooled funds helped the UN to spearhead joint collaboration and innovation, adhering to the quality commit-

ment requirements of the Funding Compact. As the administrative agent (AA) of 80% of development, transition, and climate change pooled funding for the UN system, the MPTF Office continued to support all partners in fulfilling their Funding Compact commitments related to the quantity and quality of pooled funding. In terms of innovation, the Joint SDG Fund launched the 'SDG Invest' initiative. The 28 shortlisted country proposals, with a requested budget of US\$216 million, had an estimated leverage potential of US\$9 billion in SDG investments. A new and innovative Global Fund for Coral Reefs, devised as a blended finance instrument, was launched in September 2020. The UN Partnership for Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) was instrumental in aligning its new strategy to address preconditions affecting persons with disabilities. Capital for the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) grew thanks to the onboarding of an innovative results-based carbon finance scheme. The Pacific Multi-Country Office launched the UN Pacific Strategy MPTF, the first SDG regional multi-country pooled fund. The Spotlight Initiative made substantial gains in addressing gender-based violence and tackling gender-based violence triggered by the pandemic.

5 Greater pooled funding engagement, particularly globally.

Several "flagship" funds grew in terms of donor support and capitalization. The

Peacebuilding Fund, the Spotlight Initiative Fund, the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan and Central African Forest Initiative not only grew but reached their highest levels of fund capitalization to date. Contributions to country-level pooled funds remained stable with an annual capitalization of over US\$800 million. These included humanitarian country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) administered by the MPTF Office, development and nexus country funds built around UN Cooperation Frameworks, and standalone joint programmes. Ten funds each reached the threshold of US\$50 million of annual capitalization.

Achievements like these have positioned the MPTF Office as a trusted leader in serving the United Nations and its partners when it came to pooled financing design and administration and meeting Funding Compact commitments. The MPTF Office was ready to provide innovative fund administration solutions to a new generation of collaborators as they addressed the most complex and pressing global, regional, and national challenges. Looking ahead, the MPTF Office will support efforts to building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and achieve the SDGs as part of the Decade of Action.



\$1.52B

in deposits



121

countries provided with pooled financing services



\$13.5B

of cumulative portfolio



92

active funds



64

contributors



18

funds completed



68

participating organizations



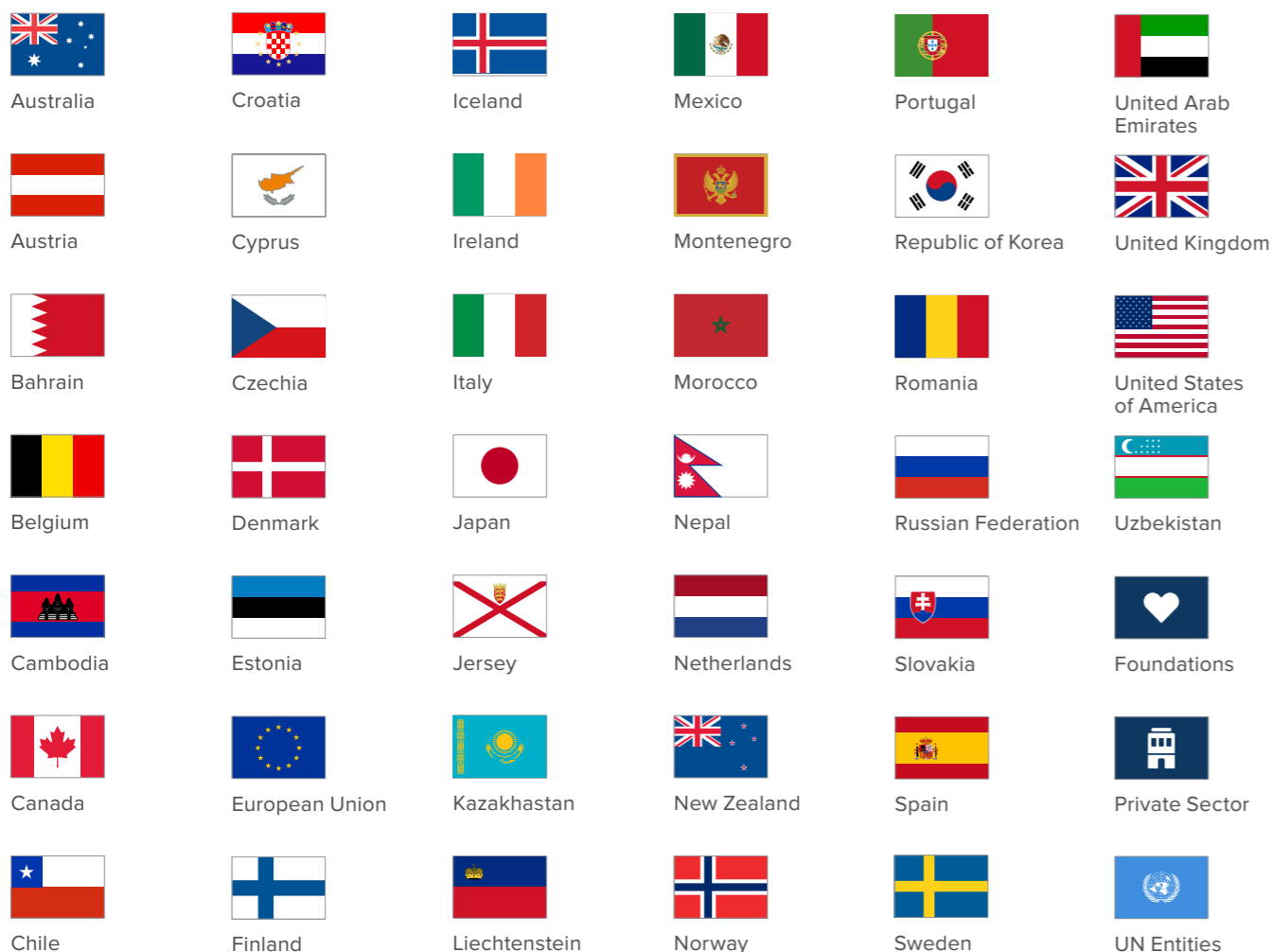
276

projects concluded



Contributors

Results would not have been possible without generous contributions to the pooled funds administered by the MPTF Office. Contributors included Member States, UN development system (UNDS) entities, foundations, and private sector establishments.



Foundations: FIA Foundation, Silatech
Private sector: Mars Inc., Essilor, Guccio Gucci Spa, AstraZeneca, Cartier, Standard Chartered Bank of Zambia, Lacoste

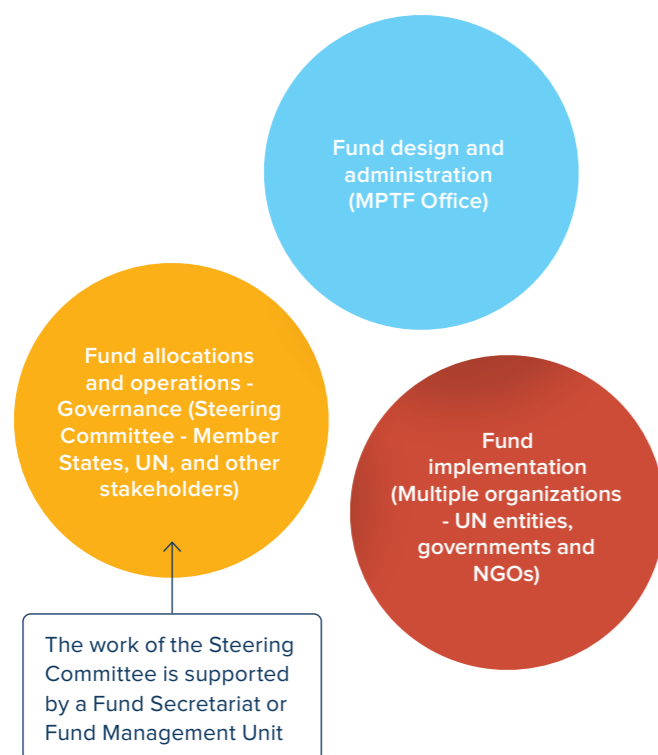
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1

MPTF Office pooled financing services

The MPTF Office provides fund design, fund administration, and other professional services to UN entities, national governments, and other and humanitarian partners. It provides integrated services throughout the life cycle of pooled funds, from inception to their closure. These services are conducted separately from pooled fund management and implementation roles, ensuring a neutral and professionally dedicated trustee function firewalled from all UN implementing entities, UNDP included.



Graph 1:

Three Roles in Pooled Fund Management

As the first UN pooled fund administrator, the MPTF Office has shaped how the UN approaches the management of this UN financing instrument. The MPTF Office relies on three distinct roles in pooled fund management.

- **Fund design and administration** is the core role of the MPTF Office as the standard setter for the UN pooled fund administration function.
- The MPTF office is not involved in **fund allocation and governance**, apart from its role as ex-officio member of the Steering Committee. The work of the Steering Committee is supported by a Fund Secretariat or Fund Management Unit.
- **Fund implementation** is the role of the multiple implementing organizations participating in a specific pooled fund. The MPTF Office is not a fund implementer *per se*, but can operate as the administrative host for fund secretariats.

These three distinct functions are reflected in the official UN definition for UN pooled funds, adopted in June 2015. This definition (in full or abbreviated format) has since been integrated in, among others, UNSDG guidance documents and the UN data standards for system-wide financial reporting.

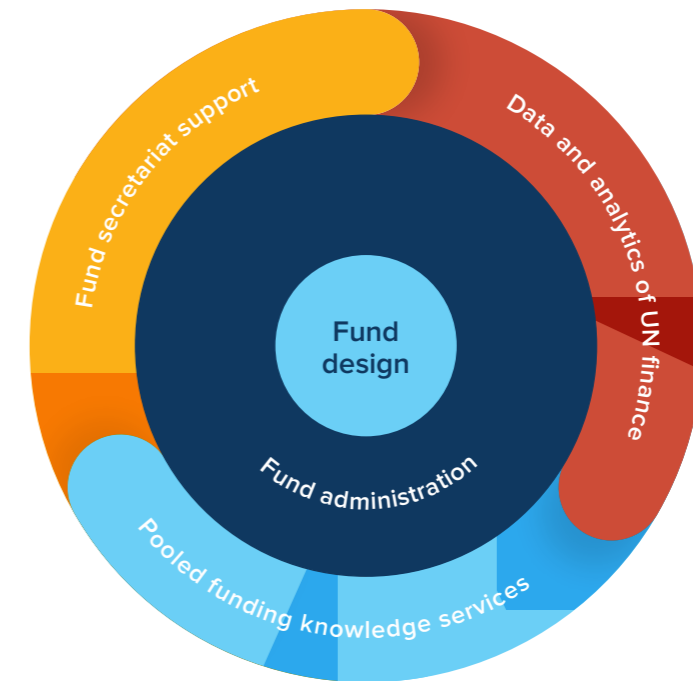


Colombian street artist paints mural with the message “With the victims” (“Con las víctimas” in Spanish). The **UN MPTF for Sustaining Peace in Colombia** works to mobilize and coordinate financing and co-financing for catalytic interventions to support the implementation of the peace agreement, in four areas: stabilization; reintegration; victims and transitional justice; and communication.
© MPTF Colombia / Julieth Serrano



Captain Atupele Mbeve from Malawi, Major Bindeshwari from India and Captain Ritu Pandey from Nepal, part of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. The **Elsie Initiative Fund for Uniformed Women in Peace Operations** supports and incentivizes the increased meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations. © Photo UN/Gregorio Cunha

Graph 2:
Current MPTF Office Pooled Funding Service Platform



MPTF Office services are grounded in pooled fund design and administration, as well as partners' requests for other pooled fund-related services. The MPTF Office provides a comprehensive service offer that includes fund secretariat support, pooled funding knowledge services, and UN financial data collection and analytics.

- **Fund design guidance** takes place at the initial stage of fund establishment and includes support for preparing fund concept notes and terms of reference (ToRs). Considerations at this stage cover the translation of fund objectives and theory of change into a fund result matrix, advice on financial viability and innovative sources of financing, and options for governance arrangements. A quality assurance mechanism is embedded in fund design services. Negotiating and finalizing fund legal agreements and structures are also central to this service.
- **Fund administration** covers trustee services and application of control frameworks for risk management, the use of standardized pre-agreed contribution agreements, fund administration business process design and management, treasury and investment management including receipt and deposit of financial contributions from contributors, disbursement of funds, monitoring and reporting on the quality and use of funds to enable governance decision making, production of annual fund financial and certified financial reports, timely closure of projects and funds, and enabling efficient, effective, and transparent fund and project management through the provision of web-enabled technology
- **Fund secretariat support** includes assistance during the transition from fund design to launch, and operationalization phases of new funds, which is critical for their success. MPTF Office guidance (such as tools or templates for secretariats) continues once a fund is established. For some flagship initiatives, the MPTF Office hosts secretariats and management units.
- **Data and analytics** are increasingly demanded by UN partners. The MPTF Office provides analytics on UN financing and on-demand analysis of available financing instruments. Specialists and portfolio managers engage with partners across the UN development system in support of common data standards that promote transparency and track pooled financing contributions.
- **Pooled funding knowledge** services include research, analysis, and gathering and dissemination of best practices on UN pooled funding. This knowledge is used to inform updates to, and modifications of, pooled-fund related policies and procedures, legal templates, and guidance notes.

platforms that provide real-time financial data and programme results.

2

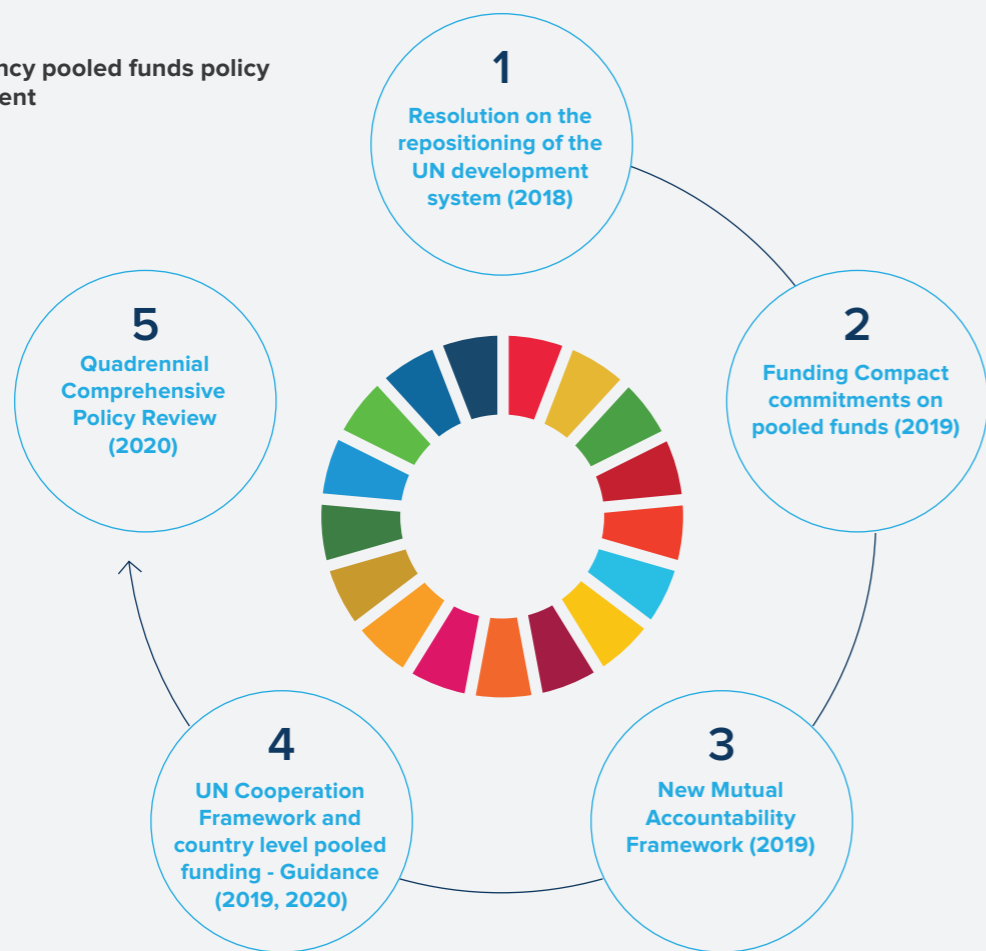
MPTF Office portfolio overview

2.1. The landscape for pooled financing

Inter-agency pooled financing is a recognized instrument for promoting coherence within the UN development system, repositioning process and reform streams led by the UN Secretary-General and endorsed by Member States. Given significant recent developments, the policy environment for pooled financing is forecasted to be propitious in coming years to support UN integrated action.

One of the impacts of COVID-19 was the confirmation of the need for flexible funding that allows for multi-dimensional solutions to be put in place—for which inter-agency pooled funds are particularly fit for purpose. Since 2018, the policy landscape has considerably evolved towards encouraging and promoting pooled funding, valued for its flexibility and synergetic impact.

Graph 3: Inter-agency pooled funds policy environment



The **resolution on repositioning the UN development system** [A/RES/72/279] was adopted in 2018 by the UN General Assembly and triggered the UNDS reform process. One major reform outcome was the request to double inter-agency pooled funds to improve the quality of financing to the UN and better support countries in their efforts to bring 2030 Agenda commitments in line with national priorities, in a coherent and integrated manner.

The **Funding Compact**, adopted in 2019, expanded on the need to effectively fund a repositioned UNDS. The Compact contained a series of commitments between the United Nations and Member States to raise the quality of funding for UNDS delivery of development assistance. Included were specific targets on inter-agency pooled funding:

- **The Member State target** was to double the share of contributions to UN pooled funds by 2023 and channel 10% of non-core resources through inter-agency pooled funds. They also committed to raising the number of pooled fund contributors and fully resourcing two key flagship funds (Joint SDG Fund and Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund) administered by the MPTF Office.
- **The UN commitment** was to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the use of development-related inter-agency pooled funds. Funding Compact

requirements outlined the uptake of a series of common management features to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of development-related inter-agency pooled funds. While most features, such as clear theories of change, solid results-based management systems, and transparency standards, were already key tenets of MPTF Office work, efforts were underway to take efficiency and functionality to the next level through the creation of a new Gateway platform, the launch of a revised Fund Administration Manual, and the introduction of additional services for fund secretariats.

In 2020, the UN General Assembly conducted the **Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN system operational activities (QCPR)**, which culminated in the adoption of a new QCPR resolution [A/RES/75/233]. This resolution will guide the UNDS between 2021 and 2024, and gives the QCPR a new impetus to offer high-level political guidance to the United Nations in its ongoing repositioning process and efforts to work effectively across the spheres of development, peace, humanitarian affairs, and human rights. Member States requested the UNDS, in this resolution, to continue "enhancing the transparency and accountability of inter-agency pooled funding mechanisms" and for UN entities to increase their participation, where appropriate, in pooled funds.

The **Management and Accountability Framework for the UN development and**

Resident Coordinator systems (MAF) was developed by the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) in 2019 as part of a reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system. It provided a framework for management and accountability within UN Country Teams, and it included specific accountability measures in relation to joint programmes and inter-agency pooled funds.

In early 2020, the UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO), with the support of the MPTF Office, issued new **guidelines on country-level pooled funds for the UNSDG Cooperation Framework**, which were accompanied by the development of training and support modules so UNCTs could design improved country-level financing instruments. The guidelines included basic information and resources on how and when to use country-level pooled funds. Aligned with UN Funding Compact definitions, a country-level pooled fund is a financing instrument available to every UN country team so they can consolidate and leverage resources towards country priority SDGs as outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). These financing instruments are complementary to other sources of local funding and aligned with global instruments, therefore common management features requested by the Funding Compact are applied. Conceived as flexible and strategic funding, earmarking is only possible at the outcome level (thematic or cross-cutting issues).

The 2020 QCPR Resolution and Inter-agency Pooled Funds

Recognizing the need for more flexible and predictable funding, and the unique contribution of inter-agency pooled funds to strengthening coordination and collaboration across the UNDS, the 2020 QCPR resolution included several key elements related to inter-agency pooled funds.

- **Joint funding around the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.** Member States and other contributors are advised to give priority to pooled, thematic, and joint funding mechanisms at all levels, where appropriate, and to limit earmarking. Included is the call for substantially increasing common resource mo-

bilization and distribution for joint programmes at the country level, including incentives for joint resource mobilization and initiatives.

- **Quality design.** UNDS entities are to continue developing well-designed pooled funds under common objectives and advance UN joint action on cross-cutting issues.
- **Transparency and accountability.** Continue enhancing transparency and accountability of pooled funds.
- **Increased entity participation.** UNDS entities are encouraged to enhance their participation, where appropriate,

with this type of funding mechanism.

- **Visibility of flexible global funding contributors.** The QCPR resolution reiterates the need to continue enhancing the visibility of UN contributors, including by making their information available to the country representatives of the respective funds, programmes, and specialized agencies.
- **Unlocking additional finance.** The resolution reaffirms the crucial role of international public finance and the potential of blended and pooled financing to assist countries in catalyzing additional public and private resources.

“ Through the 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, Member States gave clear directions to the UN system on how it can best accompany and support you in recovering from this crisis and accelerating SDG implementation”.

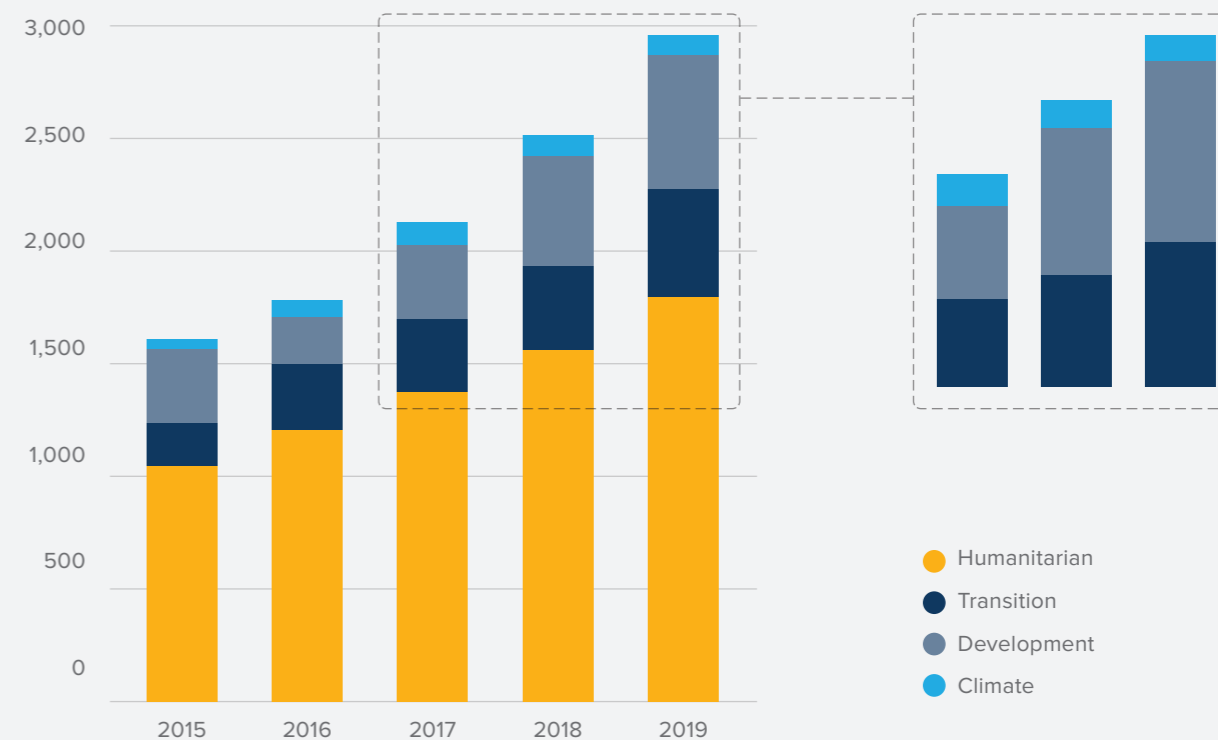


António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

An ecosystem of inter-agency pooled funds and financing instruments progressively has emerged to allow for efficient multi-stakeholder engagement and stronger inter-agency collaboration. In addition to well-known flagship global funds (the Peacebuilding Fund and Joint SDG Fund), other specialized funds promote joint UN action around intersectional issues like gender-based violence, migration, disability inclusion, anti-microbial resistance, the rights of marginalized groups, and forest protection. At the country level, several UNCTs designed and operationalized pooled funds to support key areas and priorities of the UNSDCF.

This increased commitment to pooled funds has translated into actionable financing. Based on 2019 data from pooled fund administrators, UN pooled funds mobilized an estimated US\$2.96 billion, an increase of 20% compared to 2018, with 39% of contributions going towards funds with a development focus. Funding to development-related inter-agency pooled funds increased by 111% since 2016 and now represents nine percent of all non-core funding to UN development-related activities (the Funding Compact target is 10% by 2023). Overall, 22 Member States provided at least 10% of their non-core resources to inter-agency pooled funds, including nine of the top 20 contributors.

Graph 4:
Deposits to UN inter-agency pooled funds, 2015-2019
US\$ million



Note: Based on UN system-wide data only available to 2019 at the time of publication.

Funding Compact Commitment 14: Common Management Features across Pooled Funds



With the Funding Compact, Member States and UN entities recognized the importance of pooled funds to galvanize collective action towards the SDGs. However, for this to be achieved, pooled funds had to work efficiently and effectively. The agreement was that a series of common management features would be applied across all inter-agency pooled funds.

A UN center of expertise in pooled funding, the MPTF Office has invested in ensuring relevant features are applied across all portfolios. These are grouped under 12 categories.

1. Innovation features. Innovation is a core tenet of MPTF Office processes and functions, and design experts developed, with collaborative feedback from partners, innovative results and performance-based payments tools (Central African Forest Initiative or Elsie Initiative) and deployed blended capital and mixed modalities of financing (Joint SDG Fund and a new Global Coral Reef Fund). Feeder-fund modalities assisted stakeholders in aligning global and country pooled funds through feeders (e.g. the Peacebuilding Fund acted as a catalyst for national transition funds such as the Colombia Trust Fund or Liberia MPTF). Further, the MPTF Office expanded implementation modalities for non-UN entities, mostly NGOs, using the Peacebuilding Fund as a pioneer experience. Several funds focused on greater engagement with the private sector, which has led to over 25 private sector organizations having contributed funds to trusts like the Lion's Share, Road Safety Trust Fund, or Working for Health Fund. In addition, the MPTF Office aligns humanitarian, transition, and development funds to support countries across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

2. Clear theories of change. Theories of change are at the heart of design support, and the MPTF Office prepared a design manual with specific examples and recommendations on how to institute a clear theory of change. As this is a requirement for all new funds, secretariats receive support on creating online and simplified visual representations of their theories of change. The UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Trust Fund adopted a coherent theory of change around three key thematic windows, with clear alignment to SDG safeguarding and national priorities.

3. A new results-based management (RBM) system. A part of the upgraded MPTF Gateway, a new RBM system will be made available to all funds administered by the MPTF Office in 2021, after a successful pilot with the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund in 2020. The system enables the monitoring of programmatic and financial performance indicators with financial data reported according to UN data standards for financial reporting along with International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) standards. Mainstreaming data standards on SDGs will ensure that all interventions at project and fund levels are linked to the global goals, while relationships between fund-level indicators the UN contributes to directly versus those attributable to fund interventions become more visible. Standard operational indicators measure the operational performance of each fund and overall MPTF Office portfolio against defined key performance indicators (KPIs). Another element of the new Gateway is the introduction of a grant management module that will make it possible for pooled fund secretariats to track project results towards fund and operational performance indicators.

4. Well-functioning governance bodies. In the design phase, the MPTF Office supports partners in developing each ToR to clearly outline the role of governance bodies in oversight and decision making with support from a secretariat or fund management unit. It separates the roles of the MPTF Office, as administrative agent, and participating organizations to ensure a clear delineation of responsibilities and levels of accountability. Moreover, the MPTF Office fulfils its ex-officio role as a member of the steering committee by sharing best practices and providing real-time results into its ongoing portfolio.

5. Effective secretariats. The MPTF Office recognized the value of providing strong support to secretariats and invested in services to secretariats in 2020. New digital tools and templates have been developed as part of the Gateway platform upgrade (including a fund administration system and an integrated grant management system). In addition, a full-time position was established to cover ad-hoc support needs in the start-up phase. To continue its function as a pooled funding knowledge hub, MPTF Office analysts used Gateway to gather lessons learned and share good practices across secretariats.

6. Quality assurance on UNDS norms and values. Standard legal agreements already referred to programmatic safeguards in line with UN norms and values. Specific text related to sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment was incorporated into legal agreements in 2019, following consultative processes involving Member States and UN agencies, a process coordinated by the MPTF Office. The new grant management system piloted in 2020 tracked contributions for gender equality

through mandatory gender equality markers at the project level and maintained options for fund-specific markers.

7. Risk management systems and strategies. The upgraded version of the Fund Design Manual prominently features risk management in pooled funds while the fund management platform includes a universal marker for risk management. These contribute to monitoring and due diligence processes to mitigate risks related to the multi-stakeholder nature of inter-agency pooled funds and the particularly high-risk environment in which many pooled funds often operate.

8. Operational effectiveness. The MPTF Office investment in further efficiency gains is one of its strategic objectives between 2019 and 2022. Measures implemented included the update of the MPTF Office Design Manual on 'Designing Funds for Performance,' update of the MPTF Office Fund Administration Manual; and a pilot of the revamped flagship Gateway. The latter addressed stakeholder requests and recommendations from the 2018 independent evaluation.

9. Improving reporting processes. With high financial reporting standards as a trustee, the MPTF Office, in 2020, delivered 100% of certified financial reports (sources and uses of funds) on time, and an increasing number of UN entities submitted quarterly reports beyond the require-

ment to report annually as a commitment to the principles of transparency. While narrative reporting remains the responsibility of participating organizations, the new Gateway design will include a module for secretariats to report at the project-level and aggregate results to the fund level.

10. Comprehensive approach to visibility. Funds administered by the MPTF Office has adopted a multi-platform and 360 approach to visibility. Narrative reports, as requested by the Funding Compact, properly recognized all contributors. While the new Gateway is designed to provide greater digital visibility for partners, funds, participating organizations, and the MPTF Office, partners are encouraged to use social media to acknowledge the efforts of contributors and other stakeholders. Funds also tend to adopt visibility guidelines at the country level and support the organization of advocacy and public outreach activities. As requested by the QCPR, country-level activities funded by global mechanisms are implementing specific information and visibility activities to recognize the contributions to these global funds. A social media campaign launched by the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Trust Fund on its results was illustrative.

11. Transparency. The MPTF Office has been renowned for its high transpar-

ency standards in terms of availability and access to information on contributions, transfers, and expenditure data. This was reflected in the second generation Gateway, which has been designed with additional tools, including dashboards and data visualizations, for better access, analysis, and visual representation of financial and narrative content.

12. Joint and system wide evaluation. The MPTF Office works with partners to promote good evaluation practices to ensure sufficient resources are invested in evaluation practices. It collaborates closely with the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) to track and share pooled funds evaluations in their evaluation reports database. The MPTF Office also shares a joint work stream with the UN Development Coordination Office (UNDCO), and flagship funds to align system-wide evaluations, provide guidelines, and share best practices on evaluating pooled funding, including budget allocations.

The MPTF Office will continue investing in each of these areas, particularly through four streams over the coming years. Its initiatives include the update of the fund design and administration manuals, mainstream launch of the new Gateway, and other investments in secretariat support services.

	Covered in current MPTFO manuals and Gateway	Updating Design Manual	Complete update Fund Administration	Launch new Gateway	Secretariat Support Services
Innovation features	●	●		●	●
Clear theory of change	●	●		●	●
RBM system	●	●		●	●
Well-functioning governance bodies	●	●	●	●	●
Supported by effective secretariat	●	●	●	●	●
United Nations norm and values	●	●	●	●	●
Risk management	●	●	●	●	●
Operational Effectiveness	●	●	●	●	●
Reporting	●	●	●	●	●
Visibility	●			●	
Transparency	●			●	
Joint and system wide evaluations	●	●		●	●

2.2. MPTF Office portfolio

The MPTF Office administers a broad portfolio of inter-agency pooled funds. Each is a multi-stakeholder partnership with a specific thematic and geographic focus designed to respond to a clear theory of change, fill existing financing gaps, and support collective action.

The MPTF Office administers three broad types of UN pooled financing mechanisms in terms of geographic and thematic scope: UN global and regional multi-partner trust funds (MPTFs), country-level MPTFs (covering both UN and national funds), and standalone UN joint programmes. Thematically, the MPTF Office portfolio is organized around major thematic clusters, covering key areas of UN action (humanitarian, peace and transition, development, and climate and environment). Some funds address multiple categories and these include funds

that allocate flexible resources to projects across the humanitarian-peace-development nexus.

In past years, the MPTF Office worked on creating an enhanced, strategic portfolio with a diversified contributor base. The MPTF Office established 12 new financing vehicles, including both MPTFs and joint programmes (see Table 1) in 2020 that, combined with funds from previous years, brought the total portfolio to 92 funds open for contributions. There was also an increase in the total number of funds operationally and/or financially closed with a jump from 16 funds in 2013 to a total of 100 funds operationally and/or financially closed at the end of 2020. This emphasized the strong commitment to effective management practices in providing trustee services throughout the full life cycle of pooled funds.

Table 1: Summary of MPTF Office Portfolio of Funds

MPTF Portfolio	2017	2018	2019	2020
Newly established (during calendar year)	9	16	10	4
Ongoing from previous years (as of year-end)	51	46	59	59
Operationally closed (as of year-end)	26	34	28	29
Financially closed (as of year-end)	9	15	24	33
Total	95	111	121	125

Joint Programme Portfolio	2017	2018	2019	2020
Newly established (during calendar year)	4	9	9	8
Ongoing from previous years (as of year-end)	17	15	22	20
Operationally closed (as of year-end)	34	31	28	30
Financially closed (as of year-end)	10	19	24	33
Total	65	74	83	91

Total portfolio	2017	2018	2019	2020
Open for contributions	81	86	101	91
Open for contrib. but not capitalized as of 31/12/18	8	9	6	1

Where differences exist with previous year report, it should be noted that 2017, 2018 and 2019 figures were adjusted following an update of the Fund Administration System.



Women and girls who experience sexual violence are often too afraid to seek help. **The Spotlight Initiative**, a partnership between the UN and the European Union, works to make support services more accessible to all women and girls, including those who are often left behind.

© UN Women Uganda

2.2.1. Global and regional MPTFs

Global and regional MPTFs bring an array of partners together to address challenges that require joint UN action and a coherent response across multiple countries or cross-border regions. By the end of 2020, the 24 active global and regional funds constituted approximately 45% of the total capitalization of all funds administered by the MPTF Office. Of the global

flagship pooled funds, the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the Spotlight Initiative Fund showed considerable capitalization growth in 2020.

Other thematically specialized global financing instruments (Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, Partnership for Action on Green Economy/PAGE, the Migration MPTF, Conflict Related Sexual Violence MPTF, or the new Antimicrobial Resistance MPTF) also accelerated their capitalization processes. Amongst new

funds established in 2020 were the Global Fund for Coral Reefs and Generation Unlimited MPTF. Two global standalone joint programmes were also established to address financing needs for green recovery and climate security mechanisms. At the regional level, the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI) reached the annual capitalization milestone of US\$120 million in contributions for the first time, reflecting a substantial increase from the previous year.

Table 2: Deposits in US\$ to MPTF Office-administered Global Funds, 2020

Fund	Theme	Total (US\$)	# contributors (2016-2020)
Peacebuilding Fund	Transition	180,255,932	40
Spotlight Initiative Fund	Development	148,798,779	3
UN COVID-19 MPTF	Multiple	70,687,186	19
Joint SDG Fund	Development	42,955,918	14
UN REDD Programme Fund	Multiple	16,423,417	3
Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund	Multiple	14,157,750	15
Partnership for Action on Green Economy	Multiple	12,753,338	7
Migration MPTF	Development	12,211,608	12
UNPRPD Disability Fund	Development	9,633,175	7
Conflict Related Sexual Violence MPTF	Transition	8,712,413	12
Elsie Initiative Fund	Transition	6,070,878	5
Antimicrobial Resistance MPTF	Development	5,879,000	3
JP Financing Green Recovery	Climate	5,763,998	1
UN Road Safety Trust Fund	Development	5,577,653	15
Global Fund for Coral Reefs	Climate	3,623,598	1
Human Rights Mainstreaming Trust Fund	Multiple	3,045,493	4
JP Climate Security Mechanism	Climate	2,595,449	1
Generation Unlimited Trust Fund	Development	2,247,190	1
The Lions Share Fund	Multiple	1,542,917	7
Working for Health MPTF	Development	1,477,880	2
Financing Strategy 2030 Agenda	Development	1,246,776	1
UNITLIFE Trust Fund	Multiple	500,000	1
One Planet Multi-Partner Trust Fund	Multiple	100,000	2
SDG Fund	Development	19,215	3
Total		\$556,279,564	

Table 3: Deposits in US\$ to MPTF Office-administered Regional Funds, 2020

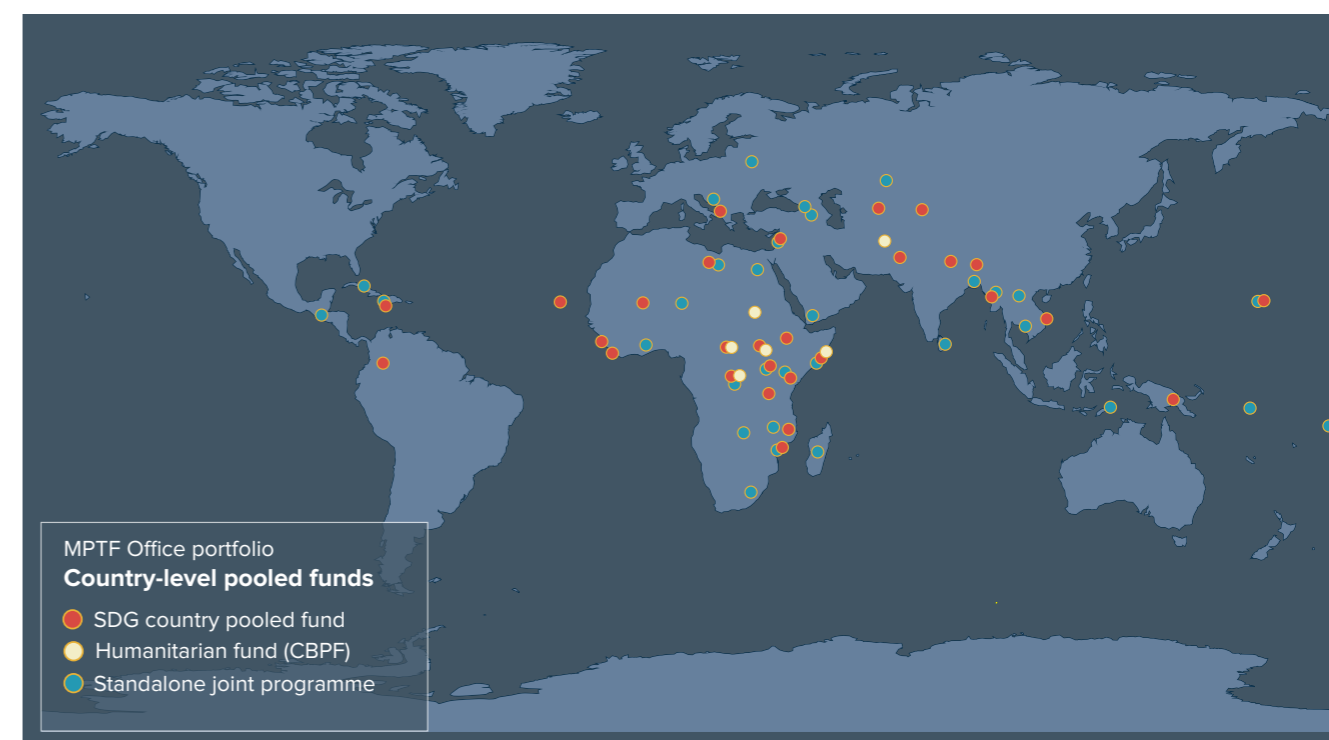
Fund	Theme	Total (US\$)	# contributors (2016-2020)
Central African Forest Initiative	Climate	120,670,460	6
West Balkans Small arms and light weapons (SALW) Control MPTF	Transition	6,441,047	6
UN Pacific Strategy Fund	Development	6,407,000	1
Liptako-Gourma Regional JP	Transition	2,384,247	1
Total		135,902,754	

2.2.2. Country-level MPTFs

By the end of 2020, country-level MPTFs constituted close to 49% of the MPTF Office portfolio in terms of total capitalization. Country-level humanitarian funds, meanwhile, were an important aspect of MPTF Office engagement with one-fourth of total contributions received going to them (a smaller percentage than previous years). Country-level transition funds also performed well, representing 40% of total capitalization across country-level MPTFs.

Funds were transformed into new funds to promote the SDGs at the country level. After the publication of new UNSDG guidelines on country-level pooled funds, UNCTs started to design and establish **country-level pooled funds around the UNSDCF**. Early indications suggest active country-level development funds performed well, enhancing UN coordinated support for the SDGs and the UNSDCF as the central programmatic framework or springboard.

One interesting trend in country-level MPTFs was that several former One UN



- **Of the existing 30+ inter-agency pooled funds to advance UNSDCF priorities, 21 were capitalized in 2020:** Albania, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya (Private Sector partnerships), Liberia (by Peacebuilding Fund), Lebanon, Malawi, Moldova, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Uzbekistan (Aral Sea Region), and Pacific Region.
- **New funds were established or redesigned** in Cabo Verde, Lebanon, Uganda, and a regional instrument for the Pacific region, the first of its kind established for the implementation of joint activities by a UN Multi-Country Office.
- Also of note were the **in-country investments of national governments and regional country partners** in some country-based funds. The contribution of the Government of Uzbekistan to the Aral Sea UN Human Security Trust Fund was one such example, as was the Government of Papua New Guinea’s contribution of almost 15% of the total capitalization for its fund in 2020.
- In other regions, the Government of Poland invested in the Albania SDG Acceleration Fund, which quickly adapted after the 2019 earthquake, and the Government of Chile made a contribution to the MPTF for Sustaining Peace in Colombia, showcasing a new trend of **regional solidarity through country pooled funds**.

Graph 5:
Top 10 Global and Regional Funds by Deposit Amount in US\$, 2004-2020

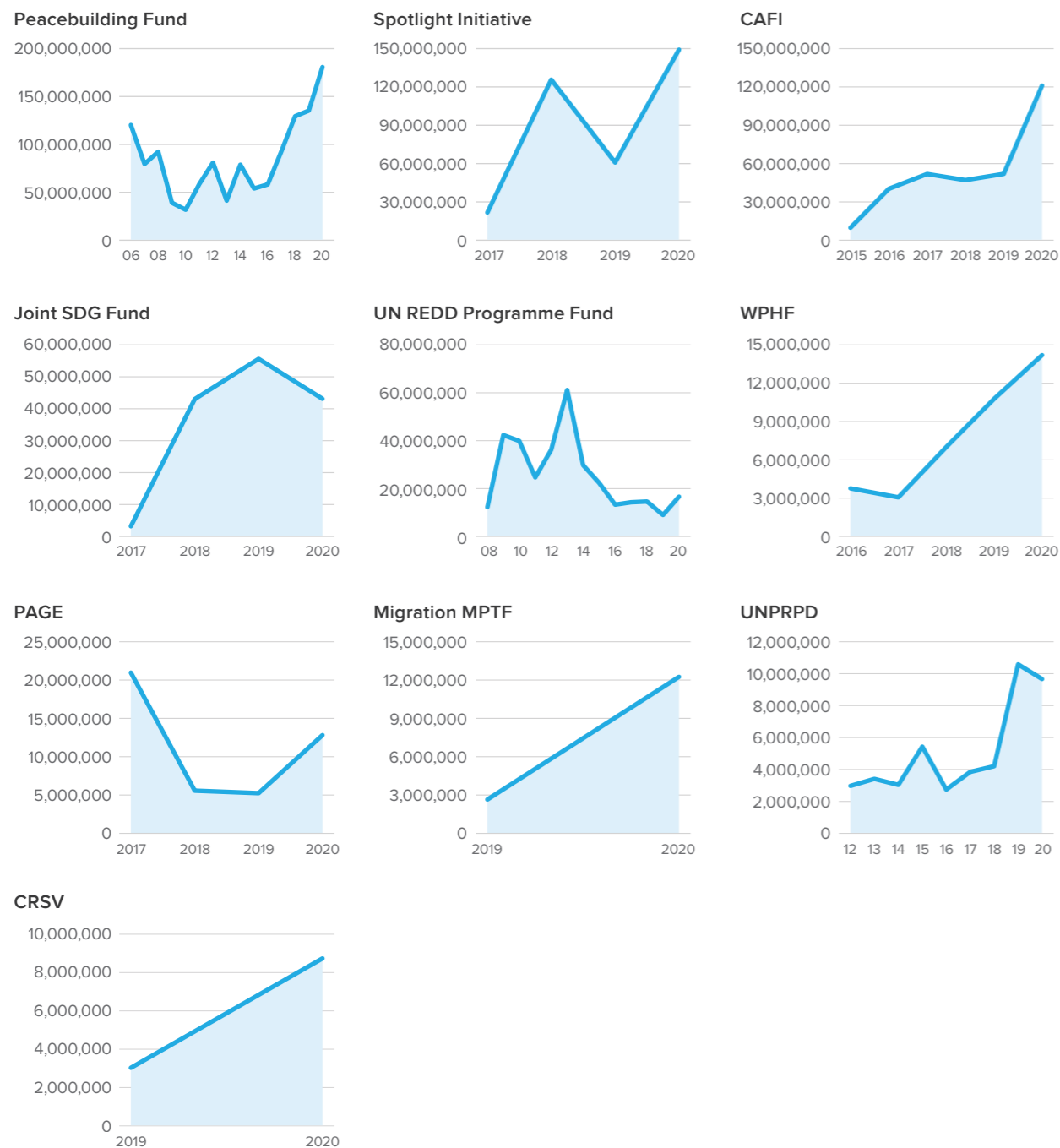


Table 4:
Deposits in US\$ to MPTF Office-administered Country-level Pooled Funds, 2020

Fund	Theme	Total deposits (US)	# contributors (2016-2020)
Afghanistan LOTFA MPTF	Transition	168,649,270	13
Sudan Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	72,587,710	16
Somalia Multi Window Trust Fund	Transition	70,775,047	13
South Sudan Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	66,302,321	19
Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	60,322,153	17
DRC Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	57,101,754	13
Somalia Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	47,500,133	18
CAR Humanitarian Fund	Humanitarian	30,300,126	16
Malawi SDG Acceleration Fund	Development	27,719,557	9
South Sudan RSRTF	Transition	19,307,692	4
Colombia Peace UNMPTF	Transition	16,626,321	15
PNG UN Country Fund	Development	16,248,594	4
Albania SDG Acceleration Fund	Development	14,829,687	9
UN Haiti Cholera Response MPTF	Development	10,387,903	45
Aral Sea Region	Climate	9,095,379	5
Pakistan UNSDF Fund III	Development	9,053,800	1
Tanzania One UN Fund	Development	8,660,009	3
Lebanon Recovery Fund	Transition	6,795,489	2
Nepal Development Framework MPTF	Development	6,203,313	2
Sri Lanka UN SDG MPTF	Transition	5,493,110	4
DRC Stabilization ISSSS Fund	Transition	4,450,220	6
Uganda UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund	Development	2,177,013	1
DRC Fonds National REDD	Multiple	1,710,367	1
Moldova 2030 SDGs Partnership	Development	1,650,732	2
Rwanda SDG Fund	Development	1,351,245	2
Cape Verde 2030 Acceleration Fund	Development	1,331,746	2
Ethiopia New Way Platform	Transition	898,124	1
Moldova Toward Unity in Action	Development	588,425	1
Darfur Peace and Stability Fund	Transition	571,102	5
Sudan Financing Platform	Multiple	333,600	1
Kenya SDG Partnership Platform	Development	100,000	5
Total		739,121,942	

2.2.3. Joint programmes (country level)

Stand-alone joint programmes using the pass-through funding modality frequently operate as the pooled funding instrument for joint development action at the country level. Initiatives typically involve two to five UN organizations agreeing on specific programmatic scope and deliverables. Together, country, regional, and global joint programmes accounted for US\$90 million of total contributions to the MPTF Office in 2020.

Table 5:
Deposits in US\$ to MPTF Office-administered Stand-alone Joint Programmes (country level), 2020

Joint Programme	Theme	Total deposits (US)	# contributors (2016-2020)
JP Yemen ERRY II	Transition	22,406,626	2
JP Bangladesh SAFE	Development	19,234,305	5
JP oPt Rule of Law II	Transition	5,347,061	2
JP Bangladesh LoGIC	Climate	4,686,168	1
JP Mozambique Rapariga Canada	Development	3,780,068	1
JP Iran Emerging Needs	Development	3,476,844	1
JP Yemen Maritime Governance	Transition	3,289,200	1
JP Somaliland Rule of Law	Transition	3,149,593	2
JP Armenia Equal Participation	Development	3,082,320	1
JP DRC Fight against GBV – JAD	Development	2,978,074	1
JP Zambia GBV II	Development	2,628,906	2
JP Mozambique Action for Girls	Development	1,743,862	1
JP Pakistan Education in KP	Development	1,524,260	1
JP Myanmar Women Empowerment	Development	1,518,894	2
JP Guatemala Ixil	Development	1,336,596	1
JP Georgia EU IPSC	Development	1,301,612	1
JP Georgia Gender Equality II	Development	1,287,303	1
JP Guatemala Cuilco	Development	1,233,781	1
JP Guatemala Maya Programme	Development	1,193,656	1
JP Georgia EU HR4 All Phase 2	Development	1,076,023	1
JP Georgia VET in Abkhazia	Development	971,632	1
JP Cambodia PDI & GBV	Development	925,799	1
JP Lao Prevention and EVAW	Development	731,658	1
JP Bosnia and Herzegovina DRR	Development	700,000	1
JP DRC ACTIF	Development	625,728	1
Total		90,229,969	



Malawi

Malawi Girls' Education Joint Programme II works to reduce poverty in three districts by providing quality education and basic life skills for adolescent girls. A cross-sector approach is used to address various issues affecting girls' access to education and their ability to stay in school.

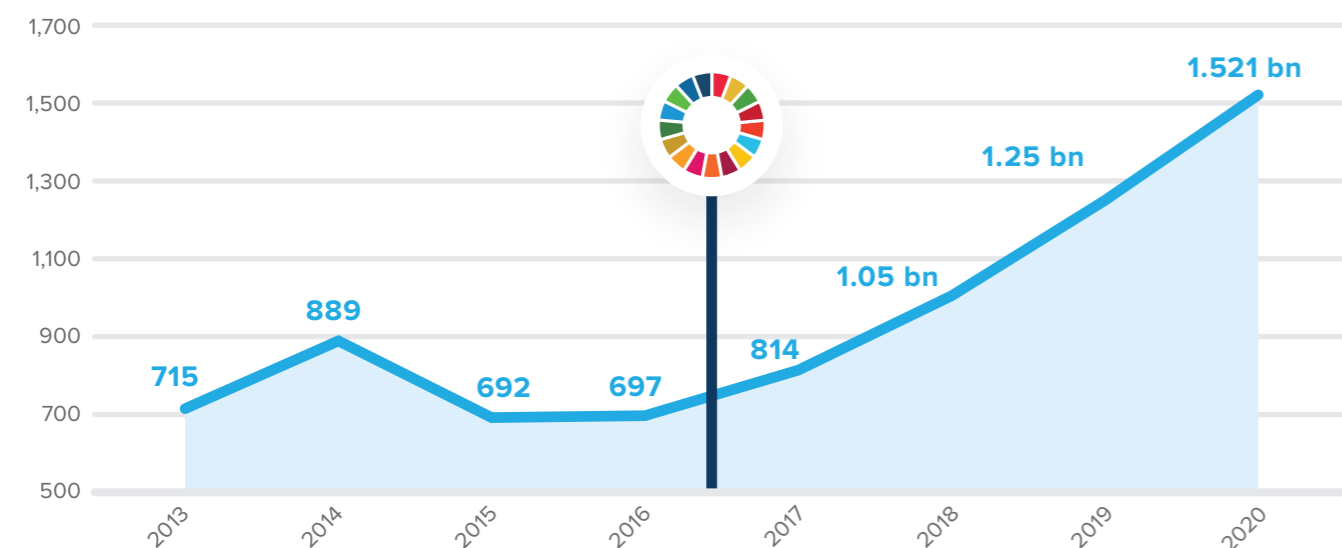
© UNFPA Malawi

2.3. Contributions and transfers

The graph below provides an overview of trends in the amount of deposits received for the total MPTF Office portfolio since 2013. **Deposits to pooled funds administered by the MPTF Office grew from US\$715 million in 2013 to US\$1.52 billion in 2020, representing an annual increase of 20% from 2019.** More importantly, it was the highest level of capitalization in inter-agency pooled funds since the MPTF Office was established in 2004, reflecting

the broader ownership and investment of partners. Beneath this aggregate financial picture was a diversified, innovative, and well-distributed portfolio of funds across the UN system and SDG agenda, with 35% of deposits in 2020 received for transition and peace funds, 32.5% of deposits received for development-related funds, 22.5% received for humanitarian funds, and 10% received for a growing environment and climate portfolio.

Graph 6:
Total Deposits Received by the MPTF Office in US\$ millions (2013-2020)



Central African Republic

Central African forests, a vital carbon sink for the globe and essential resource for communities and governments, are key to our planet's future. The **Central African Forest Initiative** supports strategic, holistic and country-level REDD+ and low emission development investments in Central African high-forest cover countries. The initiative preserves woodlands in the region by assisting local communities and authorities in mitigating climate change, reducing poverty, and contributing to sustainable and inclusive development.

© Central African Forest Initiative

The robust performance of certain funds and increase in contributions were largely attributable to transition and development portfolios, in part, due to the solid performance and recognition of the Peacebuilding Fund. In 2020, the Peacebuilding Fund had its strongest year of mobilizing contributions since its establishment, moving towards the “quantum leap” in peacebuilding financing requested by the UN Secretary-General. The adoption of the Funding Compact in 2019 also increased engagement in inter-agency pooled funds. Capitalization levels remained robust for six country-level humanitarian funds and other funds set up since 2018. For example, peace and transition funds in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, and South Sudan supported broad multi-stakeholder partnerships between the UN, national governments, non-UN organizations, the World Bank, and European Union (EU). To finance rapid and joint responses to the pandemic, the UN Secretary-General’s COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund was established in a matter of weeks.

In 2020, the top 10 donors to MPTF Office funds were the European Union, Germany, United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands, Canada, Denmark, Switzerland, and Australia. The contributor base progressively expanded and became less concentrated, with 20 contributors each providing over US\$10 million last year. Guided by the Funding Compact, the number of Member States

contributing to pooled funds continued to grow, increasing from 35 Member States in 2019 to 50 in 2020. Equally exciting was the expanded engagement of private stakeholders in multi-part-

ner funding platforms—more and more philanthropists, corporate leaders, and non-governmental organizations collaborated with the United Nations in MPTF-supported coalitions.

Table 6:
Deposits by Contributor and the Number of Funds they Supported in 2020 (in US\$)

Contributor	Total (US)	# Funds
European Union	239,088,214	15
Germany	235,358,524	20
United Kingdom	202,004,480	23
Norway	170,268,185	29
Sweden	165,356,818	36
Netherlands	128,416,076	19
Canada	97,767,956	17
Denmark	54,486,325	13
Switzerland	38,384,241	15
Australia	32,770,691	10
Ireland	19,502,740	12
Finland	19,073,420	11
Belgium	16,178,850	6
Italy	14,780,987	6
New Zealand	14,560,411	5
Republic of Korea	14,550,192	13
United States of America	13,700,000	3
Austria	6,842,528	4
France	5,609,552	3
Japan	4,576,910	2
Luxembourg	3,887,282	7
Poland	3,322,648	2
UN	3,104,177	
Russian Federation	3,082,320	1
Foundations	3,000,000	
Uzbekistan	1,500,000	1
Estonia	745,278	5
Iceland	662,729	2
United Arab Emirates	500,000	1
Other*	3,882,989	

* Portugal, Croatia, Jersey, Bahrain, Turkey, Czechia, Mexico, Thailand, Romania, Slovakia, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Hungary, Cyprus, Lithuania, Cambodia, Chile, Spain, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Peru, and Mauritius

The MPTF Office transferred a total of US\$1.44 billion to 68 different participating organizations, which included United Nations organizations and external collaborators. **The amount transferred to participating organizations, as measured in net funded amount, increased 50% since 2018**, which correlated with new legal arrangements the MPTF Office implemented over the last three years. In 2020, an important amount of resources was transferred to NGOs, directly and through the managing agent modality, by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNDP, and UN Women, representing one fifth of the total net funded amount. In 2020, approximately 75% of all contributions were directly implemented by UN entities. NGOs implemented approximately 20%, both under the Managing Agent function (in which a UN entity, particularly in a humanitarian context, transferred the resources to an NGO) or directly

as non-UN entity (NUNO), where the NGO had full programmatic and financial accountability responsibilities. UNDP, OCHA, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Women, UN Population Fund (UNFPA), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) were the primary recipients of these funds, as seen in Table 7. In addition to OCHA—whose shares substantially increased in 2020 after the transfer of the management agent functions of five country-based humanitarian funds—high rates of growth were observed at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) given it tripled its engagement in MPTF Office administered pooled funds, as well as the World Health Organization (WHO) (over 85% growth), UNDP as a Participating UN Organization or PUNO (80%), IOM (43%), UNICEF (36%), UNICEF (36%), UNFPA (36%) and UN Women (105%).

Table 7: Transfers to Top Participating Organizations in 2020 (US\$)

Participating Organization	Net Funded Amount (US\$)
UNDP	402,278,736
NGO/OCHA*	250,793,600
UNICEF	119,019,584
UNWOMEN	102,689,645
UNFPA	101,198,571
IOM	61,715,095
FAO	49,582,114
WFP	45,460,654
WHO	33,735,963
NGO/UNDP*	19,114,399
OHCHR	17,876,388
ILO	16,737,378
OCHA	15,503,636

* NGO/OCHA and NGO/UNDP refer to the contributions received by OCHA and UNDP respectively as managing agents to transfer funds to NGOs.



📍 Yemen

The high cost of diesel-generated power has deprived many poor families of electricity access in Yemen. To change this situation, Iman Hadi, led a group of women who installed a solar power plant to provide clean energy through the joint programme **Supporting Resilient Livelihoods and Food Security in Yemen (ERRY II)**. Her groundbreaking work was recognized, among others by BBC, featuring her in the list of 100 Most Influential Women for 2020.

© UNDP Yemen

3

Delivering the MPTF Office's Multi-year Plan Results

During 2020, the MPTF Office continued implementation of the Multi-year Plan for 2019 to 2022, which is guided by three strategic objectives: (1) develop and maintain quality assured pooled financing instruments, (2) increase efficiency by pursuing efficiency gains, transparency, and meeting KPIs, and (3) maintain a strong culture of client focus, bringing creativity and agility to current and expanded services. The Multi-year Plan is supported by an Investment Plan for the same period to ensure the MPTF Office is properly resourced to achieve its strategic goals.

The onset of COVID-19 required the MPTF Office to quickly transition its professional practices and business processes online while still delivering on commitments. It achieved this by rapidly building new digital business processes and adopting new working practices to ensure continuity and prompt service in light of increased contributions and substantial growth in resources transferred to participating organizations.

An internal audit carried out by the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations gave the MPTF Office the highest rating possible, “satisfactory” and assessed that “governance arrangements, risk management practices, and controls were adequately established and functioning well.”

Graph 7: MPTF Office Multi-year Plan (2019 – 2022)



Recent Assessments and Evaluations of MPTF Office Trustee Services

In recent years, evaluation and audit exercises investigated the quality and effectiveness of MPTF Office services.

Why is this important? These exercises confirmed the quality of services provided by the MPTF Office and identified areas that require improvement. Rec-

ommendations have been incorporated across all MPTF Office functions. They included:

- **Evaluation of UNDP Inter-Agency Pooled Financing (September 2018).** After months of analysis and stakeholder engagement, the evaluation team confirmed the high quality and value added of MPTF Office administration services. In the evaluation, it was stated that the MPTF Office, “sets the standard for administrative agent services for all agencies.” It also confirmed the proper functioning of the firewall, highlighting the importance of a neutral, independent, and dedicated administrative agent function.
- **The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) 2019 Evaluation of Norway’s Multilateral Partnerships Portfolio: the World Bank and UN Inter-agency Trust Funds (September 2019).** This positive independent assessment covered the transparency and accountability of MPTF Office administered pooled funds and related costs compared to World Bank Trust Funds and Fiduciary Intermediary Funds.
- **Internal Audit of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (May 2020).** The Office of Audit and Investigations of UNDP granted the MPTF Office the highest possible rating (satisfactory) and stated that the “Office’s service platform encompasses the entire trust fund management cycle, from needs, analysis, fund architecture and fund establishment, to day-to-day financial management and, ultimately, fund closure.”

These exercises, which looked specifically into the trustee role, complement the ongoing monitoring and evaluations by fund secretariats that look specific-

ly into the fund secretariat and programme management. For example, the UN Peacebuilding Fund commissioned a Synthesis Review of approximately 60

evaluative exercises conducted at both portfolio as well as project levels during its previous Strategic Plan (2017-2020). These informed the Fund’s new plan.

Quality

Strategic Objective 1

Quality-assured, Strategic and Balanced Portfolio

Develop and maintain quality assured pooled financing instruments

The MPTF Office has invested heavily in increasing the quality of funds it administers, starting with their design. Thanks to enhanced analytical capacities to analyze the financing landscape and scope opportunities, pooled funds are established when there is a clear rationale and when they underpin multi-stakeholder partnerships that benefit from robust financing instruments. To achieve this strategic objective, the MPTF Office improved its portfolio analytics and continued to invest in fund design and administration services and innovation through new financing instruments and service lines.

Refined portfolio analysis

Through improved portfolio analysis tools, many embedded in the new Gateway, the MPTF Office has updated information on the different performance and success factors of its pooled funds. These factors, which include and incorporate the common management features as identified in the Funding Compact, are crucial for good performance. All were incorporated as part of internal quality-assurance processes. New data analytics tools and dashboards were also incorporated to facilitate the continuous review of portfolio performance

Fund design and administration

The MPTF Office continued improving its design services in line with the 2016 and 2020 QCPR resolutions' mandate to "develop well-designed pooled funds." The MPTF Office Fund Design Manual emphasizes the importance of design for smooth fund function and success. A new

Design Manual will be launched in 2021, incorporating pooled funding principles outlined in the Funding Compact and the 2020 QCPR. The fund design approach was integrated into UNSDG policies and positively augmented the quality of funds, raising the expectations of stakeholders.

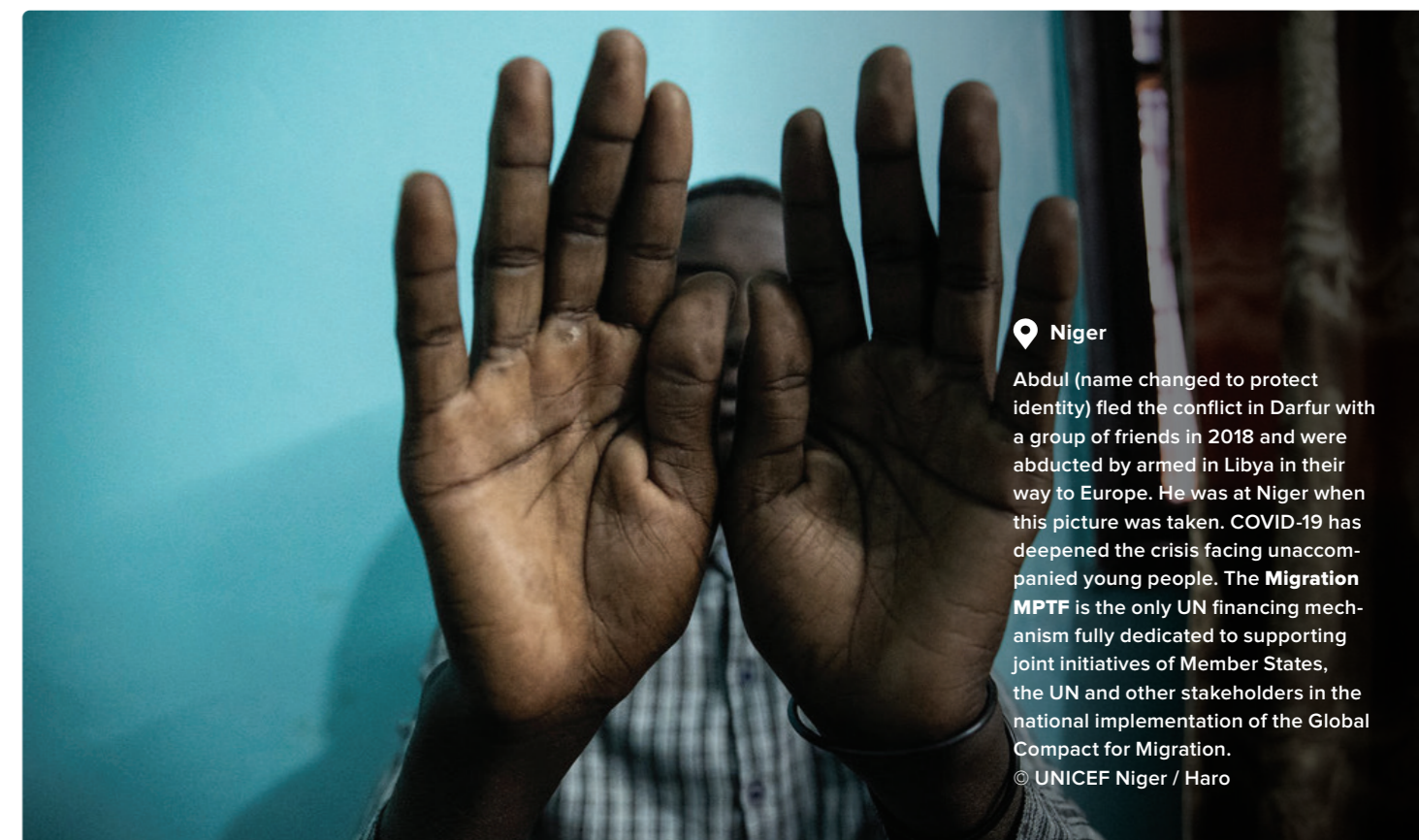
New and innovative financing mechanisms

The MPTF Office continued to focus on innovation, giving increased importance to leveraging private capital and blended finance for SDG achievement. Some primary modalities in this regard were results based-payments, blended finance, and catalytic funds.

- **Result-based systems.** In 2019, the landmark results-based payment to protect Gabon's forests under the Central African Forest Initiative attracted significant interest, as demonstrated by its most recent capitalization in 2020. Similarly, the "Gender Strong Unit Premium" in peacekeeping operations is a results-based scheme established by the Elsie Initiative Fund to incentivize countries to contribute troop and/or police to UN peacekeeping missions, and integrate women equitably throughout units, across all roles and ranks.
- **Catalytic pooled funding.** The Joint SDG Fund launched two components of its SDG financing window in 2020, with the aim of forging paths and partnerships that unlock public and private capital for the SDGs at scale. The first component supports the development of financing

strategies and frameworks for SDG investment, while the second component backs key initiatives that leverage public and private financing to advance the global goals.

- **Blended finance.** In 2020, the MPTF Office supported the design and launch of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs, which is a blended finance instrument. Mobilizing action and resources to protect and restore coral reef ecosystems, it was designed as a 10-year blended finance vehicle with two windows working under the same theory of change and common investment plan. The grant window, managed by the MPTF Office, incubates a pipeline of investible projects, while the investment window, managed by BNP Paribas, provides private capital to up-scale projects under the grant window.



Niger

Abdul (name changed to protect identity) fled the conflict in Darfur with a group of friends in 2018 and were abducted by armed in Libya in their way to Europe. He was at Niger when this picture was taken. COVID-19 has deepened the crisis facing unaccompanied young people. The Migration MPTF is the only UN financing mechanism fully dedicated to supporting joint initiatives of Member States, the UN and other stakeholders in the national implementation of the Global Compact for Migration.

© UNICEF Niger / Haro

MPTF Office dashboards



Joint SDG Fund – Public and Private Investments for the SDGs



Given the scale and level of sophistication of the global financial system—gross global product and financial assets were respectively estimated at over US\$85 trillion and US\$200 trillion—sufficient SDG financing is theoretically available. However, securing enough resources remains a major challenge, **which is why the Joint SDG Fund has set its sights on closing financing gaps to achieve the SDGs in developing countries through systemic and context-driven action by the UNDS.** Interventions are fully aligned with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and guided by the Secretary-General's Strategy and Road Map for Financing the 2030 Agenda. The Joint SDG Fund Financing portfolio, launched in 2020, is structured around two components:

- **Reinforce SDG financing architecture (component 1)** to support the development of financing strategies and enabling frameworks for SDG investments. This resulted in the June 2020 approval of 62 joint programmes covering gender-responsive Integrated National Financing Frameworks; dozens of dialogues and alliances on SDG financing with a broad range of investors and stakeholders; strengthened capacities of public authorities and broader private sector partners to build a pipeline of impact-driven investments for the SDGs; and the launch of feasibility studies for the design of financing solutions that unlock public and private capital for the SDGs, including market assessments to map opportunities and bottlenecks.
- **Catalyze strategic investments (component 2)** for key initiatives that leverage public and private financing to advance the SDGs. Under this com-

ponent, 28 joint programmes in the pipeline were approved for preparatory funding, four in early 2021. These catalytic investments demonstrate that different forms of capital can be accessed for SDG achievement and be progressively aligned with relevant targets. The Joint SDG Fund provides catalytic grant capital that opens the door to these opportunities with the outlook that targeted investments will lead to replication and scaling up, even in the most challenging of contexts. The innovative strategic investment line-up is clustered around **five priority thematic hubs:** resilient infrastructure, people and health, agriculture and food security, nature and climate action, and blue economy.

Peacebuilding Fund – Expanded Evaluation Capacities Generate Knowledge for More Effective Peacebuilding Processes



Joint system-wide evaluations are needed to ensure greater accountability, further incentivize collaboration and reinvest lessons learned into country programming. The MPTF Office promotes the incorporation of strong system-wide evaluation processes in the design phase of new funds and as a part of reviews of existing funding instruments. The Peacebuilding Fund is a strong example of a trust that has onboarded evaluation recommendations, expanding its evaluation processes during the year to achieve the highest rate of coverage in its history, nearly doubling project evaluations from 19 in 2019 to 36 in 2020 (despite COVID-19-related travel restrictions). Emphasizing a “do no harm” approach, the Peacebuilding Fund issued early guidance on remote evaluations and began to experiment **with innovative approaches.**

- Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Peacebuilding Fund remotely supported an evaluability assessment in Liberia in early 2020.
- Lessons learned from that exercise subsequently informed remotely guided processes for a high-quality evaluability assessment to improve monitoring in Madagascar.
- In the Niger, an innovative, remote, and lessons learned exercise was implemented through the development of self-paced learning modules to advance accountability and build recipient capacity for peacebuilding programming.
- The Peacebuilding Fund launched five webinars to build the capacity of partners towards the better design, monitoring, and evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives.

This led to an expanded knowledge foundation. The Peacebuilding Fund capitalized on broader evaluation coverage to produce **knowledge products** that supported impressive results for

conflict-affected communities.

- Based on evidence gathered from 22 projects in 11 countries, the Peacebuilding Fund published a **thematic review of transitional justice** in June 2020.
- **Guidelines** on how to formulate peacebuilding theories of change were issued in English and French in September 2020.

To better capture learning across its portfolio, the Peacebuilding Fund commissioned its first independent synthesis review of 54 evaluative exercises conducted from 2017 to 2019. While calling for the continued strengthening of the capacity of agencies, funds, and programmes for peacebuilding, the review **confirmed the role of the Peacebuilding Fund as a unique instrument central for helping the United Nations achieve solid peace, security, and development results in challenging contexts.** Additional capacity in monitoring and evaluation was supported by United Nations Volunteers (UNV) monitoring postings both at the secretariat and country levels.

The UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund – A Collective Response to Fight the Pandemic and Forge Pathways towards Resilient Recovery



The UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund (the Fund) proved a vital instrument, offering **rapid and flexible support to countries working to close gaps in their COVID-19 national response plans and assure that assistance reached those most at-risk of being left behind.** The Fund helped millions of people across 80+ countries take steps towards a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future.

- The Secretary-General launched the Fund to **support countries' response and recovery to the social and economic crises the pandemic caused.** The Fund was designed to bring UN agencies together to offer support where it was needed most. It was an excellent example of UN reform in action.
- The Fund financed **87 programmes across 80 countries with the support of 21 donors.** Over 50 of these joint programmes commenced within eight weeks of the Fund's launch in April 2020. As the pandemic grew from a health crisis into a development

emergency, the Fund turned around programmatic interventions in an incredibly short timeframe of four to six weeks. Country teams developed proposals. The UN Agencies' headquarters, with the Fund Secretariat, vetted hundreds of programmes assuring that resources reached countries as fast as possible.

- In addition to bringing UN agencies together, the Fund grew **partnerships with Member States, civil society, and the private sector.** In June, the Fund held a Partnership Forum, led by the Deputy Secretary-General, which recognized early donors and garnered additional support. In December, a collaboration with the thinktank Cepei was launched along with a COVID-19 data platform to assure that data from the Global South informed global response and recovery. The Fund also partnered with UN Women, which launched the Gender Monitor to boost access to gender disaggregated data.

- The Fund was innovative, seeking ways to understand needs on the ground and bring them to the atten-

tion of the international community. Through its Second Call for Proposals, the Fund created a **'Solutions Catalogue'**, with the interactive interface of the Catalogue accessible here. The Catalogue featured 200+ “shovel-ready” programmes, amounting to US\$250 million and derived from national Socio-economic Response Plans (SERPs).

- The Fund served as a showcase of jointness as much as it was also a **vehicle for learning.** A lessons learned and evaluability exercise was to be followed by a UN system-wide evaluation exercise towards the end of the Fund's scheduled operations. These outputs were to feed into the process of improvement and of continual innovation and learning – should another crisis arise.

- A social media campaign launched in early December promoted these results. Titled, **'Making a Difference,'** the campaign's social media cards recorded 75,000 impressions with numerous country offices, embassies, and ambassadors engaging to raise the visibility of the Fund and its contributors.

Efficiency

Strategic Objective 2 Efficiency gains, Transparency and KPIs Achieved

Increase efficiency by continuously pursuing efficiency gains, transparency, and meeting KPIs

To meet the growing demand for more and better pooled funding, the MPTF Office leveraged previous investments to improve its practices, business processes, updates to standard legal agreements, and enhance information services.

In 2020, the MPTF Office advanced its ambitious fund management and administration digitization effort by finalizing the design and completing most of the construction of a new, fully integrated Gateway platform. The new system was piloted in 2020 with the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund. Lessons from the pilot were incorporated and the full suite of features were set for roll out to the broader portfolio in 2021. As a key component of the MPTF Office investment plan, the platform supports improvements in integrated results reporting and transparency, enhanced quality and efficiency in fund administration for all stakeholders and cost effectiveness of managing and administering pooled funds. The new Fund Administration Manual also leverages policy and process management features and efficiencies generated by the new Gateway.

Improved business processes and information systems: The new Gateway

The MPTF Office has always pursued a technology assisted approach to providing efficient and effective trustee services, enabling it to provide fund administration services economically and at scale. Gateway, a web-based

information platform, was initially launched in 2010 and helped build the MPTF Office's reputation as a leader in providing real-time, transparent data and information. Gateway has been considered a valuable platform by contributors, the UNDS, and other partners. The existing version of Gateway provides information on fund financial data, deposits, transfers, and expenditures, which are refreshed every two hours. It houses fund-related programmatic and financial documents and reports.

The new Gateway was designed as a fully integrated platform that includes a partnership site, a fund and grants management platform, and a fund administration platform that connects all fund level partners and stakeholders. It was designed to include all the management features highlighted in the Funding Compact, including a fund-level RBM system and grants management platform that clearly embedded the fund theory of change and results framework into the programming cycle and resulting grant review, approval, monitoring and reporting processes, as well as financial flows linked to the SDG indicators. It also includes a risk management system to further enhance existing visibility and transparency standards. The new platform is meant to be the primary fund management system used by fund secretariats to support them in the effective performance of their functions resulting in stronger support to and enabled, well-functioning governance bodies. This system was piloted with

the 2020 UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, and lessons learned from the pilot will be incorporated ahead of the system roll out to the broader MPTF portfolio in 2021. The platform is fully aligned with the UN financial data standards.

The fund administration system (FAS) was fully integrated with the fund management platform to enhance efficiency and eliminate duplication, but the separate roles were clearly delineated through the design and assignment of function limited roles to be established for individual users. The FAS fully digitized all business processes of the fund administration function from establishing the memorandum of understanding (MoU) through standard administrative agreements (SAAs), deposit and earmarking monitoring, fund transfer requests, and reporting.

In 2020, the MPTF Office also finalized a series of dashboards for tracking portfolio performance, including KPIs, capitalization, fund and project operations, and financial closure and portfolio tools. Additional dashboards will be developed in 2021, building on the improved analytics and data functionalities of the new Gateway.

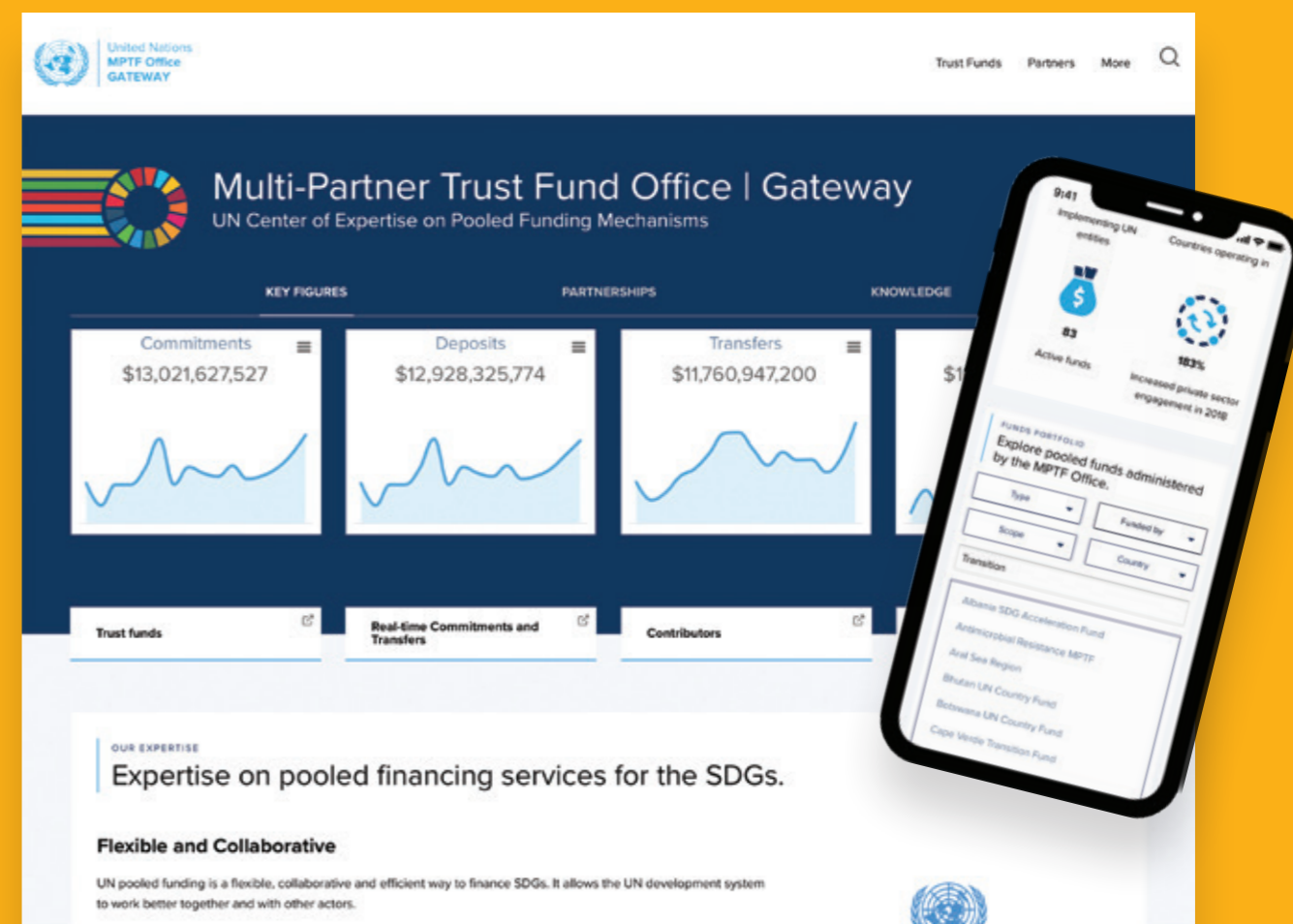
Finally the new site will enable digital storytelling and information sharing functionalities. It has been designed to support MPTF Office fund administration processes, including a business intelligence module for enhanced analysis of data and communications.

The New Gateway

For the last several years, the MPTF Office worked on an integrated platform to increase the efficiency and quality of pooled funds administered by the MPTF Office. In addition to maintaining and

expanding the high-level of transparency for which Gateway was recognized, the platform set a new level of ambition by providing flexible and integrated administration and fund management

functionalities. The new Gateway was fully designed and piloted in 2020, and it will roll out to the broader MPTF portfolio in 2021. It was structured around three integrated environments described below.



1

Fund Administration System. It provides a new back-end administration system for the MPTF Office to continue improving its administration services as a fund trustee. With the new built-in automatized processes and verification processes and a new contact management system, further efficiencies in internal processes are expected to be reached in coming years. In addition, a new data warehouse, fully aligned with the UN financial data standards and additional data needs by partners, will increase the data analysis functionalities.

2

Fund Management Platform. This a platform at the disposal of fund secretariats, including a grant management system, to boost efficiencies in the design, appraisal, approval, and implementation of programmes. It includes the common management features of the Funding Compact, and for example, it comes with a built-in results-based system. A marker system, for example, on Gender Equality Markers (GEM) as was piloted by the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, tracks how different programmes contribute to UN norms and values.

3

Partners Gateway. The platform through which partners (contributors, programme countries, and participating organizations) access financial data, results, and fund documentation is redesigned. It includes new additional contents in pooled funding, given the increase demand on knowledge and expertise in the area. It brings new functionalities for analyzing new data provided by the administration and management platforms. It also provides access to the pipeline fund portfolio, together with improved visibility and access to results.

Fund Administration Manual update

In 2020, the MPTF Office Fund Administration update was substantially completed. It incorporated the broader range of partners, instruments, and service line offerings by the MPTF Office. The manual codified policies, processes, and workstreams so they maintain and enhance the quality, consistency, and efficiency of fund administration process, including the revised business processes stemming from the Gateway platform upgrade. Furthermore, updates provide a common learning platform for users to continuously streamline, supplement, and enhance work processes based on experience. It also plays a central role in onboarding new staff.

A reliable accountability instrument of the MPTF Office, the new version includes up-to-date policies and procedures to which the new Gateway fully aligned. It reflects the diversity of fund financing instruments and features, and covers MPTF Office processes across the lifecycle of pooled funds—from initiation to administration and oversight, and the provision of support and fund closure services.

Evaluation of MPTF Office services

Findings from the '2018 Independent Evaluation' on UNDP pooled financing services, along with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation

Fund Administration Manual sections

1 Design a fund

2 Initiate a fund

3 Administer a fund

4 Oversee fund portfolio

5 Provide support Services

6 Quick views

7 Index

8 Glossary

(NORAD) '2019 Evaluation of Norway's Multilateral Partnerships Portfolio: the World Bank and UN Interagency Trust Funds,' underscored the strong position and performance quality of the MPTF Office as the preferred administrative agent for UN pooled funds. The 2018 evaluation on pooled financing services

included a number of recommendations for further strengthening engagement and design features in pooled funds. In 2020, the MPTF Office completed implementation of these recommendations.

UNSDG standard legal agreements and guidance on pooled financing

The standard legal agreements underpinning all pooled financing mechanisms are a continuous source of efficiency gains for the UNDS. From 2014 to 2015, the MPTF Office led the UNSDG inter-agency work stream for producing current standard legal agreements and corresponding guidance documents (both approved in 2015). In 2018, the MPTF Office agreed to take the lead again in updating standard legal agreements with provisions related to preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH). Updated text was finalized in December 2019, in close consultation with UN agencies and interested donors. In 2020, further progress was made on ensuring all funds across the MPTF portfolio included the revised SEAH text in the fund MoU in consultation with the UN partners who established the fund. This work is expected to be completed across the full portfolio in 2021.

**State of Palestine**

Older people in Palestine, like Falha aged 65, tend to live on fixed low incomes, have limited transport options, and often experience difficulty meeting their basic nutritional needs. In the midst of COVID-19, the Joint SDG Fund has enhanced social protection systems, so they are more inclusive and accessible.

© WFP/Elias Halabi

Client focus

**Strategic Objective 3
Diversify Service Offering and Partnerships with a Client-focused, Integrated Approach**

Maintain a strong culture of client focus, bringing creativity and agility to requests for current and expanded services

The MPTF Office facilitates multi-partner collaboration, drawing from an extensive network of governments, contributors, and implementing partners so financing platforms can flourish. Expansion of its collaborative base also supports implementation of the 2030 Agenda and humanitarian action across a wide variety of interventions.

Moving deeper into the Decade of Action, the MPTF Office approach has been to refine and communicate its value proposition through a renewed strategic approach to communications, advocacy, and partnerships, with a stronger focus on digital communications. Investments in data and analytics are a central element of client focus along with complementary services to better respond to client

needs. All have improved the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative agent and secretariat support services, as well as analytics and knowledge services on pooled funding.

Communicating the MPTF Office value proposition on pooled funding

Throughout 2020, the MPTF Office expanded its array of communication tools and digital platforms to advance the communications and advocacy strategy meant to strengthen and consolidate its position as the United Nations center of expertise on pooled financing for the SDGs. The strategy had a three-pronged approach:

- **Strategic approach** to enhance capabilities and resources for external communications;

- **Support to fund secretariats** on the use of strategic communications as a fund management tool; and
- Improvement of **the visibility of partners and advocating** for UN inter-agency pooled financing.

Through the development of new communication products and intensified digital communications, MPTF Office stakeholders better engaged with partners and explained services provided and the advantages of interagency pooled funding. As a result:

- The number of Gateway users increased by 55%, with users reaching 110,000 annually, passing the 100,000 threshold for the first time. Two years earlier, the average number of users was 50,000 and 52% were new.



Afghanistan
The Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund delivers rapid, targeted, and robust humanitarian assistance to some of the most vulnerable populations in the country. It supports the strategic priorities outlined in the Afghanistan Common Humanitarian Action Plan. Education is one of them, with focus on ensuring that school-aged girls and boys affected by emergencies can access quality, basic education. © UNFPA Afghanistan

- On social media, the Office's twitter account made over 370,000 impressions, with approximately 2,940 impressions per tweet. The followers base increased substantially, doubling from the previous year. The Office's handle was mentioned over 1,500 times. Increased traffic at the end of the year (November and December) coincided with the visibility and results campaign of the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.
- UNDS financing report downloads (see sections on data and finance below) quintupled and page views quadrupled, thanks to digitalization efforts. In addition, several data visualizations and visual styles were adopted by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

Strategic approach to partnerships

The 2030 Agenda amplified the demand for better, multi-stakeholder financing arrangements that could enhance collaboration between diverse coalitions of actors and stakeholders. Pooled funds are meeting this need, fostering open, multi-stakeholder partnerships at the country, regional, and global levels. To help achieve the SDGs, the MPTF Office places collaboration at the heart of the

pooled funds it designs. To become the preferred pooled funding trustee and enlarge its partner base, the MPTF Office brought together a cross-cutting team to explore new collaborations and support partnership engagement with UN organizations and contributors.

Partnership highlights from 2020 included:

- Close work with Member States and UNDS partners in the implementation of Funding Compact commitment 14;
- Support to UNSDG and UNDCO in developing new guidance and training modules for country-level pooled funds;
- Collaborative innovations with select partners that resulted in "deep dive" modalities;
- Frequent engagement in flagship annual events to promote pooled funding results, including the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Operational Segment for Development Activities and briefings with Member States on the Funding Compact; and
- A Multi-Stakeholder Forum organized by the MPTF Office in December 2020 that demonstrated that gains correspond to a high level of engagement by a variety of partners. The periodic multi-stakeholder discussion forum enhances sys-

tematic stakeholder engagement, with a view to reviewing progress, discussing global finance trends, strengthening partner collaborations, and building donor confidence in pooled funding.

In the last few years, the MPTF Office broadened opportunities for engagement with a diversity of partners (see table below). It expanded the range of fund initiators, which were those partners that could request the MPTF Office to establish a new fund, beyond the standard UNSDG provision (a joint request from two United Nations entities). This resulted in different categories of pooled funds, each building on the legal basis of the UNSDG pass-through arrangement, but with differentiation in governance set-up and MPTF Office policies and procedures that better reflected fund ownership.

As of December 2020, 23 funds received contributions from the private sector, and NGOs increased their participation as non-UN implementing entities (NUNOs). Several UNDS organizations like UNDP and WHO launched—with MPTF Office technical support—pooled funding engagement strategies that translated into increased participation.

Table 8:
Types of Partners' Engagement Enabled by MPTF Office Instruments

Partner roles	Partnerships types	Partners with existing vehicles of engagement
Initiation partners	Request MPTF Office support for the design and administration of new pooled funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Entities (at last two) • UN (Deputy) Secretary-General • UN Secretariat department • Governments (national funds) • UN-agency initiated
Contributor partners	Provide financial support to a fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments / UN Member States • Non-governmental organisations • Multilateral organisations; this includes both IIFIs and UN entities • Foundations • Private sector, including crowdfunding • Feeder funds
Secretariat hosts	Partner with the MPTF Office on fund design and management for the benefit of governance mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCHA – Humanitarian funds • DCO (global, regional and country levels) • Other UN Secretariat department/office • Other UN entities • MPTF Office – firewalled • Governments
Implementation partners	Hold direct programmatic and financial accountability for programmatic activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN entities • Multilateral organisations outside UN; this includes IFIs and other intergovernmental organisations • National governments • Non-governmental organisations • Recipient fund from feeder fund

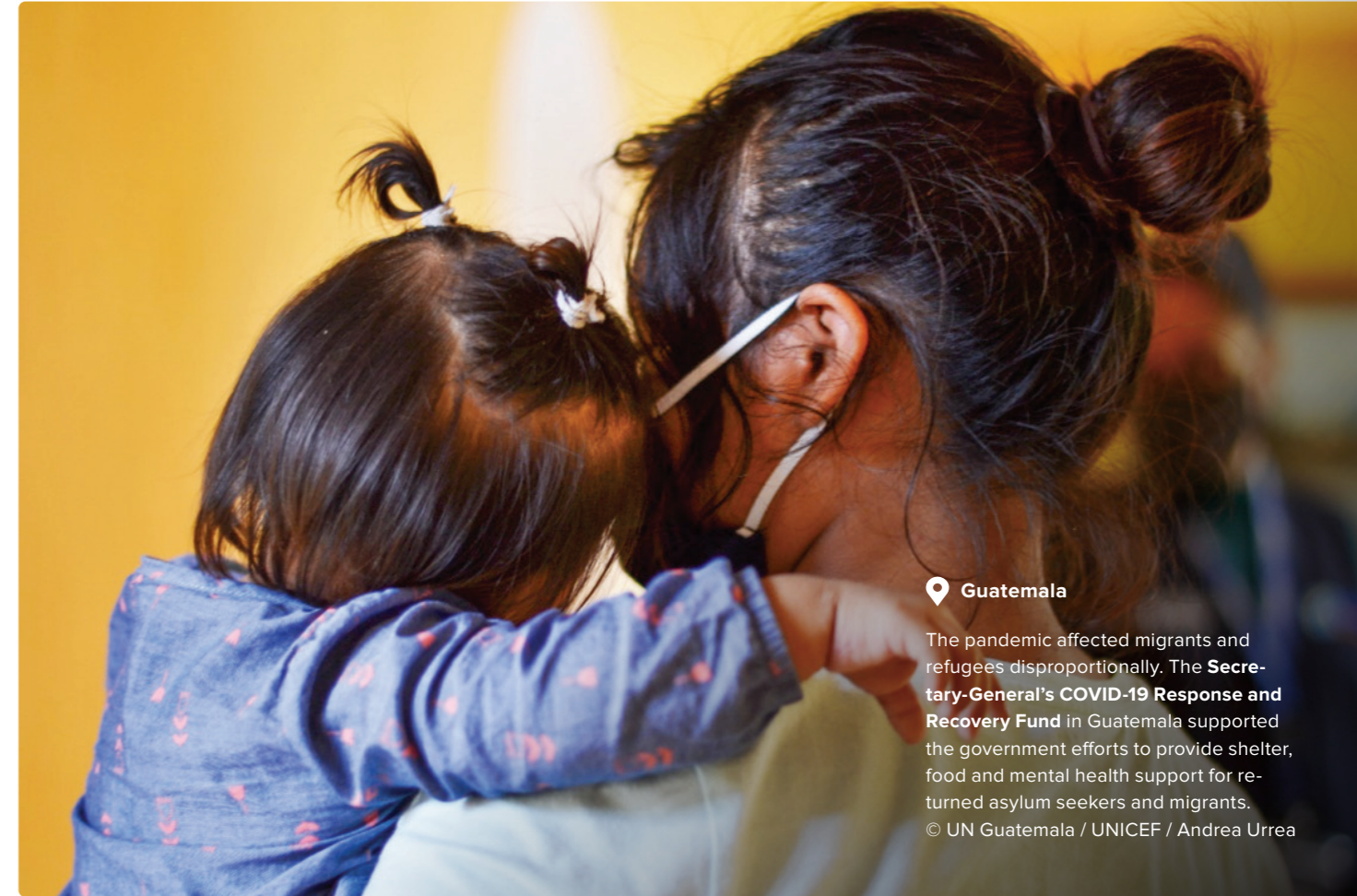
Data and analytics on UN finance

Data and analysis on UN finance is important to the MPTF Office and its partners for fund design, which relied on existing financial flow information and other financing sources. Over the last five years, the MPTF Office developed a service line of analytics on UN financing, including on-demand analysis of available financial instruments and tailor-made data-led products. Building out, the MPTF Office also partnered with foundations, research institutions, specialized NGOs, and private sector partners to advance understanding on issues of relevance to UNDS financing.

These actions were necessary for the MPTF Office and Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation—with contributions from the UNDS, academia, and other partners—to publish its annual flagship report titled, 'Financing the UN Development System—Time to Walk the Talk.' The fifth report in

the series, published in September 2020, has become a reference for policy makers and researchers to better understand how the UN is financed and how resources are expended. The report included news online data visualization tools so users could track top contributors to the UN and analyze how expenditures in crisis-affected countries evolved over the decade. Preparation of the sixth edition is currently underway, with the launch planned for September 2021.

In addition, the MPTF Office co-lead the development of the annual UNSDG inter-agency pooled fund database where different pooled fund administrators provide compiled information on existing pooled funds, contributions, and investments. In addition, the MPTF Office reinforced UN data analysis skills and developed financial overviews for programme countries and UN contributors.



Guatemala

The pandemic affected migrants and refugees disproportionately. The Secretary-General's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund in Guatemala supported the government efforts to provide shelter, food and mental health support for returned asylum seekers and migrants.

© UN Guatemala / UNICEF / Andrea Urrea

Advancing transparency through improved UNDS financial data

The MPTF Office has a keen interest in reliable and comparable UN system-wide financial data, considering its relevance to UN financing strategies, joint programming, and reporting on joint results. One priority has been to enhance transparency and coherence around financial data and arrive at an agreed way for the United Nations to link financial flows to the SDGs.

To get there, the MPTF Office co-chaired an ad-hoc team on the "future data cube," which developed all six UN system-wide data standards in 2018. Since, the MPTF Office has continued to support the implementation of the data standards, inclusive of conversations on minimum datasets

for disaggregated financial data and the creation of a single data cube with multiple dimensions that could be used for analysis, decision-making, and reporting by all UN stakeholders. Also included was a standard on linking UN financial flows to the SDGs. The new MPTF Office Gateway was designed to be fully-compliant with all six data standards.

In April 2020, the UN adopted its first-ever data strategy titled, 'Data Strategy of the Secretary-General for Action by Everyone, Everywhere: with Insight, Impact and Integrity.' The basis of this three-year strategy (2020 to 2022) was that data was a shared strategic asset integral to United Nations success. The strategy outlined a vision that the MPTF Office supports:

Transform the UN into a data-driven organization where its leaders, management, specialists, and professionals use data to make better decisions and turn actionable steps into improved outcomes.

Fund Secretariat support services

The Funding Compact recognizes that a strong and well-functioning fund secretariat is essential to supporting an effective governance mechanism for pooled funds. Along with a strong administrative agent and steering committee, a fund secretariat forms one of the three bodies that collectively contribute to the success and strength of a fund. While the roles of these functions are distinct and clearly delineated, the MPTF Office provided advisory and support services to enable rapid start up and ongoing support to fund secretariats to effectively fulfill their function.

The demand for the MPTF Office to support fund secretariats has grown with services including the development of fund operational manuals and templates, technical support during initial phases of fund implementation, and advisory services on potential funding sources. At the request of partners and UN agencies, the MPTF Office also administratively hosts a growing number of fund secretariats and management units with costs covered as a direct cost to the MPTF as a management project.

Some are well-established and serving large, long-standing MPTFs, with others

that are smaller and managed by one UN professional who performs secretariat functions on a part-time basis (note: these are not MPTF Office staff, but staff administered by MPTFO on behalf of the MPTF).

By the end of 2020, **the MPTF Office hosted or was in the process of transitioning seven fund secretariats for the following funds:** Spotlight Initiative Fund (management unit only) on behalf of the Executive Office of the UN Secretary-General (EOSG), UN Haiti Cholera Response MPTF, Joint SDG Fund, and the Human Rights Mainstreaming fund on behalf of UNDCO, the Peacebuilding Fund on behalf of DPPA, the COVID 19 Response and Recovery Fund on behalf of the UN Secretary-General's Designate for UN Reform, the Central African Forest Initiative on behalf of the donor group and UN partners in the CAFI Executive Board, and the Global Fund for Coral Reefs on behalf of the donor group and UN partners in the GFCR Executive Board. A clear division of responsibilities is in place to ensure strong checks and balances and to avoid conflicts of interest, with separate MPTF Office staff performing administrative agent and secretariat functions as well as a strong internal control framework and oversight of the administrative functioning of the fund secretariats.

Finally, as noted in section 3.2, the updated Gateway platform provides a full fund and grants management platform to help secretariats streamline management procedures.

UN MPTFs with Fund Secretariats hosted by the MPTF Office and their head operating units

							
UN Secretariat EOSG	UN Secretariat DCO	UN Secretariat DCO	UN Secretariat DPPA/PBSO	CAFI Board UNDP	GFCR Board UNEP	UN Secretariat	UN Secretariat EOSG



Somalia

A member of traditional elders at Baidoa's Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre in the South West State of Somalia. Since 2014, the **Somalia Multi-Window Trust Fund** has been supporting the country's state-building process through joint programmes that focus on immediate delivery, building local resilience, and capacity development.

© UNDP Somalia /Said Fadheye

4

MPTF Office operational performance and financial resource management

The MPTF Office is a fully self-financed office, resourced primarily by the one percent administrative agent fee income it received on donor contributions—a fee that covers fund design and MPTF Office administration costs for the entire fund lifecycle. Fund advisory services, including secretariat support, are provided on a cost-recovery basis through consultants or reimbursable staff time. Costs associated with the fund secretariat hosting services are recovered through a direct cost management project attributable to the fund. This financing structure means the MPTF Office has a strong focus on efficiency, effectiveness, and balancing projected annual and lifecycle income projections with services needs and commitments. It continued to invest in process efficiencies to optimize resources and drive economies of scale.



📍 Albania

Instructor on self-defense training of trainers (ToT) in Albania. As countries implemented lockdown measures to stop the spread of the coronavirus, violence against women, especially domestic violence, intensified. Eliminating violence against women is one of the priorities of the **Albania SDG Acceleration Fund**.

© UN Women Albania

4.1. Operational Performance

The MPTF Office monitors a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) to track its performance in the delivery of core fund administration services.

KPI 1

Timely application of donor deposits and transfers to Participating Organizations

During 2020, the MPTF Office met indicators for timeliness of deposit application of the US\$1.52 billion received and transfers to participating organizations with **US\$1.44 billion** transferred to 68 participating organizations. **93.45%** of funds transferred within the five-day window.

KPI 2

Timely submission of 2019 Annual Consolidated Progress Report

As per legal agreements, annual consolidated progress reports (narrative and financial) are made available to steering committees, donors, and stakeholders by 31 May of the following year. Final narrative reports, meanwhile, are due every 30 June. While fund secretariats are accountable for writing and finalizing the narrative reports, the MPTF Office provides inputs into these by providing consolidated financial information received from the participating organizations. The prior standardization and automation of annual financial narrative reports through Gateway made it possible for the MPTF Office to deliver these inputs for timely inclusion in final reports. Part of the UNSDG policy to ensure that fund managers maintained accountability for narrative reporting responsibilities was met with the majority of consolidated annual and final narrative reports produced by fund secretariats, Resident Coordinator Offices, or convening agencies (in the case of joint programmes). By the due date, 93 percent of the annual and final consolidated narrative reports were finalized and published.

KPI 3

Timely production of 2019 Certified Sources and Uses of Funds Statements

MPTF Office legal agreements stipulate that stakeholders are to be provided with a certified annual financial statement for each ongoing MPTF and joint programme. In 2020, for the ninth year in a row, all financial statements were posted on the individual web pages of Gateway by 31 May. **The related KPI—100% of statements were delivered by 31 May—was fully achieved.**

KPI 4

Targets for project closure

The MPTF Office invested heavily in improving UN performance on the timely closure of pooled fund projects, programmes, and funds. As per the standard MoU for pooled funds, all UN organizations financed under a given fund need to close out their projects, and submit a final refund and financial report within an 18-month period following operational completion, for the MPTF Office to financially close the corresponding project and fund.

In collaboration with a number of UN organizations, which are responsible for project closure, the MPTF Office was able to accelerate closure of a number of older completed projects and funds, resulting in the closure of the UN Board of Audit recommendation in this area.

This past year, 276 projects and 18 funds were financially closed and completed, in collaboration with participating organizations. To improve closure tracking and better identify bottlenecks, the MPTF Office developed, on the new Gateway, a project closure dashboard to help further increase closure rates of funds in the three-years after their operational conclusion.

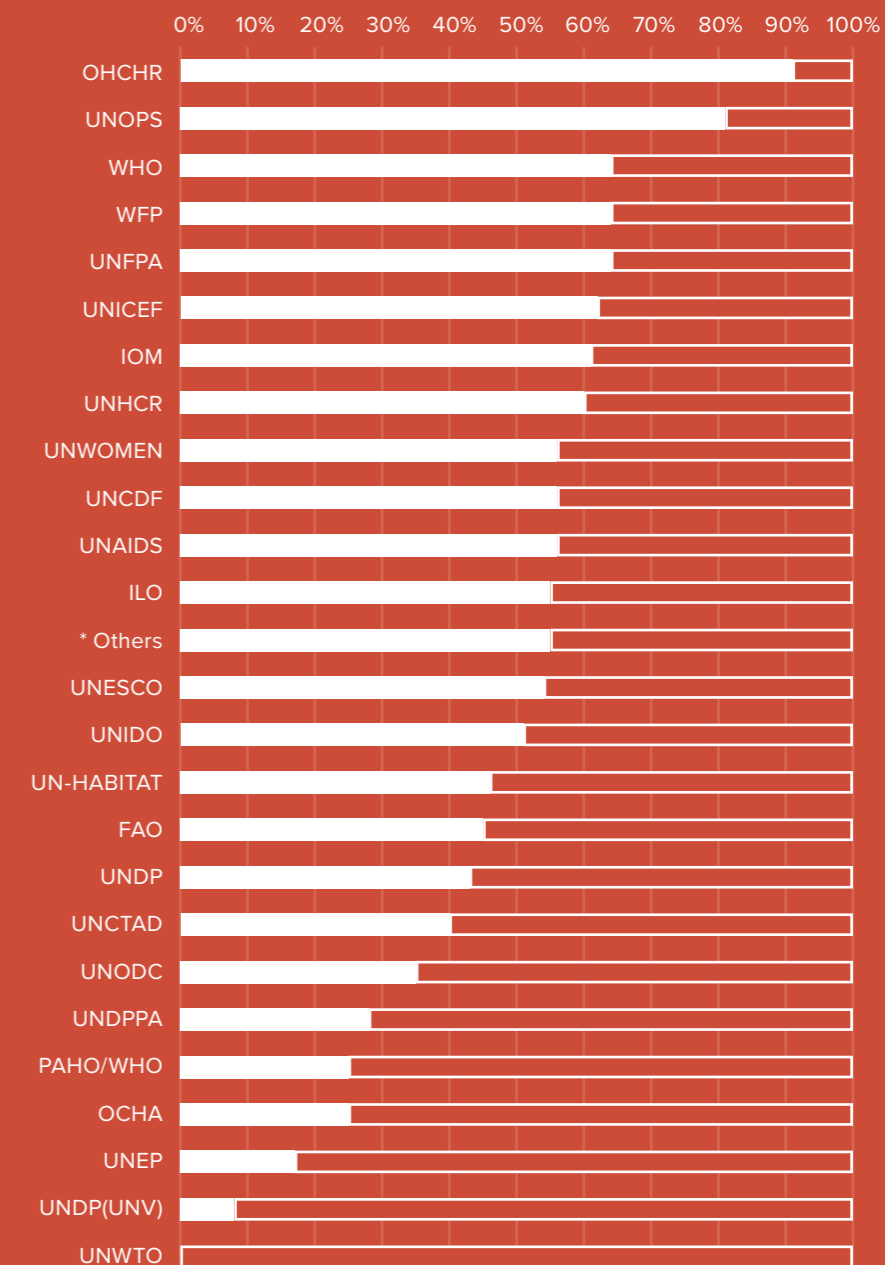
Towards effective project and fund lifecycle management, these efforts will be maintained, with Participating UN Organizations also encouraged to provide timely final reporting.

Accelerating project closure processes

Graph 8 highlights the performance of UN agencies for projects with an end date of 2018 or a prior year. It reflects the percentages of UN agency projects where certified final project financial statements (CFPFS) had or had not been received within the two-year period agreed in the fund's memorandum of understanding (MoU).

Graph 8: Agency Financial Closure Performance for Projects with End Date 2018 and prior (Certified Final Project Financial Statements, CFPFS status as of 31 December 2020)

● Received CFPFS
○ Pending CFPFS



* Others- includes 33 entities that each implemented 13 projects or less, which represents a total of 115 projects.

4.2 Financial Resources

The MPTF Office is a fully self-financed unit whereby all costs are covered by fee income generated from Administrative Agent services provided; hence, there is no cross subsidization from UNDP's core or other resources.

Fee income is earned in three ways; (i) for UNSDG interagency pass through pooled funds and joint programmes, a flat rate of one percent of the amount deposited by each partner is charged to the MPTF or JP, in line with the UNSDG Administrative Agent protocol and MPTF legal framework; (ii) for contributions provided by the European Commission, direct costs of up to one percent are charged, in line with the European Commission contributor agreement endorsed by UNSDG; and (iii) for administrative services provided to fund secretariats hosted by the MPTF Office, costs are recovered through direct costs charged to the fund secretariat under a direct cost project based on a local price list for services delivered. All fee income for fund design and administration services is charged to the MPTF Office when the deposit is received, but is earned over a four-year period so that the fee-for-service model is fully funded throughout the life cycle of the MPTF. This ensures that the timing of income generated and costs provided are matched to when AA services are provided, including UNDP central services.

In 2020, fee income for MPTF Office services totaled US\$11 m, of which USD US\$9.5 million was allocated to the MPTF Office budget costs and USD \$1.5 million was allocated to the Bureau for Management Services, UNDP to provide central services including treasury, IT, legal, and human resource support.

A multi-year plan and associated investment plan

The MPTF Office current multi-year plan covers the four-year period from 2019 to 2022. During this time the office portfolio and demand for progressively more

sophisticated and complex fund designs to meet the challenges of addressing the SDGs, has increased significantly. For example, since 2017, two years prior to the current multi-year plan and the current year, 2020, the level of contributions to the total portfolio has doubled in size to USD \$1.5b. Additionally, the service offer to host fund secretariats as a neutral service provider, and support to UN data and analytics related to inter-agency pooled funds, have progressed from a pilot phase to fully established service lines.

As part of the multi-year plan, the MPTF Office established an investment plan to address the growing demand for services and to continue to provide the quality of services that the MPTF Office reputation is built upon. The plan outlined several major areas of investment including (i) an upgraded and fully integrated web-based platform (Gateway) that incorporates the pooled fund management features highlighted in the Funding Compact; (ii) a revised and updated fund design and administration manual to incorporate the broadening partnership base and enhanced design features in pooled funds; and (iii) expansion of the MPTF Office staff and skill base to ensure services can be delivered and growth can be managed without over-burdening existing staff. The first version of the plan has been substantially implemented, however given that the growth in the portfolio exceeded initial projections, it will be revised in 2021 to further invest in staff resources to meet the needs of the portfolio, while taking into account the efficiency gains the launch of the new manual and the new Gateway will bring.

Both versions of the investment plan are resourced from fee income generated for the office, which considers both the prudent fiscal management approach necessary for a fully self-financed office while ensuring the office can deliver agreed upon services within its current fee-for-service structure and ensuring staff workload demands are taken into consideration. Staff workload reinforcement has been addressed in a number of areas, such as communications and support to UN data and analytics, and has been eased in a number of areas, but demand still remains high given that the first investment plan projected services for a

\$1b portfolio, rather than a \$1.3b to \$1.5b portfolio. Hence additional capacity will be added in 2021 based on an updated investment plan.

The original budget for 2020 was established at \$8.3m. A number of new positions as part of the investment plan were included in the budget, which were required to be fully budgeted for the year even where under recruitment. Total MPTF Office expenditures from its operating budget was \$7.3m but are fully expected to increase to the level anticipated in its annual budget and investment plan from 2021 onwards. The level of expenses was lower than anticipated for two reasons: (i) two key staff positions were vacant or on loan for much of the year, the Deputy Executive Coordinator retired in 2020, and one Senior Portfolio Manager who was loaned to the COVID 19 Response and Recovery Fund Secretariat to ensure the rapid start up and functioning of the MPTF given the importance of this Fund as part of the global COVID-19 Response in light of the global pandemic; and (ii) a number of positions were recruited in 2020, with staff onboarding later in the year and in early 2021 therefore the full year budget for these positions will be utilized from 2021 onwards.

Looking ahead, the positive policy environment set by the 2020 QCPR and Funding Compact, and broad commitments to double pooled funding to the United Nations, means the MPTF Office is preparing for longer-term growth, even in the context of potential short-term volatility or changes in the global economy generated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Projections and expectation suggest that UN pooled funds will become increasingly a preferred financing instrument that is both efficient and effective in meeting the high standards of stakeholders in terms of quality management. The UN MPTF Office, as the standard setter for the AA function, is ready to take on the challenges and facilitate broader partnerships that support SDG achievement and the delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

The MPTF Office is grateful to all partners for their collaboration in fostering the efficiency of pooled funding mechanisms as a leverage of joint action towards SDG achievement

Participating organizations

UN organizations (PUNOs)

- Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
- Department of Peace Operations (DPO)
- Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA)
- Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)
- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Telecommunications Union (ITU)
- International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)
- United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- United Nations for Legal Affairs (UNOLA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
- United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)
- United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- United Nations OSRSR Sexual Violence Conflict
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
- United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)
- United Nations University (UNU)
- United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV)
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Other multilaterals, national governments and international cooperation agencies

- African Union Commission
- Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
- Enabel - Belgian Development Agency
- Government of Central African Republic
- Government of Mali
- Government of Somalia
- Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
- World Bank
- World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

Non-governmental organizations

- Accord
- Accountability Lab Liberia
- ACORD
- Action pour Paix et Concorde
- Avocats Sans Frontières
- CARE International
- Caritas Bolivia
- CECI Burkina Faso
- Christian Aid Ireland
- COIPRODEN
- CONCERN Worldwide
- Cordaid
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- Educare
- EISA Madagascar
- Forum Konservasi Leuser
- Fund for Congolese Women
- Fundacion Libertad de Prensa
- Fundacion Mi Sangre
- Fundacion Nacional para el Desarrollo
- Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC)
- GOAL
- Humane Society International
- Humanity and Inclusion
- Hutan Alam dan Lingkungan Aceh
- International Alert
- International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)
- Interpeace
- Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
- Life and Peace Institute
- Mercy Corps
- National Peace Council of Sri Lanka (NPC)
- Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD)
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Oxfam Intermon
- PanEco Foundation
- Saferworld
- Sampan'Asa Momba Ny Fampandros
- Search for Common Ground
- Sisma Mujer
- Stichting ZOA
- War Child UK
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- World Vision International Myanmar
- Yayasan Orangutan Sumatera



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