
# 2026 Partnership Forum of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO)

The 2026 Partnership Forum of the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO), hosted by the Permanent Missions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the Republic of Zimbabwe, convened high-level representatives from Member States, UN entities, and partners to reflect on the MPTFO's contributions to UN development efforts and the future of pooled funding. The Forum was also an opportunity to mark the release of the 2025 Annual Report of the MPTFO.

Key highlights of the meeting include:

## A financing solution to meet the ambition of UN 2.0

Opening the forum, HE Ambassador Lise Gregoire-van Haaren of the Netherlands called on Member States to fulfill their commitments under the UN Funding Compact by allocating at least 30% of their contributions to inter-agency pooled funds.

**"With diminishing ODA worldwide, we need to be smarter, more effective, and more efficient – getting more impact per dollar."**

She urged partners to avoid fragmentation to align with UN 80 objectives.

HE Ambassador Irene Juru of Zimbabwe highlighted how pooled funding champions national ownership, while de-risking investments for private capital. Highlighting the scope for impact, the Ambassador pointed to the Zimbabwe Renewable Energy Fund (ZimREF) – a blended financing model established with the Joint SDG Fund – which aims to leverage $100 million in blended finance for rural clean energy infrastructure.

**"At a time when development financing is under increasing strain, pooled funds have demonstrated that multilateralism can still deliver."**

## Pooled Funding as Solutions Provider

MPTFO Executive Director, Alain Noudéhou, highlighted that in 2025, MPTFO disbursed more than $1 billion to participating entities toward their programmatic results. Resources reached more than 100 countries, through 42 UN agencies and 71 non-UN partners. Income from private sector and non-traditional donors also reached a new high in 2025.

"In addition to supporting multi stakeholder action, pooled funds provide solutions through innovation to achieve results."

He reminded that when multiple partners work towards collective development outcomes, the complexities of operations and financial structuring can sometimes cause impediments. For the past 20 years, and in response to Member States' and UN agencies' call, pooled funding has helped to find solutions.

## An 'antidote' to fragmentation

Building on the MPTFO Executive Director's remarks, Oscar Fernandez-Taranco, Director of the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), further highlighted the MPTFO's Gateway portal – which offers real-time, project-level financial tracking, as well as consolidated annual results – as a 'benchmark' for transparency across the UN system: "Pooled funding is an antidote… one of the ways we start working in a much more collaborative manner", avoiding the pitfalls of fragmentation, and internal competition.

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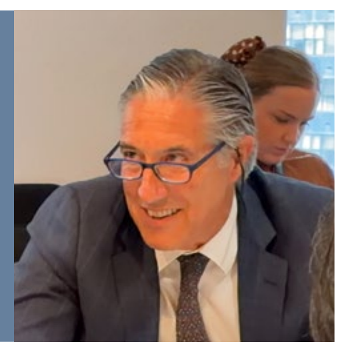

## Four development challenges; one financing solution

During a panel discussion, heads of four major pooled funds illustrated how pooled funding instruments were providing solutions to very different development challenges:

- **Mobilizing private capital**: Head of the **Joint SDG Fund** Secretariat, Ms Lisa Kurbiel, shared that every dollar invested in the fund mobilizes $20 in additional capital, citing transformative blended finance initiatives in Kenya, Uruguay, and Zimbabwe that unlocked substantial commercial bank and pension fund financing.

- **Piloting peace initiatives**: Interim Deputy Director at the Peacebuilding & Peace Support Office (PBPSO), Richard Howard, explained how sustained risk-tolerant resources from the **Peacebuilding Fund** allows country teams to demonstrate peaceful community-level solutions, which subsequently attracts 'scaling' investments from International Financial Institutions (IFIs) like the World Bank.

- **A shared natural patrimony**: Ms Guomei Zhou, Head of the **Kunming Biodiversity Fund** Secretariat, announced that the 1.5 billion CNY established multi-partner trust fund–backed by seed capital from China–is currently active in 31 projects across 45 countries, directly supporting the 2030 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework.

- **Coordinating actors in complex settings**: UN Resident Coordinator George Conway demonstrated how country-focused pooled funds such as the **Somalia Joint Fund** offer adaptive, joint delivery mechanisms across humanitarian, peace, and development priorities in complex, high-risk development settings.



## Flexible resources, for the most pressing issues

As part of the open discussion, participants emphasized the importance of safeguarding pooled funding principles; notably, **ensuring that pooled resources remain flexible and unearmarked**, to respond dynamically to the most pressing issues at country level. Other aspects of pooled funding discussed included:

- **National Ownership**: Successful pooled funds are firmly rooted in national priorities, ensuring local buy-in and sustainable development.

- **Crowding in partners**: Pooled funds act as catalytic concessional capital, de-risking investments so regional banks, private equity, pension funds and other financial actors can invest in critical development infrastructure, from energy to health.

- **Inclusivity & Gender Equality**: Pooled funds convene partners to participate in strategy-setting, allow direct resourcing to different types of partners – from indigenous groups to women's rights organizations – that may otherwise be overlooked.

- **Preventing Fragmentation**: As ODA declines, it is even more important to resist fragmentation, and support interventions at scale, for development impact.