



**GREAT LAKES REGION CROSS-BORDER
FUND (GLR MPTF)
FINAL REPORT
(2017-2022)**

Contributors



Contributing Trust Fund



UN Participating Organizations



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Acronyms

ASG	Assistant Secretary General
DDR/RR	Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration
DPPA	United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
GIZ	German Corporation for International Cooperation
GLRSF	Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework
ICG	International Contact Group
ICGLR	International Conference of the Great Lakes Region
ISM	Implementation Support Mechanism
MONUSCO	The United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
OSESG-GL	Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes
P-DDRCS	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Community Rehabilitation and Stabilisation Programme
PSC-F	Peace Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the region
RCOs	Resident Coordinator's Offices
R-UNSDG ESA	Regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Eastern and Southern Africa
SESG-GL	Special Envoy of the Secretary-General's for the Great Lakes Region
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SPG	Senior Policy Group
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General
UNAFPs	United Nations Agencies Funds and Programmes
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population fund
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme

Introduction

This is the final report of the Great Lakes Region Cross-border Fund (GLR MPTF), which was set-up in 2017 to support regional and cross-border development efforts in the Great Lakes region. The Fund was established to contribute to the concretization of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region (hereafter UN Regional Strategy), launched in 2020 to align the development work of UN agencies to better leverage the political, operational, and programmatic expertise in support of a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, and resilient region for the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the region (PSC-F). The Fund was capitalized by 2 donors - Preventing conflict and building peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and instability associated with forced displacement between Burundi and Tanzania - funded by the Peacebuilding Fund. Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region - funded by the European Development Fund.

During the Fund implementation period, the UN Regional Strategy replaced in 2020 the United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework (GLRSF) that was developed and validated in 2015 as a programmatic approach to address regional, cross border conflicts in the eastern DRC, as well as along the conflict affected areas bordering eastern DRC. Against this, a Senior Policy Group (SPG) and Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM) replaced the GLRSF Management board, which was dissolved. The SPG functions as the overall governance, steering and management body for the UN Regional Strategy and the ISM focused on the day-to-day implementation including planning, coordination, monitoring progress and ensuring follow-up. Guided by the UN Reforms and new ways of working, the SPG and ISM reflect an integrated approach across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus in the region.

The report is divided into two parts. The first part is the consolidated final narrative report, which has been developed by the GLR MPTF Secretariat, currently hosted by the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes (OESG-GL) in Nairobi. The second part is the consolidated 2022 annual financial report, which has been consolidated by the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO), as the Administrative Agent of the Fund. As per the Fund legal agreements, the final financial report will be provided once the Fund funded projects are financially closed and the available balance has been refunded to the donors (if applicable).

PART I: FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

The United Nations Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework (GLRSF)

The GLRSF was established as a programmatic approach to tackle the regional conflicts in the eastern DRC, and adopted as a regional, cross border, multi-agency set of projects along the most conflict affected DRC borders: the eastern DRC border with Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. Efforts to achieve peaceful development in the region are often made in individual countries and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) traditionally act at national level, even though the underlying causes of conflicts are not contained within country borders. On the contrary, the border areas feed the drivers of conflict but are, at the same time, strategic locations which can be tapped to build confidence, create trust, and establish momentum for peaceful resolution of conflicts.

In light of this, the GLRSF was developed and validated in 2015 under the leadership of the SESG-GL, the Chair of the Regional UN Sustainable Development Group for East and Southern Africa (R-UNSDG-ESA), the five UN Resident Coordinators of the involved countries, the R-UNSDG-ESA and representatives of regional organisations. It was launched by the UN Secretary-General and endorsed by the UN Security Council in 2016. To support and strategically finance the implementation of the GLRSF, A Multi-partner Trust Fund, the Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund (GLR MPTF) was established in February 2017.

The GLRSF governance structure comprised of decision-making structures that included the Co-Chairs (SESG-GL and Chair of the GLRSF), the Co-Champions (UNDP and WFP), the GLRSF Secretariat which was hosted by UNDP Resilience Hub for Africa in Nairobi), the Steering Committee, the Management Board, the MPTFO, the Pillar Leads and the implementing agencies.



Six Pillars in line with SDGs



1 SUSTAINABLE LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



4 YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS



2 ECONOMIC INTEGRATION, CROSS-BORDER TRADE, FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY



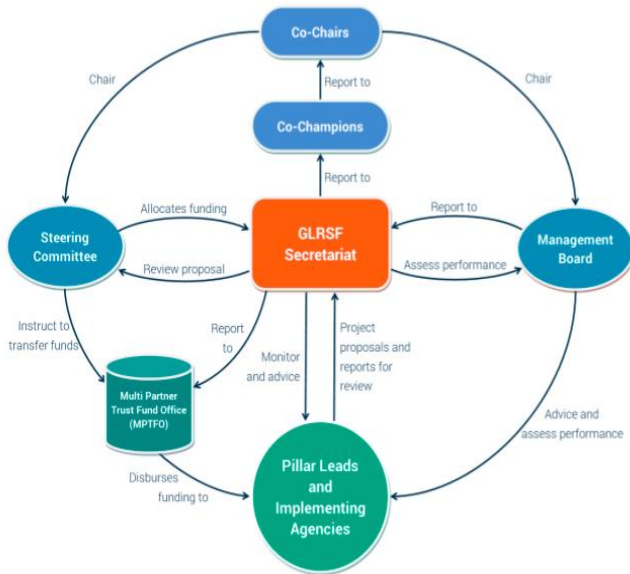
5 GENDER AND SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



3 MOBILITY



6 JUSTICE AND CONFLICT PREVENTION



Advocacy and coordination actions from the Secretariat

ICGLR Youth Forum in Zambia

On June 7-8, 2017, youth representatives, national experts from the region, policy makers and representatives of UN agencies, regional organizations, the World Bank and the African Development Bank met in Livingstone, Zambia, to discuss the challenges faced by youth in the Great Lakes region and the progress made regarding policies enabling and empowering youth. The UN agencies presented their joint analysis of the situation of youth in the region and further referred to the interventions planned as part of Pillar 4 (Youth and adolescents) of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. The final report of the meeting was presented on the next day, June 9, to the ministers in charge of Youth Affairs of the ICGLR, who held a meeting under the theme “Accelerating the implementation of the 2014 Declaration of the ICGLR Special Summit of Heads of State on the fight against youth unemployment through infrastructure development and investment promotion”.

Presentation on the UN GLRSF with UNCTAD to the international community in Geneva

A meeting on July 11, 2017, attended by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, and the UN Special Envoy, aimed at exploring the connection between humanitarian and development issues in order to promote security in the region, which includes Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The R-UNDG co-champions of the GLRSF, WFP and UNDP, presented the approach and actions fore-seen under each of the pillars. UNCTAD joined the Cross Border Multi-Partner Trust Fund and agreed to join the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework as co-lead of Pillar 2, where it will bring its expertise on economic development and trade, including for example specific expertise on leveraging informal cross-border trade for the empowerment of women.

First Management Board Meeting in Nairobi and Steering Committee of the Multi Partner Trust Fund

On July 14, 2017, the Chair of the Regional United Nations Development Group for Africa and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, convened the first meeting of the Management Board of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. They highlighted the resource mobilization and implementation of the GLRSF as a joint responsibility (carried by all members of the Management Board) and the GLRSF as a fine example of the New Way of Working, bringing together the peace and security, development, humanitarian and human rights pillars of the UN in accordance with the agenda of the new Secretary General. In the course of this meeting the finalized Communication Strategy by the Communication Group, the progress made by GLRSF pillars,

and the ongoing coordination efforts within the UN and with non-UN partners were presented.

Peacebuilding Commission Briefing

On the 27th of November 2017, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) convened a meeting on the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul, Permanent Representative of Korea, Chair of the PBC. The purpose of the meeting was to raise awareness on the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework and to generate additional interest of the international community in support of its implementation. The Commission was briefed by Mr. Said Djinnit, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, Ms. Liberata Mulamula, Former Executive Secretary of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Raymond Serge Balé, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Congo, Chair of ICGLR, Franck Bousquet, Senior Director for Fragility, Conflict, Violence and Forced Displacement at the World Bank, and Mr. David Clapp, representing the Regional Chair of the UN Development Group. In his remarks, ASG Oscar Fernandez-Taranco welcomed the Regional Strategic Framework as an innovative way to link peace, security and development, much in line with the Secretary-General's vision of the UN Peace and Security Architecture. He further noted that PBSO had approved the cross-border inter agency project (UNHCR, IOM and UNDP) Burundi -Tanzania for \$2 million, as an opportunity to implement the resolution on sustaining peace and to take forward the Secretary General's reform ideas on the Peace and Security Architecture. The Chair of the PBC concluded by welcoming the GLRSF as a key contributor to regional peacebuilding in the Great Lakes and lauded the cross-pillar approach as a precursor to the UN Secretary General's reform.

Peer-to-peer Workshop and Stakeholder Meeting on the New Way of Working Entebbe

At the Workshop on the New Way of Working in Entebbe on November 29- December 1, 2017, UN agencies as well as donors, and NGOs were invited by UNDP and OCHA to discuss on ways forward towards humanitarian and development nexus approaches. The GLRSF was presented as a concrete example of a regional inter-agency approach/collective outcomes and multi-year funding mechanisms.

Security Council Resolution 2389 (2017)

The Security Council Resolution 2389 from December 8, 2017, addressed the situation in the Great Lakes region and has two operative paragraphs dedicated to the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework. "The Security Council [...] recalls the Regional Strategic Framework for the Great lakes region 2016-2017 (RSF GLR), which outlines the United Nations development approach in support of the implementation of the PSC Framework; and urges the donor community to contribute to the implementation of the RSF GLR, as an effective platform for partnership, in support of member states in the national and regional commitments aimed to address the root causes of conflicts, promote economic development and cooperation among countries of the region, as well as strengthening mechanisms and capacities to address cross-border insecurity and trafficking, and bring about durable peace in the Great Lakes region". Additionally, the Security Council emphasized the „view expressed in the RSF GLR that there is an urgent need to address violence and discrimination against women and girls “.

Second GLRSF Management Board and Steering Committee Meeting

The second Management Board (MB) took place in January 2018 with the presence of the EU, the World Bank, the ICGLR and the Pillar Leads as observers. Members emphasized the innovative nature of the framework and reiterated the need to build on that momentum to step-up the pace of implementation and action on the ground. The MB agreed on the extension of the framework till 31 December 2019, endorsed the finalised programme documents from Pillar One, Two, Five and Six and encouraged rapid finalisation of the Pillar Four document to be presented at the following board. The second Steering Committee (SC) of the GLR MPTF was held in January 2018 with the PBF and the EU observing and representatives from the ICGLR and the MPTFO participating ex-officio. Members endorsed the fund's Operational Manual, discussed operational costs of the Secretariat and underscored the need to ensure funding for continuity of the GLRSF Coordination Specialist. The fund was extended till 31 December 2019. Furthermore, the committee agreed on the need for a coordinated Engagement Plan for resource mobilisation.

PBF Workshop on cross-border and regional projects

In July 2018 the GLRSF Secretariat facilitated a workshop of the PBF on cross border and regional pilot projects. The GLRSF was presented as a concrete example of a regional inter-agency approach/collective outcomes and multi-year funding mechanisms. Building on its recommendations as well as the lessons learned within the GLRSF, the PBF has now opened a dedicated regional and cross border funding window and is building stronger relations with the European Union (EU) Conflict and Stability Instrument for sustainability and scaling-up of interventions. This is an example of the role of the GLRSF as an enabler of cross border action.

Reports of the Secretary General on the implementation of the PSC-F

The Secretary General Reports on the implementation of the PSC-F, released in February and October 2018, call upon the international community to support the GLRSF

Virtual Joint Extraordinary Meeting of the Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region

In 2020, the UN participated actively in the Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region virtual joint extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee and Technical Coordination Committee on 15 April 2020. As a result, all implemented activities were coordinated with partners, both from a substantial and a financial point of view.

Development of GLRSF Assessment Report

The process to develop the joint UNDP-WFP-OESG-GL GLRSF assessment report started in September 2020, to inform the development and implementation of the new UN Strategy on Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region. The joint assessment evaluating progress, highlighting milestones, and documenting challenges and lessons learned in the implementation of the GLRSF was completed in March 2021. Following this, the last GLRSF Management Board meeting convened on 27 April 2021.

Approval of UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region

The UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region was developed by the Office of the Special Envoy of the Great Lakes upon wide consultations with representatives of the signatory countries and co-guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework, the United Nations entities, regional organizations, civil society organizations, international financial institutions, women's organizations, former senior officials of the UN and the African Union, and various experts. The strategy was approved by the UN Secretary-General on 22 October 2020, replacing the GLRSF, followed by publication on 14 January 2021. The UN Strategy forms the basis for joint UN interventions in the GLR. Whereas the GLRSF had six thematic pillars, the UN Strategy identifies ten priorities, structured under three pillars namely: (i) peace, security and justice; (ii) sustainable development and shared prosperity and; (iii) resilience to long-standing and emerging challenges.

Virtual Joint Planning Workshop for Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region

To ensure coordination among the various partners and regular updates on key results and challenges, the UN participated actively in the virtual joint planning workshop for the Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes region held from 30th November to 4th December 2020. The workplan and budget were adapted, in collaboration with the donor and partners, in light of the COVID-19 response and its impact on the overall project implementation.

Virtual Steering Committee and Fund Extension

The Fund's Steering Committee by silence procedure virtually approved the extension of the GLRSF MPTF until 31 December 2021.

Reports of the UN Secretary General on the Implementation of the PSC-F

The bi-annual Secretary General's Reports on the implementation of the PSC-F, released in April and September 2020, continued to call upon the International community to support the implementation of the GLRSF and its ongoing project.

Last GLRSF Management Board Meeting

The last GLRSF Management Board Meeting was convened on 27 April 2021. The meeting started with opening remarks from the co-Chairs Huang Xia, United Nations Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region (SESG-GL) and Ahunna Eziakonwa, United Nations Assistant Secretary General and UNDP Regional Director for Africa. This was followed by presentations from Alessandra Casazza, UNDP Resilience Hub for Africa Manager and co-champion of the GLRSF on the lessons learned and recommendations of the joint UNDP-WFP-OSESG-GL GLRSF assessment report; then Jennifer Topping, Executive Coordinator of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office on the current MPTF and options for the way forward; and Luc Ngowet, OSESG-GL Senior Political Affairs Officer on priority interventions and governance structure of the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region. The Management Board agreed on the following:

Acknowledging that the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region as the guiding framework to support all UN engagement in the region
Transition and handover from the Management Board to the new SPG under the aegis of the UN Strategy
The joint secretariat (UNDP-WFP) is being handed over to the OSESG-LR, to mark the transition from GLRSF to the new Strategy

Replacement of the pillar lead system by the Implementation Support Mechanism to support the Senior Policy Group

- Welcomed that Opportunity/initiative based coalition Eight (OIBC-8) under the Regional Collaborative Platform provides a platform for collaboration in the context of the UN development system to support the implementation of the UN Strategy.
- The need for a resource mobilization strategy developed in conjunction with the action plan and promotion of greater ownership of UN Strategy and action plan by all stakeholders.
- Members are committed to continue their collaboration and promote greater ownership across all different segments and stakeholders.

Virtual Joint Planning Workshop for Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region

From 24 to 28 May 2021 to ensure coordination among the various partners and regular updates on key results and challenges, the UN participated actively in the virtual joint planning workshop for the Regional Project on Peace and Security in the Great Lakes region. The work plan and budget were reviewed and adapted, in collaboration with the donor and partners, considering the COVID-19 response and its impact on the overall project implementation.

The United Nations (UN) Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region and its Action Plan

Following a series of preparatory meetings, the UN Regional Strategy's Action Plan was developed and adopted on 08 July 2021. Similarly, to the regional Strategy, the Action Plan was developed following a consultative process led by OSESG-GL with key actors in the Great Lakes region and beyond, including representatives of signatory countries and guarantor institutions of the PSC- Framework, members of the International Contact Group (ICG) on the Great Lakes Region, UN entities at Headquarters and in the region, as well as civil society, including women's organizations and the private sector from the region.

The Governance Structure of the new UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region

Upon adoption of the Strategy, the OSESG-GL was requested to establish a Senior Policy Group (SPG) and tasked to lead the elaboration of the Strategy's Action Plan for the next three years (2021-2023). Composed of nine

principles representing UN entities both at Headquarters and in the field, including Special Representatives and Resident Coordinators, the SPG serves as the political steering and management body for the implementation of the Strategy.

The SPG is supported by the Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM) which serves as the day-to-day coordinating structure with the OSESG-GL as the Secretariat. This is critically important to build upon lessons learnt from the GLRSF in addressing challenges faced with respect to effective coordination especially the need for efficient decision making, accountability, adequate resources for joint cross border and regional initiatives and the Secretariat as well as in tracking and monitoring impact and results.

ICGLR Joint Planning Workshop

The UN participated in the ICGLR Annual Workshop held on 22nd-26th November 2021. During the workshop, the UN entities (UNDP, UNFPA, UN WOMEN and OSESG-GL) shared perspectives on the lessons learned, and challenges, including capacity gaps, current restrictions linked to COVID-19 response, and delay in the disbursement of the second tranche of funds that affected the continued implementation of some programme activities. With this, the risk matrix for the project was updated with mitigating measures such as continuous dialogue at the national and regional levels as well as impact at the project level. Further, the workshop also provided an opportunity for UN entities to also share envisaged activities for the following year in support of the implementation of the UN in Support of Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Regional Project.

Implementation Support Mechanism of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region

From 9-10 March 2022, members of the Implementation Support Mechanism (ISM) held their first retreat in Naivasha, Kenya. The objectives of the retreat were to: (i) foster enhanced ownership and coordination among participating UN entities of the UN Regional Strategy ; (ii) establish working groups to facilitate the implementation of the regional Strategy's Action Plan; (iii) review the implementation of the priority initiatives under Phase 1 (2021) as well as the priority initiative matrix under Phase 2 (2022) of the Action Plan; and (iv) discuss key elements to be included in the development of the joint resource mobilization communication strategies.

Senior Policy Group of the United Nations Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region

During the SPG meeting held from 19-20 May 2022 in Bujumbura, Burundi; SPG members: SESG Huang Xia, SRSG Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, SRSG Bintou Keita, ASG Elisabeth Spehar, Fode Ndiaye RC Rwanda, Susan Ngongi Namondo RC Uganda, Bruno Lemarquis DSRSG/RC DRC, Chris Mburu RC Congo, Damien Mama RC Burundi, Michael Kingsley- -Nyinah from DPPA and other representatives of UNAFPs, UNOCA, RCOs and the O-SESG-GL participated. The following key points from the meeting:

The Action Plan for 2022 and flagship initiatives were adopted with some amendments that will be reflected in their final versions.

- The Secretariat to prepare a retreat report to be shared with all participants.
- Participants to brief their Principals on the retreat with a view to identifying their contributions to the proposed integrated Secretariat to ensure effective coordination and follow-up to the regional
- Five or six flagship initiatives to be identified for submission to the ministerial-level Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) meeting scheduled for late July 2022
- SESG Xia to convene, as soon as feasible, a meeting with the Regional Directors of AFPs
- participating in the implementation of the Strategy to secure their buy-in on the next steps,

Technical Coordination Committee and Technical Steering Committee meetings

On 9 June, the Technical Coordination Committee held a meeting at the UN in Support of Peace and Security Regional Project to ensure coordination among partners to share updates on the regional context, review of the 2022

Programmatic Framework and challenges faced during the project implementation. Following that, on 20 June, the Technical Steering Committee convened virtually with a focus to discuss key developments of ICGLR and the region, updates on the partnership context and impact on the project, assessment of the programmatic framework and remaining interventions by UN partners including challenges and remaining activities.

UN in Support of Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Regional Project Assessment Report

An assessment was undertaken by UNDP, UNFPA and UN WOMEN in November 2022 to review and reflect upon the efforts in the implementation of the EU/UN joint project to support peace and security in the Great Lakes Region, with a focus on each of the key milestones and achievements of the project in each outcome area and output area.

Programmes by Pillars

The GLRSF has developed programmes and Project documents by Pillar (Programme documents can be found at www.glrfsf.org). In January 2018 the first cross-border project officially started its activities across Burundi and Tanzania and a second regional initiative was launched in Burundi in December 2018.

Preventing conflict and building peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and instability associated with forced displacement between Burundi and Tanzania - funded by the Peacebuilding Fund

The overall objective of the cross border PBF project was for instability linked to displacement in the Burundian-Tanzanian cross-border areas to be mitigated, and for displaced persons to be better protected and supported in their progress toward durable solutions, and with enhanced resilience of host communities, to contribute to socio-economic revitalization and peacebuilding in Burundi, Tanzania, and the wider Great Lakes Region. To meet this outcome UNHCR, UNDP and IOM recommended a joint human right-based cross-border approach to help mitigate the adverse impacts of displacement on displaced persons and host communities and to prepare for a locally community-based reintegration process in collaboration with national and local authorities on both sides of the border. In detail this means:

- Joint and well-coordinated cross-border management and protection monitoring to better mitigate instability, identify and respond to the main protection risks in cross-border areas and to inform the reintegration process;
- An economic reintegration component including context-specific and locally based economic reintegration projects aiming at strengthening the resilience capacities of local communities and returnees in areas of returns based on UNDP 3X6 approach;
- A conflict prevention and conflict resolutions component aimed at strengthening formal and informal disputes resolution mechanisms to support social cohesion and peaceful reintegration in areas of re-turn.

The cross-border and interagency nature of the project provided an excellent opportunity for a collaborative and concerted approach based on the respective expertise and comparative advantages of the three implementing agencies in the two countries. Cross-border and interagency data and experience sharing contributed to the overall efficiency of the programme.

In 2018, a joint action plan was prepared by the participating agencies as well as the ICGLR and both Tanzania and Burundi Government representatives. A joint monitoring mission took place in September 2018, including all UN participating agencies and relevant partners to visit the project sites and evaluate the progress. The mission assessed that the project implementation was on track despite remaining challenges. As a follow-up to this mission, in October 2018 the UN participated in the Governors' bi-annual meeting in Ruyigi town (Ruyigi province, Burundi) to update on the implementation and related challenges. The project annual progress report was released on 15 November 2018 and assesses that, despite some delays due to the changing political environment, all components will be successfully implemented by the end of the project with major peacebuilding results.

This project proved the effectiveness of a cross border approach to peacebuilding and concrete delivery on the peace-development-humanitarian nexus. All reports with details on the impact and the key results can be found here. Key achievements include i) establishment of peace-making and conflict resolution systems; ii) improved resilience of border communities through socioeconomic reintegration of returnees and IDPs; iii) new operational crisis management guide/manual and SOPs for humanitarian border and crisis management; v) joint trainings between immigration and border police officers increase knowledge in protection sensitive humanitarian border management and capacity building; viii) monitoring of protection situation of refugee returnees and facilitating access to basic services, including health, education, administrative documentation, justice and legal assistance, including related to GBV, child protection and land disputes' resolution.

The project was granted a no-cost extension at the end of 2018 until 31 March 2019, when all activities will be closed. Procurement of an external evaluation is currently under way for the evaluation to take place during May and June 2019. Collection of results against the M&E Framework as well as lessons learned in terms of inter-agency, cross-border work is currently ongoing to support the evaluation. Results of the evaluation will feed into the formulation of the PBF End of Project Report, due end-June 2019.

In parallel, support from the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region did a short documentary video about the project. This MTPF support project is seen as a concrete example of realising the Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus in practice. The video showcases how UNHCR, UNDP and IOM work jointly across the border between Burundi and Tanzania with protection of refugees, skills building and livelihood activities for returnees and community-based conflict resolution between refugees and host communities.

Peace and Security in the Great Lakes Region - funded by the European Development Fund

In December 2018, the EU funded project was jointly launched with the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and GIZ in Bujumbura. The project aims at strengthening ICGLR Peace and Security Program and supporting the implementation of the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence against Women and Children in the region. The UN participating agencies will implement activities in support to ICGLR capacities in mediation and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reinsertion (DDR), including options for insider mediation at local level, in support to four ICGLR fora (women, youth, private sector and civil society), to promote awareness of Gender-Based Violence as well as the transcription of the above-mentioned protocol into national laws.

For Pillar Four, in 2019 the leading agency will focus on institutional strengthening of the ICGLR youth and women's fora. This will include an organizational assessment and support for capacity building to strengthen institutional structures, resource mobilization and partnership strategies, regional and national action plans, and an M&E plan. The aim is to support the fora's participation in the consultative process of the ICGLR. For Pillar Five, in 2019 the leading agency will focus on promoting awareness of Gender-Based Violence in the Great Lakes region as well as the transcription of the above-mentioned protocol into national laws. For Pillar Six, in 2019 the leading agency will organize a strategic planning consultation with all relevant regional stakeholders to define the strategy for the creation of a regional network of local insider mediators with focus on DDR and in line with UN Integrated DDR Standards. This strategy will pave the way for the implementation of the project and the related capacity building initiatives.

Key Results in the Implementation of the EU/UN Joint Project

UNDP key Results

Creation of a network of regional mediators specialized in the subjects covered by DDR/RR

The use of insider mediators seeks to achieve DDR/RR results by complementing national efforts with a more proactive, flexible, locally-embedded solutions approach to engaging armed groups. Insider mediation is “a process of supporting negotiations – as well as a variety of other forms of dialogue – to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts at different levels of society”. Given the complexity of the regional context and challenging dynamics, political actors demand community-based approaches to address the persistent challenges. This component of the project thus focused on enhancing communities' capacities and initiatives to deal with armed groups and provided an opportunity to address modalities on how to contribute to the PSC-F for the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the region. Cognizant of the planned exit of MONUSCO and handing over of DDR/RR issues to ICGLR, the project identified insider mediation and infrastructures for peace, as a viable way of enhancing the capacity of local communities to support peacebuilding.

The target groups for this output were respected individuals within civil society organizations (CSOs), national NGOs, women's groups and traditional leaders that are well positioned and ready to make a difference in their communities by engaging with armed groups in support of DDR/RR. Activities under this output were aimed at equipping the individuals with ‘the appropriate technical DDR knowledge and mediation skills to engage with armed groups with a view to supporting their members' disengagement from violence.’

Insider Mediation for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Trainings

During the implementation period, 87 insider mediators (38 women; 49 men) from across the region, representing the Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM), ICGLR Regional Pool of Mediators, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), National Demobilization and Reintegration Commissions and Operational Cell Expert Members of the Contact & Coordination Group participated in Insider Mediation for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Trainings.

Considering the restrictions to movement that were in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic and alternative implementation modalities that were not feasible, in April 2021, the Insider Mediation for

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Training Course organized by UNDP, in collaboration with ICGLR and GIZ, with funding from the EU. Clingendael Academy delivered the five -day online course. The online course was developed by a core Team led by UNDP that was established and composed of key actors, ICGLR, GIZ, MONUSCO, UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Clingendael Academy and OSEG-GL to provide expertise in the designing of training modules. The joint training was designed through virtual workshops in August and September 2020, with a testing of the modules through regional training targeting the ICGLR Mediators' pool, the EJVM and key individuals identified at the workshop. The training brought together 41 participants (13 females and 28 males) from the ICGLR Pool of Mediators; ICGLR Youth and Women; Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM); CSOs, NGOs, and National Demobilization and Reintegration Commissions. The training focused on the following objectives:

- Contribution of the current DDR approaches to sustaining peace, security, and development;
- Concepts of insider mediation as well as skills and techniques;
- Assessment of conflict dynamics and conflict mapping;
- Reintegration opportunities to ensure the successful exit of armed groups;
- Identification of potential risks and mitigation strategies for undertaking insider mediation work.

The training strengthened the capacities of existing regional mechanisms within the Great Lakes region. This was evident from the post training evaluation that demonstrated the success of the training with participants highly scoring components for example: 9.88 out of 10 for the simulation exercise; 9.56 out of 10 for understanding mediation and insider mediation; 9.38 out of 10 for the linkages between insider mediation and DDR/RR; and 9.71 out of 10 for the group discussions on lessons learned. In addition, the training also identified potential members to form the establishment of the CSOs network working closely with ICGLR in the region.

A key recommendation from the virtual training held in 2021 was the need for future trainings centered on the linkages between insider mediation and DDR. As such, in September 2022, UNDP in collaboration with ICGLR and Clingendael Academy with funding from the EU delivered an in-person training on Insider Mediation for DDR/RR. Participating in the training were 18 (10 men; 8 women) representatives from the ICGLR Expanded Joint Verification Mechanism (EJVM), ICGLR Regional Pool of Mediators, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Operational Cell Members of the Contact and Coordination Group (CCG) across the region. The training sessions also benefitted from a partnership with OSESG-GL and GIZ. These collaborations provided interventions on the linkages of insider mediation, and DDR/RR approaches to broader peacebuilding efforts in the region. The course also benefitted significantly from the partnership with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes (OSESG-GL) and GIZ. The main objective of the training was to provide capacity and learning development with gender considerations to key regional mechanisms on Mediation/Insider Mediation applied to DDR/RR. Considering this, the training focused on:

- Strengthening the capacity of existing regional mechanisms within ICGLR Member States and their capacity to fulfill their mandates with a focus on Mediation/Insider Mediation applied to DDR/RR;
- Collect and share examples and previous experiences, consequently facilitating regional dialogue and cross-country engagement which will strengthen and support the work that is done by the different mechanisms within ICGLR Member States, and by that support their mandate
- Assist the further identification of concrete activities for supporting insider mediation in the GLR

in line with the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration standards (IDDRS) and relevant national strategies, as this will support a comprehensive approach towards mediation using the existing regional mechanisms within the ICGLR Member States.

The key follow-up actions from the training included:

- The need for similar trainings to be conducted throughout the Great Lakes region and for organizations to support the replication of these trainings;
- Biannual follow-up with participants on the progress of the Action Plans developed
- Support the operationalization of the ICGLR's Situation Room
- Development of an online platform that will enable information sharing
- Extend the membership of the community of practice to experts to facilitate webinars on various focus areas

From 17-19, November, ICGLR with support from UNDP with funding from the EU held a three-day in-person experience-sharing workshop on Insider Mediation for DDR that brought together 28 (18 women; 10 men) regional mediators from FemWise Africa, ICGLR Regional Pool of Mediators, EJVM, CSOs and the Operational Cell Members of the Contact and Coordination Group across the region. The regional mediators engaged in experience sharing and group exercises to deepen knowledge of insider mediation for DDR/RR through in-person exchanges and cross-learning. The workshop also benefited from the expertise of the OSESG-GL on DDR experiences in the region. The workshop aimed to share experiences and enhance the understanding of insider mediation with a focus on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. With specific objectives which included:

- To establish a common understanding of insider mediation and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
- Synergized experiences of Insider mediation for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration including learning best practices
- To establish entry points and cross-cutting interventions for meaningful engagement in peacebuilding activities and participation in the Great Lakes region

The regional mediators engaged in experience sharing and group exercises that helped them identify key lessons learned, best practices and take home action plans. It was important to ensure that participants leverage the cross learning and engagement in application of those lessons and best practice in their contexts.

Great Lakes Region Civil Society Symposium

In January 2022, complementary to the small grants initiative, a two-day symposium in Goma, DRC organized by UNDP Global Rule of Law Programme in partnership with Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre for the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Network in the Great Lakes on Insider Mediation, Reintegration, Reconciliation and Preventing of Violent Extremism. The symposium brought together 20 CSO partners from the Great Lakes (Burundi, DRC, Rwanda, Uganda) and the Lake Chad Basin (Chad, Niger and Nigeria, Cameroon), whose objective was to exchange experiences and lessons across sub-regions, as part of the effort of enhancing their role in the prevention of violent extremism, mediation, and reintegration.

Following the Call for Proposals in partnership with Elman Peace and Human Rights Centre in May 2022,

33 proposals were submitted by eligible CSOs from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. After this, 15 shortlisted proposals underwent a transparent vetting process by the Steering Committee. Upon review of the shortlisted proposals, the Steering Committee represented by ICGLR, African Union, CSOs, UNDP and Goodwill ambassador unanimously decided on six CSOs; 1-Uganda, 1-Burundi, 1-Rwanda and 3-DRC that were supported through funding to implement activities to promote insider mediation, reintegration, and reconciliation efforts. Hereinafter, the disbursement period for the awarded CSOs commenced in August 2022 namely: *JAMAA Grand Lacs*- Reconciliation process between ex-combatants and local communities; *Union des Juristes engages pour les opprimes*- engaging local communities in the process of DDR for Peace and Stability; *Reseau Des Cadres De concertation Intercommunautaire*- to support the socio-economic reintegration of former combatants; *Association des Scouts du Burundi* – Support for the promotion of community reintegration of youth and women affected by socio-political crises; *Inter-religious Council of Uganda*- Building social cohesion and strengthening community resilience for non-violence among communities; and *Prison Fellowship Rwanda*- Psychosocial reintegration of ex-combatants, and community reconciliation.

Community of Practice

From the virtual training and related initiatives, participants expressed interest to continue learning on insider mediation for DDR/RR through the Community of Practice (CoP). 79 participants engaged in monthly Community of Practice Meetings focused on learning on various topics to enhance their insider mediation for DDR/RR competencies. With this, terms of reference were drawn and validated to articulate the membership, objectives and governance structure. A capacity needs assessment and a framework was developed in support of the engagement of members as well as other insider mediators specialized in DDR/RR. Additionally, through monthly meetings and platforms such as the WhatsApp group and Virtual Teams Space information sharing takes place. Beyond the CoP, some of the trained insider mediators members have since participated and been engaged and involved in the ongoing Nairobi Peace Process, on the restoration of peace and security in Eastern DRC. Additionally, with the adoption of the national strategy for the implementation of the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery and Stabilization Program (P-DDRCS) for ex-combatants in DRC, some CoP members are supporting the strategy's implementation that entails active participation of CSOs at all levels and local communities, especially those that have been victims of the armed groups.

UNFPA key results

Output 1.5: Support for the participation of the ICGLR fora in the ICGLR consultative process.

The overall purpose of the UNFPA portion of the program was to support institutional strengthening of the women, youth, civil society, and private sector fora of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), in order to better enable the fora to fulfill their mandate of representing their constituencies in the ICGLR consultative process and promoting peace and security in the region.

Women, children, CSOs, and the private sector contribute significantly to a promising future in governance and socio-economic development. To make this contribution they should be involved in political, and development related decision-making processes and be supported by inclusive and equitable economic and social policies. However, women and youth have been marginalized in political negotiations on conflict and peace in the Great Lakes Region.

Since its inception, the ICGLR has maintained that the absence of violent conflict alone is insufficient to ensure peace in the Great Lakes Region. Rather, Member States must work within a broader transformation framework that recognizes the conditions necessary for sustainable peace and development through women, youth and the participation of CSOs. The ICGLR thus considers participation of youth, women, CSOs, and private sector in its consultative processes important. Their participation has been taking place through the ICGLR Youth Forum, ICGLR Regional Women's Forum, ICGLR Civil Society Forum, and IGCLR Private Sector Forum.

It was with this inception that the project aimed at strengthening the ICGLR fora, in order to better enable the fora to fulfill their mandate of representing their constituencies in the ICGLR consultative process and promoting peace and security in the region. Accordingly, the overall purpose of the UNFPA portion of the program is to support institutional strengthening of the women, youth, civil society, and private sector fora of the ICGLR, in order to better enable the fora to fulfill their mandate of representing their constituencies in the ICGLR consultative process and promoting peace and security in the region under Outcome 1, i.e. *“A1.5 Support for the participation of the ICGLR Fora (multifunctional Youth Forum, Women Forum, Civil Society Forum and Private Sector Forum) in the ICGLR consultative process.”*

The project under this output focused on the implementation of the recommendations that emanated from the organizational assessment that was conducted in 2019¹. The recommendations of the organizational assessment speak to the strengthening of the national level of the fora, the development of lean and efficient ways of working and institutional strengthening by means of holding General Assemblies and developing regional action plans of the fora. The assessment suggested that the General Assemblies provide opportunities to re-energize the fora leadership, engage the national level of the fora and address capacity building needs.

The holding of General Assemblies of the Fora and development of regional action plans have been identified as priority activities under the project, consistent with the project document and the report of the organizational assessment. Accordingly, draft roadmaps and concepts for General Assemblies of the

¹ The General Assembly of the private sector forum was organized in 2019

women, youth and civil society fora have been developed (the General Assembly of the private sector forum was organized in 2019). A template for the regional action plans of the fora has also been developed. The documents have been shared and discussed with key stakeholders with a view to support further progress as regards to the institutionalization of the fora. Furthermore, the executive bodies of the women and youth fora have taken decisions in support of the organization of General Assemblies and development of regional action plans.

The project has been flexible to accommodate new changes that benefited the implementation of the project. In the light of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, planned activities under output A 1.5 had been partially reprogrammed to support pandemic response and to manage travel restrictions that render physical meetings difficult. These planned reprogramming activities were scheduled under the second tranche of project funds, and it was agreed with the ICGLR youth, women, and civil society fora that their General Assemblies would be fully virtual.

Implementation of the project in 2021

UNFPA had spent all its funds allocated in the first tranche of EU funds by December 2020, and the second tranche of funding was received at the end of 2021. Therefore, the UNFPA was able to continue with its planned activities under Output A1.5 of the program in 2022. Despite this ‘break in implementation’, UNFPA provided technical support to the ICGLR fora who were still able to participate in some of the activities and consultative processes related to the ICGLR.

These included:

- Regional Private Sector Forum (RPSF) partnered with the Africa Private Sector Summit (APSS) conference on creating an enabling environment for doing business in Africa. Series 1 took place online in March 21, and Series 2 took place in Accra in October 2021.
- The Regional Youth Forum (RYF) executive members participated as part of the ICGLR Election Observer Mission in Zambia in August 2021
- Various chambers represented in the RPSF participated in the East Africa Trade and Investment week held in Dar es Salam, August 2021
- The IRYF hosted a High-Level Peace and Security Symposium in Nairobi, September 2021
- The RPSF participated in the ICGLR Conference on illicit trade and exploitation of natural resources held in Khartoum, September 2021
- RPSF participated in the making of the ICGLR Strategic Plan, Gender Policy and various inter-ministerial committee sessions

In 2021 some of the activities of the ICGLR fora that contributed towards the strengthening and operationalizing of the fora, included:

- The RYF developed a Regional Youth Action Plan 2021-22 and planned calendar of events. Due to a lack of resources many of these activities were not able to be carried out, however.
- The RYF conducted two Executive Committee meetings; one on the 23rd September 2021 and the other on 8th October 2021. Discussions took place on convening the General Assembly, and action planning.
- The RPSF hosted the ICGLR Executive Secretary Amb. Caholo for a courtesy visit in April 2021 during his official visit to Kenya

- Together with the Office of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes (OSESGL), the RPSF launched the Great Lakes Women Entrepreneurship Network in December 2021 to promote women involvement in business and to begin to build a network of women entrepreneurs across the Great Lakes region.

Acceleration of implementation in 2022

The implementation in 2022 has significantly targeted acceleration in terms of achieving the key milestones of the project with regard to institutionalization of the fora and their engagement in key decision making processes.

The key milestones and achievements on each of the three ICGLR fora focus areas included:

Women Peace and Security

The ICGLR Regional Women’s Forum (ICGLR/RWF) was created by the ICGLR as one of the forums to ensure the implementation of the Pact under its Regional Follow-up Mechanism. The Pact specifically provides that: “Member States agree to create a Regional Follow-up Mechanism which shall consist of the Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Regional Inter-Ministerial Committee, the Conference Secretariat, the National Coordination Mechanisms and the Collaborative Mechanisms or other specific structures or forums, if necessary, in order to ensure its implementation.”² The Pact further states that: “The Regional Follow-up Mechanism shall be based upon principles of best practice, complementarity, linkages, and collegial ownership by the Member States, in cooperation with the African Union and the United Nations and other partners.”³

Pursuant to the pact, UNFPA supported the following initiatives:

- **3rd General Assembly of the ICGLR/RWF** - The project supported convening of the 3rd General Assembly of the ICGLR/RWF, which was held in Bujumbura, Burundi between 18-20 May 2022. The Assembly discussed reports and challenges, and oversaw the election of a new Steering Committee and Bureau. The chair of the forum is from Burundi, while 6 more members each represent the other ICGLR Member States. This forum has served as a platform where the Regional Women Fora has reviewed its successes and challenges and pledged to enhance its engagement with its constituencies going forward.
- **Development of a five-year Strategic Plan for the ICGLR/RWF 2023-27** - The General Assembly proposed the **review of ICGLR/RWF strategic direction** taking into consideration the current developments in the Great Lakes Region. In furtherance of that recommendation, UNFPA with the ICGLR Secretariat supported the development of **five-year Strategic Plan for the ICGLR/RWF**. A consultation was organized in Kampala, Uganda from 12-14 October 2022 by the ICGLR Secretariat and UNFPA to engage the members of the executive committee of the Regional Women Fora and key stakeholders in the development of the strategic plan. The strategic plan has since been developed and endorsed by key stakeholders for use taking this consultation as a major foundation.

² The Pact, Article 22 (1)

³ Ibid, Article 22 (2)

The Strategy seeks to galvanize, harmonize and align the Fora's roles, mandates, and activities with the national fora in the region. In addition, a key requirement identified for the effective operation of the ICGLR/RWF was to establish a **functioning Secretariat** that can ensure that the day-day activities of the ICGLR/RWF are carried out. The Strategic Plan aligns and harmonizes the Regional Women's Forum (ICGLR/RWF) strategic direction with the objectives and activities of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in the Great Lakes Region, National Women Fora and other Women-led organizations in the Great Lakes Region. The ICGLR/RWF Strategic Plan, 2023 – 2027 takes into account the current internal and external operating environment to enhance effectiveness and sustainability in the area of programming, policy, and advocacy in the Great Lakes Region; and builds upon ICGLR/RWF's previous achievements and takes into consideration its current operating environment.

- **Meaningful participation of women in peace processes** - The project mobilized high-level engagement in the key processes of ensuring the meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding and sustaining peace architecture. Among these are H E Mrs. Angeline Ndayishimiye, the First Lady of Bujumbura and Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, the Prime Minister of Uganda who attended the General Assembly of the Regional Women Fora and the Consultation held to develop the strategic plan respectively. During their remarks, both leaders emphasized the importance of providing deliberate opportunities to national and regional women's institutions in decision-making processes of the region mainly related to peace, development and wellbeing.
- **Great Lakes Women Entrepreneurship Network** - Together with the Office of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes (OESG-GL), the RPSF launched the Great Lakes Women Entrepreneurship Network in December 2021 to promote women involvement in business and to begin to build a network of women entrepreneurs across the Great Lakes region.
- **Strengthened partnerships** - The project further galvanized partnerships and collaboration among UN agencies beyond serving specific mandates, with key stakeholders such as the office of Special Envoy of the Secretary General to the Great Lakes Region, different Directorates within ICGLR secretariat and the different fora to ensure interlinkages and efficiency during implementation and beyond.

Youth Peace and Security

- The ICGLR firmly acknowledges the critical role of youth in advancing peace and security in the region and recognizes the inextricable link between security and other development-related issues and has taken several laudable efforts in this regard. The key milestones by the project in furtherance of this goal included the following:
- **Strengthening capacity of the ICGLR Multifunctional Youth Forum (RMYF)** - The RMYF seeks to avail young men and women in the region a platform to engage and play a meaningful

role in all the ICGLR agenda, especially on peace, security and development. The RMYF, with the buy-in of and support from Member States of the ICGLR, is the focal body and bridge between the youth in the region and the ICGLR Secretariat. In April 2018, the “Accord Establishing the Regional Youth Forum of the International Conference on the Great Lakes (ICGLR RYF) was adopted which acknowledged that “...the youth play a major role and contribute significantly to the reinforcement of peace, security, stability, poverty eradication, mutual understanding and friendship between African populations, solidarity, fraternity and good relations between States in the Great Lakes Region.” The Accord provided a veritable entry-point to kickstart and sustain the fledgling momentum for YPS in the Great Lakes.

- However, since its establishment in 2014, the RMYF faced the challenge of inadequate technical and resource capacity to mobilize the national forums and their constituencies. Its engagements were thus random and not based on strategic directions and therefore fell short in addressing critical needs of the youth in the region. Limited political space to engage in key decision-making processes was also another challenge that the RMYF has faced since its establishment.
- UNFPA through the project with the leadership of the ICGLR secretariat and the outgoing RMYF Executive Committee took major steps towards the **revitalization of the regional peacebuilding movements** through participatory capacity building interventions beyond the rigorous online consultation processes held with the former Executive Committee and the ICGLR secretariat that placed the foundation for the key achievements of the project.
- **Leveraging on Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace and Security** –In its capacity as Chair of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), the Government of Burundi hosted the Bujumbura Youth Dialogue on 23 April 2022. More than 350 young women and men from across Africa participated in the Continental Dialogue on Youth, Peace, and Security. The dialogue created a space for the participants to connect by sharing practices and innovative ideas for the implementation of the youth, peace and security agenda, in Burundi and Africa generally. The key objective of the dialogue was to promote meaningful engagement and active participation of youth in peacebuilding processes and in the formulation of peace and security policy and action plans at the national, regional and continental levels. The fact that the dialogue was co-facilitated by 4 AU Youth Ambassadors for Peace (AYAP) and the AU Youth Envoy provided the youth in the region valuable insights from among the youth leaders which was inspirational for the participants to do more. The dialogue culminated with a declaration calling on Member States to engage youth in peacebuilding under the five pillars of UNSCR 2250.
- **Youth capacity building** - A capacity building workshop was organized by the Office of the Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region (OSES-G-L) and UNFPA in partnership with the ICGLR Secretariat and the AU Youth 4Peace on 17-20 October 2022 in Nairobi Kenya. The workshop sought to mobilize young peacebuilders in the Great Lakes Region to explore their potential and assess the bottlenecks facing youth-led peacebuilding initiatives. Key stakeholders such as the EU, AU, OSES-G-L, ICGLR secretariat, the AU Youth Envoy, UN agencies mainly UNFPA and UNDP engaged with the youth leaders drawn from 16 countries. The workshop created opportunities to further promote the role of youth in sustaining peace at

national peace processes and also at the community level, by analysing the systematic and structural barriers, local mechanisms and capacities. It lifted the regional level discussions and promoted an enabling environment at the national level for shifting the discourse and opened up opportunities for youth to effectively participate in peacebuilding processes. It was also used as a forum to consult and brainstorm on the strategic areas for regional youth-led peacebuilding initiatives to go forward. The inputs compiled from this consultation have informed the 5 years' strategic plan for the regional multifunctional youth forum.

- **The ICGLR Multifunctional Youth Forum (RMYF) 5 Year Strategic Plan** – The project supported development of a five-year RMYF strategic plan. The process for developing the Strategy relied on extensive consultations with different categories of stakeholders. The consultations included virtual and on-site meetings with a wide range of youth leaders in the ICGLR and a Technical Working Committee comprising staff of the ICGLR Secretariat, mediation experts, representatives of youth organizations, and consultations with the staff of major UN entities such as OSESG-GL, UNFPA and UNDP. The consultations included interactions with participants that attended two major events: (1) Capacity building workshop on youth peace and security to youth-led in the Great Lakes Region, 17-20 October 2022; and (2) Regional Youth Forum General Assembly, 1-3 November 2022. The consultations provided rich insights/data that supported the development of the strategic plan, plan of action and insights into the best pathways for the operationalization of the RYF Secretariat.
- **RMYF General Assembly** – Despite being the supreme organ of the Forum, the last General Assembly was held in 2016. Holding a General Assembly had been identified as a priority action to support the functioning of the Forum. The General Assembly was organized by the Regional Youth Forum, in collaboration with the ICGLR Executive Secretariat, Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) from 1-3 November 2022. In preparations for the General Assembly, the RYF conducted two Executive Committee meetings; one on the 23rd of September 2021 and the other on 8th October 2021 centered around convening the General Assembly, and action planning. The overall objective of the General Assembly was to support the effective, efficient and sustainable functioning of the Regional Youth Forum, including its active participation in the ICGLR consultative processes. Through the newly elected national fora representatives from the 12 Member States, the General Assembly was able to strengthen and engage with the national level of the Forum; considered activities undertaken by the Forum; reviewed and adopted a regional action plan (addressing for example partnership, resource mobilization, monitoring and accountability and secretariat functionalities); and identified capacity building needs that are incorporated in the five years' strategic plan. The General Assembly culminated with the elections of the executive committee of the fora which followed a democratic process as per the Accord and identified youth leaders delegated from each member state based on criteria adopted by the assembly mainly which considered the age bracket to give chance to emerging youth leaders.
- **Strengthening and working with national youth networks** - While strengthening the regional youth platforms is a critical step, the experience from this project reaffirmed the fact that similar efforts should be exerted to strengthen and mobilize national youth forums through direct support of Member States and country focused stakeholders. UNDP and UNFPA thus

embarked on a new initiative that focused on strengthening and working with national actors, mainly youth networks to initiate and strengthen initiatives toward developing and implementing national action plans. Accordingly, national dialogues were conducted from September – December 2022 in DRC, Burundi and Rwanda to inform national-level youth peace and security initiatives. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the process of appropriation and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250, on the Youth, Peace and Security agenda, culminated with the establishment of the National Technical Secretariat on the implementation of UNSCR 2250 in DRC (STN2250), as well as the adoption of the National Action Plan (NAP) on YPS on 12 August 2022. As part of this initiative, a south-south experience mission was conducted from DRC to Burundi to enhance cross learning and collaboration.

- **Participation of women and youth in electoral processes** - The project also supported and facilitated the participation of women and youth leaders in the election monitoring missions of the elections that happened in Kenya and Angola in 2022. The Regional Youth Forum (RYF) executive members also participated as part of the ICGLR Election Observer Mission in Zambia in August 2021. The support demonstrated the progress toward opening political platforms to the observation of women and youth.
- **Strengthening the role of CSOs including women and youth-led organizations and the engagement of the private sector in the ICGLR:-** In 2002 at a conference in Nairobi, the joint UN/AU Secretariat of the GLR appointed the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation as the Regional Coordinator of Civil Society inputs to the ICGLR process. Four years later, in December 2006 also in Nairobi, the Regional Civil Society Bureau was established but was not able to meet until July 2011. At the Bujumbura meeting, the Regional Civil Society Forum and its structures were set up and the newly established Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) was tasked to prepare strategies that would facilitate the operationalization of the Forum and identify priority actions as well as recommendations for effective coordination of civil society action. A strategic plan and annual action plan were also developed not long after.
- However, implementation of the action plan has been slow due to among other things, lack of funds, the absence of an administrative Secretariat to run the day-to-day business of the RCSF, and the absence of National Civil Society fora in all member states which form the General Assembly. The Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation has been serving as a provisional Secretariat and has been able to raise awareness of regional activities and improve working relations with governments and other partners including the office of the Special Envoy to the UN Secretary General and Great Lake Partners which has facilitated the establishment of 9 national Civil Society Fora in CAR, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Because of the absence of a Secretariat, there has not been effective coordination of the Regional Forum’s activities and consequently progress in establishing national Civil Society fora has been slow which in turn has affected the ability to hold general meetings as specified in the Accord establishing the Regional Civil Society Forum. Against this context the project supported the following initiatives:
- **ICGLR -RCSF General Assembly** – Since its establishment, the RCSF had only met twice in July 2011 in Bujumbura and in March 2016 in Dar es Salaam. That is although it is supposed

to meet every two years. Against that background and in the absence of a Secretariat of the Forum, the regional CSO Fora with the support of UNFPA, the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and the ICGLR Secretariat convened the 3rd General Assembly from 5-6 October 2022 at Dar es Salam, Tanzania. The General Assembly was attended by the higher officials of ICGLR and the Minister for Constitutional and Legal Affairs, Hon. Dr. Damas Ndumbaro. This intervention has reignited momentum and background work that was done to locate the secretariat in Dar es Salam, Tanzania. To increase linkage and cross-learning, the executive committee members of both women and youth regional fora attended the General Assembly.

UNWOMEN key results

Outcome 3: The provisions of the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children are effectively applied in the Great Lakes Region.

In 2019 the implemented activities supported the systematic and effective application of the provisions of the Protocol by the Member States in the GLR and provided the opportunity to strengthen collaboration between the ICGLR, governments and civil society organisations for greater knowledge on the extent and impact of SGBV in the region and the high political commitment and actions required to address it.

Key activities included a joint solidarity mission to Burundi by the OSESG-GL, FEMWISE and UN WOMEN to advocate for full participation of women in the electoral process in the upcoming elections; sensitization of judicial officers, prosecutors and probation officers in the Great Lakes Region on existing ICGLR instruments on SGBV; development of a draft model law for establishment of special courts and other mechanisms to fast track trial of cases of sexual and gender-based violence against women and children to address impunity for commission of SGBV due to protracted periods of trials; and an updated and validated report on progress of implementation of the Kampala Declaration (2011).⁴

The draft Model Law and Updated and Validated Report of progress on the implementation of the Kampala Declaration were approved by the Council of Ministers of Gender and Justice in the Great Lakes Region in their meeting in Brazzaville in November 2019.

For the implementation of this Outcome, a Letter of Agreement (LOA) was signed by UN WOMEN with the ICGLR Secretariat in July 2019 for the activities to be implemented by its Regional Training Facility (RTF) based in Kampala, Uganda. An inception/orientation meeting was held in July 2019 with the RTF to develop a common understanding of the project's objectives. Concept notes were developed for the implementation of the various activities, including a budget and a workplan. Moreover, the RTF programme and operations staff underwent a one-week training on Results-Based Management (RBM) and financial reporting to enhance their capacity in programme implementation and reporting.

Output 3.1: Domestication of the ICGLR Protocol strengthened.

⁴ Outcome document of a Special Summit of Heads of States of the ICGLR countries held in Kampala, Uganda in 2011 to address the high levels of SGBV in the Great Lakes Region.

<https://www.icglr-rtf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/15-16th-December-2011-Kampala-Declaration-by-Heads-of-State-from-icglr.pdf>

Key results for 2019 included the identification of best practices and lessons learned in the region for the prosecution of SGBV cases and the development of a draft model law for the establishment of special courts and other mechanisms to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases.

In November 2019, a regional workshop was organized by the RTF for 28 judicial officers and prosecutors from the 12 Member States of the ICGLR in the format of a platform to share experiences on the national prosecution of SGBV and the development of a model/guide on establishment of special courts and other mechanisms to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases. Key findings from the meeting highlighted that 9 out of 12 Member States had adopted and/or strengthened mechanisms to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases. These mechanisms included special courts that have special chambers to hear SGBV cases that are supported by specially trained police officers; special sessions that aim to clear the backlog of existing SGBV cases and special procedures for the prosecution of SGBV cases that are in the form of legislations, practices or services to survivors. During the meeting, the participants finalized a draft model legislation on establishment of Special Courts and other mechanisms for fast tracking the prosecution of SGBV cases⁵.

This model legislation incorporates good practices and lessons learned from current fast track measures developed by member states of the ICGLR, and responds to Commitment 8 of the Kampala Declaration of 2011 to end impunity for SGBV. Features of the draft law include:

- A definition of special courts and functions of the court;
- Procedures and measures for fast tracking the prosecution and hearing of sexual offenses and;
- Guidelines for judicial officers and prosecutors, investigating officers and medical personnel in handling sexual offenses to ensure proper management of sexual offenses.

In 2020, activities supported the implementation of some provisions of the Protocol on Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children in the Great Lakes Region by the Member States in the ICGLR and provided the opportunity to strengthen collaboration between the ICGLR, governments and civil society organisations for greater knowledge on the extent and impact of SGBV in the region and the high political commitment and actions required to address it.

A joint solidarity mission to Burundi was undertaken by the OSESG-GL, FEMWISE, UN WOMEN, and the ICGLR Regional Women's Forum to advocate for peaceful elections and respect for the women's constitutional quota to enable full participation of women in the 2020 electoral process. The elections were relatively peaceful and women were able to compete for the affirmative action seats.

The ICGLR Protocol on Management of Information and Communication (Article 3 (2)) commits Member States to promote freedom of media and their role in protecting the objectives and activities of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and its Instruments including those on SGBV. In this regard, in 2020, ICGLR Regional Training Facility in partnership with UN Women, and funding from the European Union, trained 56 senior journalists from 11 of the ICGLR member states on SGBV and the skills required for reporting and accountability. The journalists were trained virtually from 9th -11th December 2020. A draft Media Action Plan on SGBV Accountability, outlining key outputs for SGBV accountability and the related indicators, baselines, targets, and activities was developed and a Great Lakes

⁵ See **Annex 1**: Model Law Legislation on the Establishment of Special Courts & other Mechanisms to Fast Track the Trial of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children.

Media Campaign Against SGBV was launched.

In 2021, no project activities were undertaken, as funds received in 2019 had been exhausted, and replenishment could not be requested until the combined expenditure of the three participating Agencies had reached 80%.

In 2022, an impact assessment of the effectiveness of Special Courts and Other Measures for Fast-Tracking SGBV prosecution was conducted; a meeting of technical experts of Gender Ministries in the Great Lakes member states was convened to deliberate on the gendered impact of COVID in their countries and measures being taken to align with the AU guidelines for a gendered COVID response to address the negative and disproportionate social (including increased SGBV) and economic impact on women and girls; and training of traditional and religious leaders on SGBV prevention was conducted to widen the scope of stakeholders in the fight against SGBV.

Impact Assessment of the Effectiveness of Special Courts, Special Procedures and Other Measures to fast track SGBV cases.

The impact assessment of the effectiveness of Special Courts and Other Measures for Fast-Tracking SGBV established pursuant to Commitment 8 of the Kampala Declaration (2011) of the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region revealed that there was greater confidence in the justice system and noted that most member states had put in place measures to improve access to justice for survivors of SGBV⁶.

The specific objectives of the assessment were to: -

- 1) assess the effectiveness of the various mechanisms adopted by member states;
- 2) provide concrete examples and data from a sample of states that have implemented these special mechanisms;
- 3) highlight the strengths and/or weaknesses of the various mechanisms and come up with recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of the mechanisms; and
- 4) develop a position paper for presentation to the next summit of Heads of States, tentatively planned for February 2023, to support the adoption of the Model Law to fast track SGBV cases with recommended amendments (if any).

The special courts and measures significantly reduced the duration of SGBV trials and increased confidence in the justice system. In DRC, the Law on Sexual Violence modified the Code of Criminal Procedure by setting a deadline of 1 month for investigations and 3 months for prosecution. Judicial Police had to notify the Office of Prosecutions within 24 hours of filing an SGBV complaint. Some countries set up special courts (viz. Burundi, South Sudan, and Zambia) or special sessions (DRC, Uganda, and Zambia) to fast-track trials; and most countries (Burundi, Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia) instituted special procedures to ease the prosecution of SGBV cases. In Uganda where previously about 40 cases were handled over a 6-month period, 788 cases were cleared over a 40-day period in 2019 through special sessions. Zambia saw an increase in reported cases from

⁶ **Annex 2:** Special Courts and other measures for Fast-Tracking Sexual and Gender-Based Trials; a rapid assessment of effectiveness; Florence Butegwa, 2022.

12,924 in 2012 to 26,370 in 2020. There was a drop however in reported cases in 2021.

Several weaknesses were noted by the impact assessment. Special courts, and fast track mechanisms and procedures focused on prosecution and punishment of the alleged perpetrator, and not on the survivor which could possibly be a cause for the reduced reporting observed over a period. The recommendation is for a victim-centered approach to prosecution, whereby in addition to accountability by the perpetrator, the survivor gets something out of the prosecution such as access to an integrated health service, psycho-social, and legal support services as part of the overall criminal justice response to GBV, and income, or skills training support to rebuild her life. It is important to avoid the re-traumatisation of the primary and any secondary GBV survivors as part of the overall criminal justice response to GBV.

Support and protection of GBV victims start at the family and community levels. Countries like Rwanda, Zambia, and Uganda have integrated a community-based approach in the design and operation of the GBV special courts. Zambia was singled out as having a model/good practice of a survivor centered and integrated service that covered legal aid, health services, trained health workers, prosecutors and police, community networks, entrepreneurship, and financial services to enhance resort to the legal process.

Most ICGLR member states with the exception of Angola, Central Africa Republic, and Tanzania have adopted some measures to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases. Three countries have established special courts (Burundi, South Sudan, and Zambia), and three countries have special sessions (DRC, Uganda and Zambia). It must be stated that more countries than the baseline earlier stated (of 5 countries) before the convening of judicial officers and prosecutors in 2019 had instituted mechanisms for fast tracking cases. The operation of these mechanisms to the current level was further developed by the experiences shared.

In 2022, UN WOMEN commissioned a study on the gendered impact of COVID-19 on the member states of the ICGLR. The study noted a sharp increase in SGBV in the region, an increase in teenage pregnancies, reduced access to social services including protection services for SGBV, and a disproportionately negative impact on women's economic status. This was followed by a convening of technical experts from the Ministries responsible for Gender and relevant women's civil society organisations to present the findings and deliberate on measures to be taken to address the negative impact of COVID-19 on women and girls. ICGLR member states adopted the AU Guidelines on Gender Responsive Responses to COVID-19 and Enhancing Women's Leadership in COVID-19⁷, proposed development of a monitoring framework for progress, and biannual reporting.

Africa, led by the AU, had developed a robust response to the COVID-19 epidemic which resulted in Africa accounting globally for only 3.6% of COVID cases and 3.6% of COVID deaths respectively. The health response included prolonged lock downs of affected communities and households, international border closures, closure of schools and colleges for prolonged periods (more than a year in some countries in the Great Lakes region) etc. These successful health measures came with great social and economic consequences; an increase in SGBV and serious economic consequences for women in cross border trade and informal employment.

Three meetings were held by the AUC on 24 April 2020, 29 April 2020 and 7 May 2020 that focused on the Impact of COVID-19 on GEWE, and resulted in the development and adoption of the AU Guidelines on Gender-Responsive Responses to COVID-19 and Enhancing Women's leadership in COVID-19

⁷ https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38617-doc-gewe_and_covid_19_eng.pdf

respectively. On 12 May 2020, the AU in collaboration with UNECA and UN WOMEN convened African Ministers responsible for Gender to share their experiences and good practices on a “Gendered Framework” in the response to COVID-19. The meeting brought together more than 200 participants and representatives from more than 40 African countries, from government, civil society, and the United Nations. Only four countries from the ICGLR were in attendance, viz. Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia. Similar attendance of ICGLR member states at the earlier AUC meetings was low. It was to address this gap that UN WOMEN supported ICGLR to commission the study on the gendered impact of COVID on countries of the Great Lakes and for them to review the recommendations of the AU on a gendered response to COVID 19.

Output 3.3: Raising awareness among member states about the seriousness and severity of gender-based sexual violence and the severity of such crimes.

Key activities and results for 2019 included the first validated report on the status of implementation of the Kampala Declaration, a joint solidarity mission of the OSESG-GL, ICGLR, UN WOMEN and FEMWISE in Burundi to advocate for and raise awareness for a conducive environment for women’s increased participation in the 2020 presidential and parliamentary elections, and approval of the draft model law for fast tracking of SGBV cases and the status report of the implementation of the Kampala Declaration by the ICGLR Council of Ministers of Justice and Gender meeting in Brazzaville in November 2019, prior to submission to the heads of State Summit for adoption and binding on member states for domestication.

A 2017 report on implementation of the Kampala Declaration was updated using additional data provided by Member States and a desk research. Data was collected through literature review and interviews using a standard questionnaire addressed to Member States. A two-day Validation Meeting was held in November 2019. The meeting was attended by 25 participants from all ICGLR Member States. Discussions focused on the progress made in implementation by each Member State which can be found in the annexed updated report. All member states had strengthened legal and policy frameworks to support SGBV prevention, were providing training for relevant personnel, and were operating “recovery” centres that provide comprehensive services for survivors. Significant challenges included insufficient financial inputs to address the magnitude of the problem, low rates of reporting due to lack of confidence in the Police and low conviction rate of reported cases, and no member state had comprehensive and up to date data on SGBV prevalence and management. Key recommendations were; enhance capacity for data collection, align national laws and policies with international frameworks, train law enforcement and judicial officers, allocate adequate resources for SGBV prevention, and increase awareness on the issues⁸.

One solidarity mission to Burundi was supported, which took place on 5-8th June 2019. The solidarity mission was undertaken by representatives of the AU, ICGLR, and the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region, acting on behalf of the Women's Platform Advisory Board for Women Peace and Security (WPS) for the Great Lakes Region. The mission was led by Her Excellency Catherine Samba-Panza, former President of the Central African Republic, Co-Chair of FEMWISE-Africa, accompanied by Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, former Executive Secretary of the ICGLR, both members of the Framework Agreement's Women's Platform Advisory Committee. The mission’s objective was to conduct advocacy for the promotion of the status of women in Burundi for their full participation in the electoral

⁸ Annex 3: An Updated Report on the implementation of the Kampala Declaration on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence by the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region Member States; Hon. Dora Byamukama, 2019.

process, decision-making mechanisms, and peace and security consolidation dynamics at both the national and community levels. The mission encouraged various stakeholders to invest in the priorities of women and girls and urged them to maintain accountability standards for SGBV and to strengthen legal measures to combat impunity. It also urged the women leaders to be supportive and to reach out to women at grassroots level to conduct awareness sessions before and during national consultations for peacebuilding.

In November 2019, a regional workshop was organised by the RTF for 28 judicial officers and prosecutors from the 12 Member States to share experiences on national prosecution of SGBV and the development of a model/guide on establishment of special courts and other mechanisms to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases. Key findings from the meeting highlight that 9 out of 12 Member States had adopted and or strengthened mechanisms to fast track prosecution of SGBV cases. These mechanisms include special courts that have special chambers to hear SGBV cases that are supported by specially trained police officers; special sessions that aim to clear backlog of existing SGBV cases and special procedures for prosecution of SGBV cases that are in the form of legislations, practices or services to survivors. During the meeting, the participants finalised a draft model legislation on establishment of Special Courts and other mechanisms for fast tracking prosecution of SGBV cases.

The meeting of the ICGLR Council of Ministers of Gender and Justice, organized by the ICGLR, was held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo on 24th- 27th November 2019. The ‘Updated Report on Progress on Implementation of the Kampala Declaration’ was presented together with the draft Model Law for the Establishment of Special Courts for the Prosecution of SGBV Cases. Among others, the objective of the meeting was to assess actions for the implementation of the Kampala Declaration. Both the updated report and the model legislation were approved and will go to the next stage of presentation to the Heads of States for adoption. The acceptance was included in the final communiqué of the meeting.

In 2020, a further good will mission to Burundi was supported, from 2nd to 4th March 2020. The mission was undertaken by representatives of FemWise, ICGLR Gender Directorate, the Office of the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, UN Women and the ICGLR Regional Women’s Forum. It was led by Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, former Executive Secretary of ICGLR in her capacity as member of FemWise. Other participants in the solidarity mission were the Director of Gender of ICGLR, the Vice President of the ICGLR Regional Women’s Forum, Burundian Women leaders, the Senior Gender Adviser in the Office of the UN Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes region, and the UN Women Country Representative in Burundi.

The delegation met with Burundi Government officials viz. the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender and the Minister of Justice and Keeper of the Seals, Minister of Home Affairs and the Ombudsman, who all reaffirmed the need to take quotas into account in the elections in order to support women’s participation in the elections and consequently gender parity. The delegation and government authorities noted that the electoral context and framework had become more open for women to participate in the electoral process. The authorities undertook to help more women to participate by creating favourable conditions as well as to involve women in efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts.

The mission was a follow up to the regional workshop on the participation, representation and protection of women in the electoral processes in the Great Lakes Region that was held in Addis Ababa on 12-13th December 2019. The workshop requested the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation

Framework for the DRC and the region (PCS-F), through the Advisory Board on WPS, to pursue joint initiatives to promote inclusive electoral processes and women's protection in post conflict stabilisation and peace building contexts.

In 2022, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Training for religious and traditional leaders of ICGLR member states was held on 15 and 16 November 2022⁹. The objectives of the training, attended by 53 participants were: -

- a. Religious and traditional leaders in the Great Lakes region have enhanced knowledge on SGBV prevention and control and can define their role in prevention and response.
- b. The ICGLR-RTF has a comprehensive training package for Religious and Traditional rulers on SGBV prevention and response.
- c. Religious and traditional leaders come up with an Outcome Document that outlines their commitments to work within their various constituencies to implement actions on SGBV prevention and response in accordance with the ICGLR Protocol on the Prevention and Suppression of Sexual Violence Against Women and Children.

At the end of the training participants came up with the following Outcome Statement, reflective of a deep commitment to address SGBV in their various spheres of work and influence: -

We commit to:

1. Create awareness and sensitize our people through our pulpits and cultural platforms about the dynamics, nature, and forms of SGBV and the need to curb such;
2. Advocate for the voice of all categories of victims of SGBV, including those with disabilities to be more amplified and heard when they are violated, because we understand that women and girls with disabilities are likely to face emotional, sexual, and physical violence three times more than persons without disabilities;
3. Ensure that victims of SGBV are protected, given access to justice within our communities, and are empowered to report violence to end the impunity of perpetrators;
4. Create partnerships with State and non-state actors in combating SGBV in our communities and at the national level using different existing platforms of which we are members, including the platform of certified mediators and faith-based organisation platforms, among others;
5. Work closely with our local administrations to set up SGBV desks or incorporate SGBV prevention and response into the work of Gender Desk Officers at the local level;
6. Ensure that Gender Desk Officers work closely with the Gender Task Force set up at all local levels to address SGBV (for e.g., under the Nyumba-Kumi Initiative);
7. Utilise existing platforms and religious and traditional spaces to sensitize our communities on ending SGBV, such as the community meetings, Friday prayer for Muslims, Madrasa, church meetings, Chief Barazas, and one-on-one sessions;
8. Establish forums and platforms to target potential perpetrators of SGBV and sensitize them of the criminal implications of their actions;
9. Create groups of male champions against SGBV in our localities and spheres of influence;

⁹ Annex 4: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Training for Religious and Traditional Leaders of ICGLR Member States; A Report. *Angela Dwamena-Aboagye, 2022.*

10. Monitor implementation of National and Regional Action Plans and provide feedback to state authorities and other duty bearers; and
11. Monitor the actions of state institutions in our local communities, such as the police, health, and social service facilities in terms of their response to SGBV incidents and advocate for better responses.

ICGLR-RTF also has a comprehensive training package for Religious and Traditional rulers on SGBV prevention and response¹⁰.

Lessons Learned, Challenges and Way Forward

The following key lessons emerged throughout the implementation period:

1. Leverage ICGLR's convening power of Member States to operationalise the regional mechanisms for peace and security in the Great Lakes region
2. The project has supported in placing strategic documents and frameworks which could facilitate inclusive peace building processes. However, the momentum should continue through continuing support for the operationalisation of the ICGLR fora and its strategies, the frameworks on Insider Mediation/DDR and the fast-tracking of SGBV cases.
3. Foster greater collaboration between ICGLR and the UN system to support the effective implementation of the P-DDRCS in the DRC and other DDR/RR processes in the Great Lakes region
4. Build on existing partnerships with regional CSOs, national NGOs, women's groups, media, religious and traditional leaders to continue shaping and strengthening capacities to support DDR/RR processes and address SGBV at regional, national, and local levels

The following challenges were faced during implementation:

1. The unpredictable security situation in the region particularly in Eastern DRC impacted the planned activities
2. The necessity for contingency measures that ensure flexibility and adaptability to emerging challenges such as prolonged vacancies within the ICGLR Secretariat impacting institutional capacity
3. Restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic affected the implementation of some activities at the beginning of the project which were however addressed at scale in 2022.

Way Forward

1. Build on gains to consolidate progress and development of Phase II of this project
2. Leverage networks and partnerships from this project to support initiatives targeting peace and security in the Great Lakes region including the Flagship on Strengthening the role of civil society organizations, women and youth in political processes and peacebuilding structures
3. Support the implementation of the ICGLR Strategic Plan 2022-26, through the joint implementation of regional and national priorities
4. Leverage UN comparative advantage to advocate and provide spaces for Women and Youth

¹⁰ Annex 5: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Training for Religious and Traditional Leaders of ICGLR Member States. *Angela Dwamena-Aboagye, 2022.*

Forums to engage in peacebuilding and political dialogue

5. Through partnerships position gender in policies, frameworks on peace and security and governance, and SGBV

PART II: ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

prepared by the Administrative
Agent

(January – December 2022)

DEFINITIONS

Allocation

Amount approved by the Steering Committee for a project/programme.

Approved Project/Programme

A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Contributor Commitment

Amount(s) committed by a contributor to a Fund in a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.

Contributor Deposit

Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement.

Delivery Rate

The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Participating Organization against the 'net funded amount'. This does not include expense commitments by Participating Organisations.

Indirect Support Costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Participating Organizations. UNSDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs for inter-agency pass-through MPTFs.

Net Funded Amount

Amount transferred to a Participating Organization less any refunds transferred back to the MPTF Office by a Participating Organization.

Participating Organization

A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is a partner in a Fund, as represented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular Fund.

Project Expenditure

The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all Participating Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Participating Organization follows for donor reporting.

Project Financial Closure

A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project Operational Closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which Participating Organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project Start Date

Project/ Joint programme start date as per the programmatic document.

Total Approved Budget

This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Steering Committee.

US Dollar Amount

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars

INTRODUCTION

This Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the **Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund** is prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in fulfillment of its obligations as Administrative Agent, as per the terms of Reference (TOR), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the UNDP MPTF Office and the Participating Organizations, and the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) signed with contributors.

The MPTF Office, as Administrative Agent, is responsible for concluding an MOU with Participating Organizations and SAAs with contributors. It receives, administers and

manages contributions, and disburses these funds to the Participating Organizations. The Administrative Agent prepares and submits annual consolidated financial reports, as well as regular financial statements, for transmission to stakeholders.

This consolidated financial report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2022 and provides financial data on progress made in the implementation of projects of the **Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund**. It is posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY (<https://mptf.undp.org/fund/blr00>).

2022 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

This chapter presents financial data and analysis of the **Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund** using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December **2022**. Financial information for this Fund is also available on the MPTF Office GATEWAY, at the following address: <https://mptf.undp.org/fund/glr00>.

1. SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS

As of 31 December **2022**, **2** contributors deposited US\$ **1,699,956**, other MPTFs US\$ **1,999,981** in contributions and US\$ **5,548** was earned in interest.

The cumulative source of funds was US\$ **3,705,484**.

Of this amount, US\$ **3,676,301** has been net funded to **5** Participating Organizations, of which US\$ **3,410,317** has been reported as expenditure. The Administrative Agent fee has been charged at the approved rate of 1% on deposits and amounts to US\$ **0**. Table 1 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses, and balance of the **Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund** as of 31 December 2022.

Table 1 Financial Overview, as of 31 December 2022 (in US Dollars)

	Annual 2021	Annual 2022	Cumulative
Sources of Funds			
Contributions from donors	886,756	-	1,699,956
Contributions from MPTFs	-	-	1,999,981
Sub-total Contributions	886,756	-	3,699,937
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	825	142	5,548
Total: Sources of Funds	887,581	142	3,705,484
Use of Funds			
Transfers to Participating Organizations	877,504	-	3,682,528
Refunds received from Participating Organizations	(6,227)	-	(6,227)
Net Funded Amount	871,278	-	3,676,301
Bank Charges	7	-	34
Other Expenditures	8,868	-	17,000
Total: Uses of Funds	880,152	-	3,693,335
Change in Fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	7,429	142	12,149
Opening Fund balance (1 January)	4,579	12,008	-
Closing Fund balance (31 December)	12,008	12,149	12,149
Net Funded Amount (Includes Direct Cost)	871,278	-	3,676,301
Participating Organizations Expenditure (Includes Direct Cost)	207,908	773,190	3,410,317
Balance of Funds with Participating Organizations	663,369	(773,190)	265,985

2. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

Table 2 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this fund as of 31 December 2022.

The **Great Lakes Region Cross-Border Fund** is currently being financed by 2 contributors – the European Union and the Peacebuilding Fund, as listed in the table below.

The table includes financial commitments made by the contributors through signed Standard Administrative Agreements with an anticipated deposit date as per the schedule of payments by 31 December 2022 and deposits received by the same date. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond 2022.

Table 2. Contributions, as of 31 December 2022 (in US Dollars)

Contributors	Total Commitments	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2021 Deposits	Current Year Jan-Dec-2022 Deposits	Total Deposits
European Union	1,699,956	1,699,956	-	1,699,956
Peacebuilding Fund	1,999,981	1,999,981	-	1,999,981
Grand Total	3,699,937	3,699,937	-	3,699,937

3. INTEREST EARNED

Interest income is earned in two ways: 1) on the balance of funds held by the Administrative Agent (Fund earned interest), and 2) on the balance of funds held by the Participating Organizations (Agency earned interest) where their Financial Regulations and Rules allow return of interest to the AA.

As of 31 December **2022**, Fund earned interest amounts to US\$ **5,548**.

No Interest received from Participating Organizations amounts. Details are provided in the table below.

Table 3. Sources of Interest and Investment Income, as of 31 December 2022 (in US Dollars)

Interest Earned	Prior Years as of 31-Dec- 2021	Current Year Jan-Dec-2022	Total
Administrative Agent			
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	5,406	142	5,548
Total: Fund Earned Interest	5,406	142	5,548
Participating Organization			
Total: Agency earned interest	-	-	-
Grand Total	5,406	142	5,548

4. TRANSFER OF FUNDS

Allocations to Participating Organizations are approved by the Steering Committee and disbursed by the Administrative Agent. As of 31 December 2022, the AA has transferred US\$ **3,682,528** to **5** Participating Organizations (see list below).

Table 4 provides additional information on the refunds received by the MPTF Office, and the net funded amount for each of the Participating Organizations.

Table 4. Transfer, Refund, and Net Funded Amount by Participating Organization (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Prior Years Cumulative as of 31-Dec-2021			Current Year Jan-Dec-2022			Total		
	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded
IOM	560,431	-	560,431	-	-	-	560,431	-	560,431
UNWOMEN	469,270	-	469,270	-	-	-	469,270	-	469,270
UNDP	1,600,877	-	1,600,877	-	-	-	1,600,877	-	1,600,877
UNFPA	457,684	(6,227)	451,457	-	-	-	457,684	(6,227)	451,457
UNHCR	594,266	-	594,266	-	-	-	594,266	-	594,266
Grand Total	3,682,528	(6,227)	3,676,301	-	-	-	3,682,528	(6,227)	3,676,301

5. EXPENDITURE AND FINANCIAL DELIVERY RATES

All final expenditures reported are submitted as certified financial information by the Headquarters of the Participating Organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Joint programme/ project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization, and are reported to the Administrative Agent as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The expenditures are reported via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The **2022** expenditure data has been posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY at <https://mptf.undp.org/fund/blr00>.

5.1 EXPENDITURE REPORTED BY PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION

In **2022**, US\$ **773,190** was reported in expenditure.

As shown in table below, the cumulative net funded amount is US\$ **3,676,301** and cumulative expenditures reported by the Participating Organizations amount to US\$ **3,410,317**. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of **92.76** percent.

Table 5.1 Net Funded Amount and Reported Expenditures by Participating Organization, as of 31 December 2022 (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure			Delivery Rate %
			Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2021	Current Year Jan-Dec-2022	Cumulative	
IOM	560,431	560,431	560,431	-	560,431	100.00
UNDP	1,600,877	1,600,877	1,101,874	396,072	1,497,946	93.57
UNFPA	457,684	451,457	131,420	314,328	445,747	98.74
UNHCR	594,266	594,266	594,266	-	594,266	100.00
UNWOMEN	469,270	469,270	249,136	62,790	311,926	66.47
Grand Total	3,682,528	3,676,301	2,637,127	773,190	3,410,317	92.76

5.2. EXPENDITURES REPORTED BY CATEGORY

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting.

Table 5.2. Expenditure by UNSDG Budget Category, as of 31 December 2022 (in US Dollars)

Category	Expenditures			Percentage of Total Programme Cost
	Prior Years Cumulative as of 31-Dec-2021	Current Year Jan-Dec-2022	Total	
Staff & Personnel Cost	403,259	163,271	566,531	17.83
Supplies, commodities and materials	280,331	-	280,331	8.82
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	34,572	(838)	33,733	1.06
Contractual Services Expenses	880,740	282,043	1,162,783	36.60
Travel	183,710	214,933	398,643	12.55
Transfers and Grants	326,067	75,403	401,470	12.64
General Operating	341,595	(8,142)	333,452	10.50
Programme Costs Total	2,450,274	726,670	3,176,944	100.00
¹ Indirect Support Costs Total	186,852	46,520	233,372	7.35
Grand Total	2,637,127	773,190	3,410,317	-

1 Indirect Support Costs charged by Participating Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

5.3. EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT GROUPED BY OUTCOME

Table 5.3 displays the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Outcome by project/ joint programme and Participating Organization

Table 5.3. Expenditure by Project within Outcome

Outcome / Project No. and Project Title	Participating Organization	Project Status	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %	
3 Mobility							
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	IOM	Operationally Closed	140,000	140,000	140,000	100.00
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	UNDP	Operationally Closed	745,041	745,041	681,581	91.48
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	UNHCR	Operationally Closed	169,359	169,359	169,359	100.00
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	IOM	Financially Closed	420,431	420,431	420,431	100.00
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	UNDP	Financially Closed	100,243	100,243	100,243	100.00
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	UNHCR	Financially Closed	424,908	424,908	424,908	100.00
3 Mobility: Total				1,999,981	1,999,981	1,936,521	96.83
4 Youth & Adolescents							
00115217	UNFPA_UN in support of peace a	UNFPA	On Going	457,684	451,457	445,747	98.74
4 Youth & Adolescents: Total				457,684	451,457	445,747	98.74
5 Gender & SGBV							
00115216	UN Women_UN in support of peac	UNWOMEN	On Going	469,270	469,270	311,926	66.47
5 Gender & SGBV: Total				469,270	469,270	311,926	66.47
6 Justice & Conflict Prev							
00115215	UNDP_UN in support of peace an	UNDP	On Going	755,593	755,593	716,122	94.78
6 Justice & Conflict Prev: Total				755,593	755,593	716,122	94.78
Grand Total				3,682,528	3,676,301	3,410,317	92.76

5.4. EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT GROUPED BY COUNTRY

Table 5.4 displays the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Country by project/ joint programme and Participating Organization

Table 5.4. Expenditure by Project, grouped by Country

Country / Project No. and Project Title	Participating Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %	
Burundi						
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	IOM	140,000	140,000	140,000	100.00
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	UNDP	745,041	745,041	681,581	91.48
00108156	BUR Preventing conflict and bu	UNHCR	169,359	169,359	169,359	100.00
Burundi: Total			1,054,399	1,054,399	990,939	93.98
Global and Interregional						
00115215	UNDP_UN in support of peace an	UNDP	755,593	755,593	716,122	94.78
00115216	UN Women_UN in support of peac	UNWOMEN	469,270	469,270	311,926	66.47
00115217	UNFPA_UN in support of peace a	UNFPA	457,684	451,457	445,747	98.74
Global and Interregional: Total			1,682,547	1,676,321	1,473,796	87.92
United Republic of Tanzania						
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	IOM	420,431	420,431	420,431	100.00
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	UNDP	100,243	100,243	100,243	100.00
00108157	TAN Preventing conflict and bu	UNHCR	424,908	424,908	424,908	100.00
Tanzania, United Republic of: Total			945,581	945,581	945,581	100.00
Grand Total			3,682,528	3,676,301	3,410,317	92.76

6. COST RECOVERY

Cost recovery policies for the Fund are guided by the applicable provisions of the Terms of Reference, the MOU concluded between the Administrative Agent and Participating Organizations, and the SAAs concluded between the Administrative Agent and Contributors, based on rates approved by UNDG.

The policies in place, as of 31 December 2022, were as follows:

- **The Administrative Agent (AA) fee:** 1% is charged at the time of contributor deposit and covers services provided on that contribution for the entire duration of the Fund. In the reporting period no amount was deducted in AA-fees.
- **Indirect Costs of Participating Organizations:** Participating Organizations may charge 7% indirect costs. In the current reporting period US\$ **46,520** was deducted in indirect costs by Participating Organizations. Cumulatively, indirect costs amount to US\$ **233,372** as of 31 December **2022**.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

In order to effectively provide fund administration services and facilitate monitoring and reporting to the UN system and its partners, the MPTF Office has developed a public website, the MPTF Office Gateway (<https://mptf.undp.org>). Refreshed in real time every two hours from an internal enterprise resource planning system, the MPTF Office Gateway has become a standard setter for providing transparent and accountable trust fund administration services.

The Gateway provides financial information including: contributor commitments and deposits, approved programme budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by Participating Organizations, interest income and other expenses. In addition, the Gateway provides an overview of the MPTF Office portfolio and extensive information on individual Funds, including their purpose, governance structure and key documents. By providing easy access to the growing number of narrative and financial reports, as well as related project documents, the Gateway collects and preserves important institutional knowledge and facilitates knowledge sharing and management among UN Organizations and their development partners, thereby contributing to UN coherence and development effectiveness.

LIST OF ANNEXES

Annex 1: Technical Steering Committee Minutes

Annex 1a: Technical Coordination Committee Minutes

Annex 2: Insider Mediation for DDR/RR Training Course Reports (ENG & FR)

Annex 3: Experience Sharing Workshops Reports (ENG & FR)

Annex4 : Terms of Reference Community of Practice

Annex 5: Goma Symposium Reports (ENG & FR)

Annex 7: UNDP Regional Programme for Africa Newsletter

Annex 8: Special Courts and Other Measures for Fast-Tracking Sexual and Gender Based Trials: A rapid assessment of effectiveness

Annex 9: A report on the impact of COVID 19 on Women and Girls in the member states of the Great Lakes Region, and Measures Adopted to Respond to the Situation

Annex 10: A report on Sexual and Gender Based Violence Training for Religious and Traditional Leaders of ICGLR member states

Annex 11: SGBV Training Materials for Religious and Traditional Leaders

Annex 12: The Report on the General Assembly of ICGLR Women Fora

Annex 13: The Report on the General Assembly of ICGLR Youth Fora

Annex 14: The Report on the General Assembly of ICGLR CSO Fora

Annex 15: The Report on the Regional Capacity Building Training on YPS

Annex 16: The Strategic Plan of the Regional Women Fora

Annex 17: The Strategic Plan of the Regional Youth Fora

Annex 18: The Strategic Plan of the Regional Private Sector Fora

Annex 19: The Strategic Plan of the Regional CSO Fora