



**Spotlight
Initiative**
*To eliminate violence
against women and girls*

Global

Annual Narrative Progress Report

01 January 2020 – 31 December 2020

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AA	Administrative Agent
AFP	Agency Focal Point
AR	Annual Report
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUC	African Union Commission
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
C4D	Communication for Development
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CHAMP	Collaborative HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Programme
CMI	Count Me In! Consortium
CoP	Community of Practice
CONSLE	Council for National Security & Law Enforcement
COSI	Community of the Spotlight Initiative
COTLA	Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSRG	Civil Society Reference Group
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CTA	Technical Advisory Committee
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DGC	United Nations Department of Global Communications
DG INTPA	EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DPOs	Disabled Persons Organizations
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General
DV	Domestic Violence
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EoI	Expression of Interest
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
ESP	Essential Services Package
EU	European Union

EUD	European Union Delegation
EVAWG	Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls
EVAWMW	Eliminating Violence Against Women Migrant Workers
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCI	Foundation for Community Initiatives
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
GRG	Global Reference Group
GP	Global Platform
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HoA	Head of Agency
HP	Harmful Practice
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
IDWF	International Domestic Workers Federation
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IMPACS	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
INAM	Instituto Nacional de la Mujer (National Institute for Women)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
JLOS	Justice, Law and Order Service
LAD	Legal Aid Directorate
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex +
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LPA	Lukautim Pinkini Act
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEF	Malaysian Employers Federation
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework
MGCSV	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MSC	Multi-Stakeholder Case Management Committee
MTA	Mid-Term Assessment
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OM	Operations Manual
ONPG	National Observatory for Gender Promotion
OSC	Operational Steering Committee

PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PFLN	Platform of Women Leaders of Niger
PIAPS	Programme Implementation Action Plans
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RSS	Regional Security System
RSM	Salvadoran Media Network
RUNOs	Recipient United Nations Organizations
SAP	Slum Aid Project
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SBCC	Social and Behavioural Change Communication
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SERNIC	National Criminal Investigation Service
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SI	Spotlight Initiative
SMART	Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SYVA	Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassadors
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIC	United Nations Information Centres
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNTF EVAW	UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WFP	World Food Programme
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

FOREWORD

**BY THE UNITED NATIONS
DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL**

2020 was a year like no other. COVID-19 has been not just a health, economic, and development crisis, but a devastating human crisis at every level. As the virus has spread across the world, we've witnessed a parallel and equally horrific pandemic in its shadow. From domestic violence and sexual exploitation to trafficking, child marriage, and female genital mutilation, violence against women and girls has increased alarmingly, as have the physical and mental health consequences.

While the response to the pandemic has been unprecedented in its scope and scale, demonstrating the capacity of the world to respond with urgency to a shared challenge, the global response to violent misogyny remains limited. States, the private sector, and individual responses are inadequate to advance the health, rights, and dignity of women and girls. Some countries are in fact retreating, rolling back legal protections as violence is used to target women, including women human rights defenders on the frontlines demanding action.

Despite these challenges, over the course of 2020, in partnership with the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls has delivered significant results across Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific and Central Asia. In the countries in which the Initiative operates, eighty-four laws and policies to protect women and girls were adopted or strengthened. Prosecution of perpetrators increased 22 per cent. Some 650,000 women and girls received services despite lockdowns and mobility restrictions. Close to 900,000 men and boys – including traditional leaders, heads of religious

The Spotlight Initiative's partnership with civil society is unique and a fundamental aspect of its structure and functioning. To date, 48 per cent of programme funds – about USD 146 million – have been allocated directly to civil society organizations.

institutions, male taxi drivers and young gamers – were engaged to be allies in finding solutions. And across these countries, national budget allocations for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls increased by 32 per cent, a clear indication of future sustainability.

Moreover, the Spotlight Initiative has embarked on a transformative way of engaging with civil society, and operationalizing the principle of “leaving no one behind” as well as the Sustainable Development Goal on Partnerships. The Spotlight Initiative's partnership with civil society is unique and a fundamental aspect of its structure and functioning. To date, 48 per cent of programme funds – about USD 146 million – have been allocated directly to civil society organizations. Of these, 77 per cent went to national and grassroots organizations, underscoring the Initiative's dedication to supporting local actors that are at the forefront of transformative and sustainable change in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

In 2017, when the European Union and the United Nations came together to launch the Spotlight Initiative,

this partnership was groundbreaking. Its scale, its innovative structure in line with the United Nations Systems reform, and its ambition were unprecedented. Three years on, the Initiative is demonstrating a “proof of concept”, providing a blueprint that has the potential to transform the way the international community prevents and responds to one of the most pervasive and universal human rights violations. We urge all stakeholders, including donors, to gather around this proven model. Together, we can fully realize the Sustainable Development Goals, with women and girls as equal partners living lives free of fear, violence, and indignity.



United Nations Deputy
Secretary-General Amina
Mohammed
©UN Photo/Mark Garten

FOREWORD

BY EU COMMISSIONER FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS, MS JUTTA URPILAINEN

Gender equality is a universally recognised human right and a core value of the European Union. It is also the driver of economic growth, prosperity, peace and security.



European Union Commissioner
for International Partnerships
Jutta Urpilainen
Picture: Courtesy of the EU
Commissioner

It is more than 25 years since the international community adopted the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action. While some progress in tackling discrimination against women and girls has been made, gender inequality continues to hold women back.

This year we have witnessed not only a backlash against women's rights, but also a horrific rise in domestic violence linked to the COVID-19 pandemic. Coupled with pre-existing toxic social norms and gender inequalities, the pandemic-induced economic and social stress, movement restrictions and social isolation measures led to an exponential increase in gender-based violence.

The Spotlight Initiative, with unprecedented support from the European Union, provides a platform to tackle the rise in domestic violence across the globe. It brings together all stakeholders to ensure freedom from all forms of gender-based violence and to "build back better".

Spotlight Initiative programmes have faced challenges because of the pandemic, but we have also seen opportunities, creativity and innovations. People, communities, and civil society organisations have adapted their work. Despite exceptional circumstances they have reached beneficiaries and boosted prevention

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measures. They have reinforced services to survivors of violence, and addressed the acute needs of women and girls.

COVID-19 preventive measures were swiftly incorporated into outreach activities, digital innovations welcomed, and protective materials delivered to courts to ensure the continuation of service delivery to survivors. There were more mobile clinics and a shuttle service in Zimbabwe and additional shelters in Nigeria. There were virtual referral and response services in El Salvador and online consultations with pro bono lawyers in Kyrgyzstan.

I welcome the results achieved by the Spotlight Initiative across its six pillars during this exceptional year, and in the three years since we launched it. Now we must make sure that the COVID-19 crisis does not lead to further backtracking on the rights of women and girls.

We need a holistic, multilateral response where everyone has a role to play. It is essential to forge strong partnerships and dialogue with government, local actors, civil society and local communities, and to support women's organisations. To change mind-sets we need engagement at the grassroots level, including men and boys and traditional leaders. It is

critical to challenge the power dynamics that generate gender-based discrimination at all ages, starting from early childhood.

It is only by coming together that we can inspire change. We see this with the Generation Equality Forum, a global platform to advance the gender equality agenda, and with the Spotlight Initiative. The Spotlight Initiative puts survivors first. It empowers civil society and promotes institutional strengthening and legislative reforms. It engages with men and boys, and provides good practices to drive global policy.

The approach of the Spotlight Initiative, based on a strong partnership between the European Union and the United Nations, has never been more relevant and is open to all partners. Positive change is possible. The EU is ready to do what it takes to achieve a gender-equal world.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The COVID-19 global pandemic has made 2020 an incomparable year. Over the course of the 12 months, the still ongoing pandemic has upended daily routines, created national lockdowns, resulted in 3.3 million deaths, especially among marginalized populations, and pushed countries' health systems to their limits. The “shadow pandemic” of violence against women and girls has deepened, with a massive spike in male violence against women and girls¹ enabled by lockdowns, restrictions on movement, and the closure of physical spaces for outreach, services and support. The acute and wide-ranging socio-economic impacts of the pandemic have exposed and exacerbated global inequalities and injustices. Addressing violence against women and girls has never been more pressing. In response to this new reality, on 5 April 2020, the UN

Secretary-General issued a global call for peace in the home, with 146 Member States committing to support efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative was well positioned to address this critical need, being in its third year of operation as the world's largest global effort to end violence against women and girls.

The Spotlight Initiative is a global partnership between the United Nations and the European Union. With the European Union's historic investment of EUR 500 million in the Spotlight Initiative, programmes were able to rapidly adapt to the pandemic, accelerating and **redirecting more than USD 21 million² in funding to address violence against women and girls within the COVID-19 response**. Guided by the principle of “leaving no one behind,” programmes paid particular attention to reaching women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.



USD 391 million
allocated so far



5
regions



11 UN Agencies



34
programmes

¹ [State of World Population report](#). UNFPA, 2021; [Impact of COVID-19 on Family Planning: What we know one year into the pandemic](#). UNFPA, March 2021; [Responding to Rising Intimate Partner Violence Amid COVID-19 A rapid global review](#). Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, February 2021.

² Estimated figure based on self-reporting by Spotlight Initiative programmes as of August 2020.

Fund overview and governance

From 2018 through to the end of 2020, the Spotlight Initiative allocated over USD 391 million in funding to 34 programmes across five regions, including two trust funds for civil society.³ Of that sum, USD 51.7 million was allocated in 2020 to eight new Spotlight Initiative programmes. By December 2020, almost USD 300 million had been disbursed to Spotlight Initiative programmes, of which USD 169 million were disbursed in 2020. Based on progress made, a European Union replenishment brought in USD 148 million in 2020. Eleven UN agencies are delivering the Spotlight Initiative's programmes, including the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as core agencies, working closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Please see Chapter 10 and Annex 1 for more detailed information on the overall delivery of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as delivery rates by Region and Agency.

Ensuring a streamlined allocation of the Fund, the governance structure of the Spotlight Initiative provides clear lines of accountability and supports decision-making and oversight. At the global level, the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee provide Fund governance, with the Secretariat providing operational and administrative support to these bodies and the Administrative Agent administering the Fund portfolio. At country and regional levels, Spotlight Initiative programmes have parallel governance structures as Country and Regional Programme Steering Committees providing oversight and accountability mechanisms. Across these decision-making bodies, the Spotlight Initiative has ensured that civil society plays a meaningful role, with representatives serving as full voting members in global- and programme-level steering committees.

Spotlight Initiative programmes

In 2020, country programmes in **Afghanistan**, **Ecuador**, **Kyrgyzstan**, and **Tajikistan** were approved in addition to the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, **Caribbean Regional Programme**, and the Pillar 6 (support to women's movement) of the **Pacific Regional Programme**.⁴ **Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes** were approved through the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund for **Papua New Guinea**, **Haiti**, and **Afghanistan**. Additionally, **USD 9.1 million was reallocated to address COVID-19** realities from the Spotlight Initiative **sub-Saharan Africa** multi-country grants envelope of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. These programmes joined the Initiative's existing first year programmes, totaling 21 new country, regional and grant-giving programmes in the **Caribbean**, **Central Asia**, and the **Pacific** as well as the **Africa Regional Programme**.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative launched its first **mid-term assessment**. The assessment covers all programmes, focusing, first, on programmes in Latin America and Africa with their assessment to be completed in the second quarter of 2021. Then, in mid-2021, the programmes in the Caribbean, Pacific, and Asia will undergo the same exercise. Preliminary findings from the assessments of programmes in Africa and Latin America revealed compelling results across the 6 Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative: the mid-term assessment validated the assumptions underpinning the Spotlight Initiative's comprehensive Theory of Change, the Fund's participatory and multi-stakeholder methodology, as well as the central role given to civil society in the governance, design and implementation of the Initiative. In a survey conducted for the mid-term assessment, **more than 700 programme stakeholders (government, civil society, EU and UN teams) confirmed the gender-transformative, survivor-centred and human-rights based approach of the Initiative**. Of survey respondents, 90 per cent also expressed that they considered the Spotlight Initiative to be in line with the UN Reform's principles, contributing to more efficient and better coordinated action on ending violence against women and girls. The results also highlighted the agile adaptation of programmes to the COVID-19 context.

³ This total figure does not include the Guatemala Programme that was approved for closure in 2020. Allocations per programme may be found in Chapter 3.

⁴ The Pacific Regional Programme was approved in 2019, but in 2020 an additional allocation to fund its Pillar 6 to support the women's movement was approved.



©Christopher Kageni from UN Women in Papua New Guinea

Partnerships

At the heart of the Spotlight Initiative is the UN-EU partnership: these two organizations have pooled their resources and expertise on international development to implement stronger integrated programmes and offer a new model of international, multilateral partnership. As a Sustainable Development Goal and UN Development System reform model fund, the Spotlight initiative is pioneering an unprecedented integration of UN agency efforts under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. Country and regional programmes also engage with government and regional entities as essential partners, in order to foster local ownership and political buy-in to the elimination of violence against women and girls. Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has also pursued a new way of working with civil society, particularly local and grassroots organizations and feminist and women's rights organizations, recognizing the unparalleled expertise and leadership of civil society in the elimination of violence against women and girls. In addition, the Initiative has engaged the UN system across agencies, as well as media, religious institutions, academia, traditional leaders, and the private sector to ensure effective interventions and

lasting results. In 2020, the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls was established. Chaired by the European Union, the Group of Friends collaborates in support of the Spotlight Initiative, aiming to amplify its reach, leverage co-funding, and deepen efforts to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

The Spotlight Initiative channelled USD 96 million of critical funding to civil society and women's organizations to continue their essential work in delivering quality, life-saving services to survivors and advocating for prevention. A total of **77 per cent of civil society funding so far has been delivered through national and grassroots organizations. Forty six per cent of all civil society funding delivered so far has gone to first time civil society organization partners, expanding their funding opportunities.**

The Initiative also contributed to ensuring these organizations were consulted in both Spotlight Initiative COVID-19 response plans, where programming pivoted to adapt, as well as national COVID-19 response plans. The Spotlight Initiative mobilized prevention and response efforts and galvanized support aligned with the Secretary-General's global call, including through the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls.

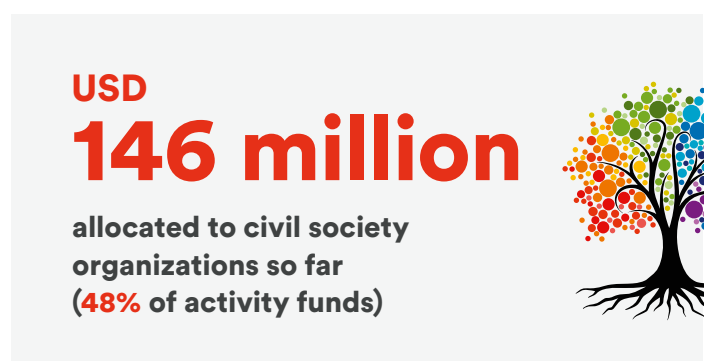
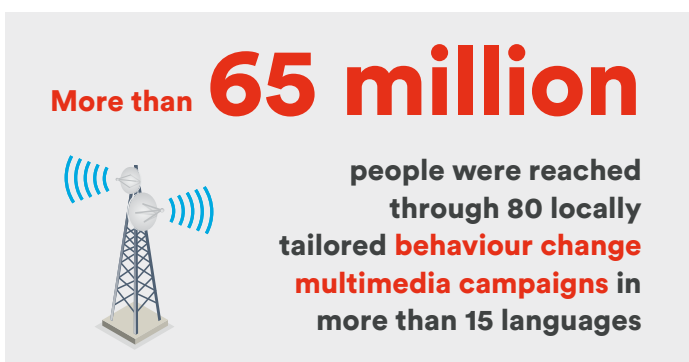
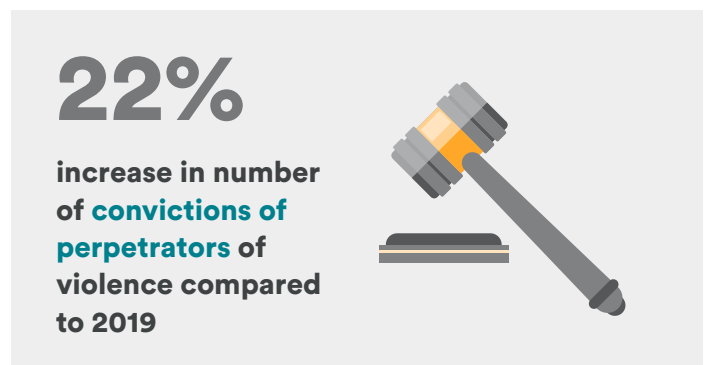
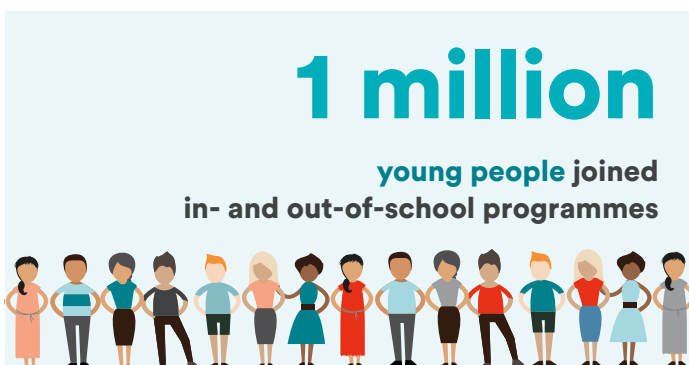
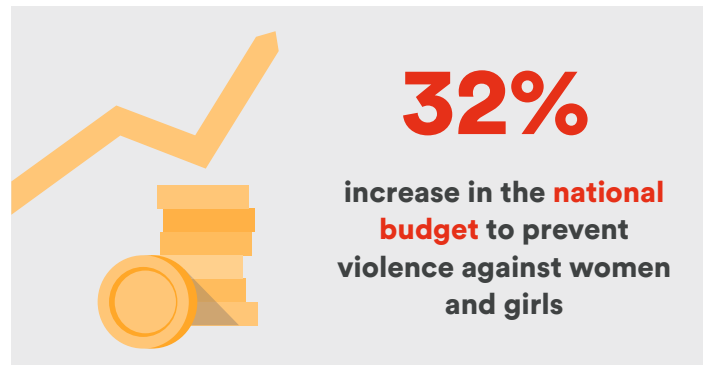
Results across pillars

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the following results across the six Pillars of its comprehensive Theory of Change:





2020 Spotlight Initiative Global Annual Report Results



Outcome 1: Policies and legislation

Adequate responses to violence against women and girls require comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that ensure effective rights protection and specific and coordinated response mechanisms. The Spotlight Initiative contributed to a diverse set of results in 2020, including strengthened legal and policy analysis of stakeholders and the promotion of gender sensitive laws and policies, more national action plans on violence against women and girls, and a greater number of laws and policies signed or strengthened to stop and criminalize violence against women and girls. During the reporting period, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, **84 laws have been developed or strengthened in 17 countries on eliminating violence against women and girls or gender equality**. Spotlight Initiative teams also provided **technical and operational capacity building assistance to 6,347 parliamentarians in nine countries with strengthened ability to design laws and policies to end violence against women**.

Outcome 2: Institutions

Institutions at the national and subnational level play a critical role in ensuring that laws and policies are implemented and adequately funded. Through the Spotlight Initiative's contributions, **19 national action plans to eliminate violence against women and girls were developed** and a range of countries in which the Spotlight Initiative operates strengthened institutional mechanisms or bodies to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices. In addition, during the reporting period, **in the ten countries that prioritized these activities, 180 parliamentarians, 995 government officials and 365 women's rights advocates were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and are now better equipped to advocate for the allocation of resources for eliminating violence against women and girls**. As a result of gender-responsive budgeting efforts, there was a **32 per cent increase from 2019 reporting in the proportion of national budgets allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls** across ten countries targeted by the Spotlight Initiative.

Outcome 3: Prevention

Prevention efforts are central to the Spotlight Initiative's strategic approach and investments. Prevention efforts tackle systems of oppression and gender discrimination as the root causes of violence against women and girls, which are driven by patriarchal social norms and practices. This includes addressing gender stereotypes, bias and power, as well as inequalities in resources and rights. To this end, Spotlight Initiative programmes launched anti-violence campaigns that reached a broad public through various platforms – television, the internet, printed publications, billboards and radio. Over the course of 2020, **80 campaigns were undertaken across 14 countries, reaching more than 65 million people with locally designed messages and behaviour-change methodologies**. Spotlight Initiative programmes also supported community-level interventions, dialogues and mobilization activities, targeting traditional and religious leaders, as well as men's and boys' networks. **With Spotlight Initiative support, 3,405 villages, districts and other communities have developed advocacy platforms promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, and nearly 2 million community members (men, women, boys and girls) were reached through community dialogues aimed at transforming collective norms, stereotypes, and promoting behaviour change**. Extensive evidence shows that in order to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, comprehensive sexuality education, both in- and out-of-school, is also important. The Spotlight Initiative **reached 978,165 young people through in- and out-of-school programmes despite school closures due to COVID-19**.

Outcome 4: Services

Providing quality and timely access to comprehensive multisectoral services can significantly contribute to breaking cycles of violence, and this need was even more pressing in 2020 as levels of violence against women girls spiked due to COVID-19. To address this specific context, the Spotlight Initiative adjusted its activities and **reached 1,865,476 women and girl survivors of violence (more than ten times the number that had been originally planned for 2020) with specific information about services**. There was



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also an increase in access to, and improvement in, the quality of services, including ensuring services better respond to, and are accessed by, marginalized women and girls. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 20,655 government service providers in 24 targeted countries increased knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence. Work in this area resulted in **more than 650,000 women and girl survivors of violence accessing services supported by the Spotlight Initiative, through the opening of new service delivery points, longer opening hours, and mobile service delivery.**

Outcome 5: Data

Quality, reliable, comparable, and disaggregated data by gender, type of violence, and populations are essential for understanding the trends in, and designing and delivering programmes to address, violence against women and girls. **Overall, the Initiative's**

interventions have contributed to an increase in the percentage of targeted countries that have publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on intimate partner violence from 63 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative supported partners in collecting, analysing and using data for planning and policy formulation; budgeting on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls and ending harmful practices; and monitoring trends in violence against women and girls at national and subnational levels. Through the Initiative's support, **251 national statistics officers, 124 women and 127 men, have strengthened capacities to produce data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and incidence where appropriate.** A total of 4,101 participants, including government personnel and women's rights advocates, supported by Spotlight Initiative programmes, have enhanced capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate data on violence against women and girls.

“The Spotlight Initiative is a significant and ground-breaking investment to end violence against women and girls that has a huge potential to model the way we do development funding towards nations recovering from colonization – the Global South – by way of meaningful partnerships with civil society and taking the cue from grassroots organizations as partners rather than just ‘grantees’”.

– Shamah Bulangis, Representative of the Civil Society Global Reference Group on the Operational Steering Committee

Outcome 6: Women’s movements

The activism of women’s rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, is at the core of efforts to end violence against women and girls and harmful practices. Spotlight Initiative contributed to a myriad of results in 2020, including having supported **1,254 local and grassroots women’s organizations to design and expanded their activities to end violence against women and girls**. A total of 556 civil society organizations – 356 representing youth and 200 representing other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination – were able to integrate with coalitions and networks of women’s rights groups and civil society to work on ending violence against women and girls. **From 2019 to 2020, 82 per cent of civil society funding was invested in women’s rights and women-led organizations**. To further support women’s organizations and address the increased funding needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, through its partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, the Spotlight Initiative reallocated USD 9.1 million for institutional funding of 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa. This underscores the Initiative’s dedication to flexibly resourcing and supporting women’s organizations at the local and national levels.

Communications and visibility

The Spotlight Initiative relies on communications to build momentum and support to end violence against women and girls, and enhance the visibility of the UN-EU partnership, its national and regional programmes and global campaigns. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative held 11 high-level national and regional launches and spearheaded several campaigns, both globally and nationally, to raise awareness of violence against women and girls and to engage communities in the prevention of this violence. **The Initiative also launched two new official social media channels (Facebook and Instagram) and premiered its flagship digital campaign, #WithHer. The #WithHer campaign** spotlights the work of activists globally who are helping to eliminate violence against women and girls; it also leverages UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative and international sports stars to support elimination efforts. More than 1,000 media outlets, reaching **3.7 billion readers across more than 100 countries covered the Spotlight Initiative’s work- a significant achievement in the pursuit of wide-ranging communications, public outreach and visibility for the Spotlight Initiative and its partners.**⁵

⁵ Meltwater media keyword search (1 Jan-31 Dec 2020). Raw data available [here](#).

Timor-Leste

**“We are all in this together
and we will overcome this
together.”**

- Norberta V. Soares da Cruz,
Advocate and activist



Spotlight
Initiative



©UN Women/Helio Miguel

Challenges and lessons learned

In 2020, the global community faced unprecedented challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, as did organizations and institutions working to end violence against women and girls. As the Spotlight Initiative adapted to the challenges COVID-19 posed, **more than USD 21 million⁶ in Spotlight Initiative funds, across all five regions, were redirected to address violence against women and girls within the COVID-19 response.** Though many challenges were programme-specific, contextual obstacles included the need to reimagine activities in light of COVID-19 and the corresponding restrictions, as well as the further exacerbation of violence by COVID-19 and coinciding natural disasters and national emergencies. Common actions to address restrictions on movement and meeting face-to-face included:

- Deploying remote service delivery options to scale up the provision of essential services and case management
- Leveraging existing partnerships and coordination mechanisms to provide and strengthen comprehensive referral mechanisms, case

management and swift service delivery during the pandemic

- Using accessible and localized multi-media as well as non-traditional channels to raise awareness on the exacerbated risks of violence, and available services for timely access

In addition, the Spotlight Initiative faced contextual, programmatic, and technical challenges often typical of any large-scale international development effort (as well as those resulting from COVID-19). From a programmatic angle, challenges included the learning curve of adapting to the new way of working under the UN Reform, the time-consuming recruitment and capacity-building processes for teams and implementing partners, the long-term meaningful engagement of government in the face of political instability or turnover, and the constrained access of civil society to UN funding due to the United Nation's complex processes. **Across regions, Spotlight Initiative programmes faced technical challenges as well, in regressive cultural norms and persistent harmful traditions, increased violence against women's human-rights defenders, challenges with the supply, access and quality of services for survivors, and limited availability of high-quality, disaggregated data.**

⁶ Estimated figure based on self-reporting by Spotlight Initiative programmes as of August 2020. This figure includes the USD 9.1 million that the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women allocated for immediate support to its existing 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

With the support of the Secretariat and programme partners, Spotlight Initiative teams implemented mitigating measures not only to monitor and overcome challenges but also to learn from each other and enhance coordination in order to build more resilient programming. **For example, in 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes developed deeper coordination and shared practices across countries and regions, such as common calls for proposals, shared reporting templates, and joint tools to streamline programme management and inter-agency work. Mitigating measures ultimately led to greater flexibility, deeper inter-agency coordination, more sustainable partnerships, and higher-quality implementation – all of which lead, in turn, to more transformative results over time.** Furthermore, teams identified lessons learned that will influence and inform future programming, following the principles of the UN Reform and leaving no one behind, both across the Spotlight Initiative and beyond.

Innovative, promising and good practices

After two years of implementation, Spotlight Initiative programmes have created a wealth of knowledge on ending violence against women and girls and on implementing in alignment with the UN Reform. Moreover, valuable lessons and results have emerged from the mid-term assessments. As such, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has worked with programme teams to identify and amplify innovative, promising and good practices to advance the work of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as to equip the broader international development community, particularly those working to end violence against women and girls, with the knowledge necessary to achieve maximum impact. **Across Spotlight Initiative programmes, promising practices in 2020 included mobile and remote provision of essential services, scaling up pioneering prevention initiatives related to attitude and behaviour change, partnering with traditional and religious leaders to transform harmful masculinities, elevating women and girls and youth as agents of change, leveraging the newly empowered role of the Resident Coordinator, advancing more integrated coordination and joint operations, building communities of practice, and harnessing global partnerships for stronger advocacy.**

The way forward

Looking ahead, the Spotlight Initiative will redouble its efforts to advance inter-agency coordination and achieve multidimensional, transformative impact in the lives of women and girls. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat will continue its targeted support to programmes as they continue to implement in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and shadow pandemic. Africa and Latin America programmes will also move into their second phase of implementation based on the recommendations of the mid-term assessment that will be carried out early 2021.

The Spotlight Initiative's priorities for the coming year include advancing knowledge generation, analysis and uptake on the elimination of violence against women and girls, deepening meaningful engagement with civil society, particularly local and grassroots groups, bolstering and expanding the partnership base, and reaching more communities, particularly young people and new audiences, to change cultural norms and promote rights more broadly. The Spotlight Initiative Global Platform will be launched in 2021 as a virtual exchange and convening platform that will offer the combined power of a knowledge hub, a community of practice and an advocacy platform, founded in the practical experience of the Spotlight Initiative's programmes. Finally, as the Fund will be reaching a near full allocation of its current resources in 2021, and with a now proven model of effectiveness, efforts will focus on donor base expansion and additional funds to scale up and broaden the reach of the Initiative.

REPORT STRUCTURE AND SCOPE

This Annual Report details the critical contributions, transformative achievements, and lessons learned of the Spotlight Initiative's work over the past year, from 1 January to 31 December 2020, as well as results built on progress made in 2019.

The report begins with an executive summary, a report overview and signature results in the past year of the Spotlight Initiative's work to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Chapters 3 and 4 highlight the Spotlight Initiative's fund structure and governance mechanisms and its unique model: as a Sustainable Development Goal model fund and a new way of working in support of national governments, within the UN system, and with civil society, particularly women's and feminist organizations and movements.

Results from the 34 Spotlight Initiative programmes in their first or second year of implementation are then detailed in Chapter 5:

- Africa Country Programmes (8): Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe
- Latin America Country Programmes (5): Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico
- Caribbean Country Programmes (6): Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago
- Pacific Country Programmes (4): Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu
- Asia Country Programmes (3): Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan
- Regional Programmes (6): Africa Regional Programme, Latin America Regional Programme, Caribbean Regional Programme, Pacific Regional Programme, Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, Safe and Fair Programme in ASEAN countries
- Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes (2):
 - For Africa and Latin America through the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF-EVAW)
 - For Africa, Haiti, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

Honduras

“I share my experiences with other young, Afro-Honduran women, encouraging us not to remain silent.”

- Marissa Gabriela Solano
Filmmaker



Spotlight
Initiative



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The report then covers the communications and visibility work of the Spotlight Initiative in Chapter 6, while Chapter 7 details challenges and lessons learned, followed by innovative, promising and good practices, which are set out in Chapter 8. Adaptations to programme interventions are also captured, including those that may have emerged as a result of Spotlight Initiative programmes' flexible response to the COVID-19

crisis. In the closing section, the report outlines the way forward for the Spotlight Initiative as it enters a second phase of programming in 2021 and starts looking into the sustainability of the expansion of the fund. The report also includes the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Consolidated Annual Financial Report, in adherence with the requirements specified in the contract with the European Union.

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE FUND OVERVIEW AND GOVERNANCE

This chapter provides an overview of the Spotlight Initiative and its 2020 funding portfolio, including how funding was allocated to programmes, the Initiative's governance structure, and what makes it unique. It closes with an overview of the Secretariat's roles and contributions to knowledge management, quality assurance, accountability and monitoring and evaluation in 2020.

Though featured in this chapter, as well, the transformative principles underpinning the Spotlight Initiative's approach, and the overarching results to which the Spotlight Initiative has contributed, are woven throughout the report. The report details how a commitment to: 1) meaningfully implementing the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB), 2) centring partnerships with feminist and women's rights organizations and grassroots groups, and 3) demonstrating the effectiveness of UN Reform in supporting country level delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals, all contribute to the elimination of violence against women and girls, and advances in gender equality more broadly.

3.1 Overview

The Spotlight Initiative's overarching goal is to *ensure that all women, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable, live free from violence and harmful practices*. Achieving this goal is critical to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In order to reach this goal, the Initiative has engaged multi-stakeholder partnerships across governments, UN agencies and the European Union, civil society (focusing on women's and feminist movements in particular), the media and the private sector.

Together with these groups, the Spotlight Initiative seeks to achieve its aim of ending all forms of violence against women and girls through a comprehensive response that spans six key Pillar areas:

Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

Pillar 2: Institutions

Pillar 3: Prevention

Pillar 4: Services

Pillar 5: Data

Pillar 6: Women's Movements

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative distributed its investments to 32 country and regional programmes across 5 regions, complemented by 2 civil society grant-giving programmes through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO: PHASE I BUDGETS AND START DATES

CARIBBEAN		ASIA		PACIFIC	
Belize	Jan 20	Safe and Fair	Jan 18	Papua New Guinea	Jan 20
\$2,475,000		\$29,370,587		\$15,680,000	
Grenada	Jan 20	Afghanistan	Nov 20	Samoa	Jan 20
\$1,650,000		\$16,500,000		\$2,900,000	
Guyana	Jan 20	Kyrgyzstan	Jan 20	Timor Leste	Jan 20
\$3,700,000		\$4,700,000		\$9,900,000	
Haiti	Jan 20	Tajikistan	Jan 20	Vanuatu	Jan 20
\$9,900,000		\$4,900,000		\$2,475,000	
Jamaica	Jan 20	Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme	Jul 20	Pacific Regional Programme	Jan 20
\$6,600,000		\$4,248,584		\$7,077,830	
Trinidad & Tobago	Jan 20				
\$3,700,000					
Caribbean Regional Programme	Jul 20				
\$9,552,830					



LATIN AMERICA		AFRICA		CIVIL SOCIETY GRANT GIVING PROGRAMMES	
Argentina	Jan 19	Liberia	Jan 19	Nigeria	Jan 19
\$5,400,000		\$15,844,000		\$25,000,000	
Ecuador	Nov 20	Malawi	Jan 19	Uganda	Jan 19
\$2,900,000		\$20,000,000		\$22,000,000	
El Salvador	Jan 19	Mali	Jan 19	Zimbabwe	Jan 19
\$7,200,000		\$18,000,000		\$21,000,000	
Honduras	Jan 19	Mozambique	Jan 19	Africa Regional Programme	Jul 20
\$7,200,000		\$20,000,000		\$25,620,000	
Mexico	Jan 19	Niger	Jan 19		
\$6,300,000		\$17,000,000			
Latin America Regional Programme	Jun 19				
\$3,500,000					
				UNTF ERAW Africa	Jul 19
				\$20,636,792	
				UNTF ERAW Latin America	Jul 19
				\$5,660,378	
				WPHF Africa	Jul 19
				\$7,075,472	
				WPHF Afghanistan	Jul 20
				\$2,000,000	
				WPHF Haiti	Jul 20
				\$2,000,000	
				WPHF Papua New Guinea	Jul 20
				\$2,000,000	

*Civil society grant-giving programmes and the Safe and Fair Programme funding covers both Phase I and II.



The Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls can provide a new model for partnerships with both national governments and civil society. Civil society is involved in its design, implementation, monitoring and decision-making at all levels.

António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

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3.2 Governance

3.2.1 Governance Structure

A global partnership between the United Nations and the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative is a flagship initiative of the United Nations Secretary General, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and globally coordinated from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. As the Spotlight Initiative works to achieve the bold goal to end violence against women and girls, the Secretariat relies on a multi-tiered and multi-sector governance structure to manage the fund. There are two main tiers of governance at the global level: the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee (OSC). The Administrative Agent (AA) administers the fund while the Fund's Secretariat manages the programmatic investments. This structure supports the decision-making and oversight of the Spotlight Initiative. Notably, civil society and the women's movements have been given meaningful membership across all Spotlight Initiative's decision-making bodies.

Global governance structure

Governing Body

The Spotlight Initiative's **highest tier of governance is the Governing Body**, which provides strategic direction, high-level advocacy, and oversight. It is co-chaired by the United Nations and European Union: United Nations Deputy Secretary-General and the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission. Other members of the Governing Body include the Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of UN Women and the European Union's Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development. A civil society representative also serves as a member on the Governing Body nominated by the Spotlight Initiative's Civil Society Global Reference Group.

Operational Steering Committee

The second tier of governance is the **Operational Steering Committee**, tasked to ensure effective management and coordination of all managerial, implementation, and technical aspects of the Spotlight Initiative. This includes decisions on country selection and resource envelopes and the formal approval of all Spotlight Initiative country and regional programmes. The Operational Steering Committee is co-chaired by a representative at the Director level of the Executive

Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) from the United Nations and the European Union Director-General for International Cooperation and Development. Other members include UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP, as well as UNICEF as a permanent observer and an additional United Nations entity as a rotating observer. The European Union also has three other member representatives (the Director from Peace and People, and two Directors from Africa, Asia or Latin America Directorates) and two observers. Given the Operational Steering Committee decision in December 2019 to grant full and equal membership to civil society in all the Spotlight Initiative Governance bodies, in line with the Spotlight Initiative's core principles, a civil society representative has been granted full member status and is nominated by the Civil Society Global Reference Group.

The Executive Office of the Secretary-General coordinates the Spotlight Initiative, and a nine-person global Secretariat works in close collaboration to support the Spotlight Initiative Fund's implementation.

Administrative Agent

The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office is the **Administrative Agent (AA)** of the Spotlight Initiative, using a pass-through arrangement. In this role, it provides the Secretary-General and Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) with fund administration and other support services, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Secretary-General and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

Civil Society Global Reference Group

The Civil Society Global Reference Group is an established institutional mechanism of 20 peer-selected women's rights activists who advise the Fund and hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable to its commitments to civil society.⁷ Group members represent a diverse cross-section of civil society, balanced by region and issue-orientation, and representing, or

themselves facing, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.⁸ One representative from the Civil Society Global Reference Group serves as a full member on the Global Operational Steering Committee and one serves on the Governing Body of the Spotlight Initiative. As a new model for a Sustainable Development Goals fund, having the representation of the Civil Society Global Reference Group on the highest governance mechanisms embodies a new way of working with civil society and reflects the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to meaningfully engage civil society at all levels.

In 2020, the Civil Society Global Reference Group worked to identify bottlenecks (detailed further in Chapters 4 and 7) in the United Nations processes that restrict grassroots funding, and the shifts needed to enable more effective human rights-based programming that respond to the lived realities of women's organizations on the ground. Through monthly meetings with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, focused sub-working groups on monitoring, advocacy and communication, webinars,⁹ and meetings with the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, the Civil Society Global Reference Group effectively elevated critical issues related to policy and implementation as it impacts civil society for action at the highest levels of the Spotlight Initiative.

In 2021, the Civil Society Global Reference Group will have a more deliberate focus on advocacy, specifically around flexible feminist funding mechanisms and engagement with the Generation Equality Action Coalitions on Gender-Based Violence and Feminist Movements and Leadership. Another priority area is to establish a more robust and coordinated Civil Society Global Reference Group system with vertical and horizontal communication streams to connect Global, Regional and National Reference Groups. This will allow for more coordinated efforts, cross-regional learning and joint advocacy.

⁷ The biographies of the Civil Society Global Reference Group members can be found [here](#).

⁸ These include, but are not limited to, women and girls living in rural communities, women and girls from ethnic minorities and indigenous communities, women and girls who are survivors of violence, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, LGBTQI+ persons, women and girls living with disabilities, sex workers, domestic and informal workers, women of diverse sexual orientations, gender diverse women, etc.

⁹ For example, in November 2020, the Civil Society Global Reference Group members moderated a Secretariat hosted learning sprint on flexible feminist funding for the women's movements.

“The civil society reference group structure is more than a simple advisory mechanism to Spotlight: it is a key partner in decision-making and an accountability mechanism towards women’s movements. The Global Reference Group was encouraged to self-define our role to this end... and our request for full membership of global-level decision-making structures has been met and realized over 2020. We look forward, with support from the Secretariat and Spotlight Initiative teams, to improving communication with sister reference groups at national and regional levels over the coming year, with a view to amplifying civil society voices in the Spotlight Initiative and coordinating our collective advice and advocacy to the Initiative.”

– Lara Fergus, Member of the Civil Society Global Reference Group

Governance related decisions in 2020

The following section summarizes Spotlight Initiative management and programme development decisions in 2020.

The Governing Body met once in 2020, on 14 September 2020, where members agreed on the necessity to expedite implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as the critical importance of the mid-term assessment and for it to begin as soon as possible. The Operational Steering Committee held four written procedures in 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic.

Programme level governance structure

Steering Committees

At the country and regional levels, Steering Committees provide implementation oversight and coordination of the country and regional programmes. This is done by ensuring proper communication with and coordination of the Spotlight Initiative, approving annual work plans, budget revisions and annual reports, and managing stakeholder relationships.

National Steering Committees are context-specific and aligned with the priorities and dynamics of each country. This reflects the Spotlight Initiative’s principles of inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decision making, and national participation and ownership. The following members are expected to be part of a Country Steering Committee: 1) United Nations Resident Coordinator; 2) European Union Representatives; 3) Government and participating national organizations; 4) Recipient United Nations Organizations; and 5) Civil society representatives. Regional programmes have a similar composition of their **Regional Steering Committee** substituting national governments with intergovernmental regional bodies as relevant.

Notably, in 2020, Country and Regional Steering Committees in some programmes have taken on an essential role in reviewing and endorsing the 2020 COVID-19-adapted country annual work plans, with Steering Committee representatives regularly engaged and playing critical roles in decision making and coordination for Spotlight Initiative programming and implementation.¹⁰

¹⁰ Further information about the composition, functions, and achievements of Country and Regional Steering Committees may be found in the respective programmes’ 2020 Annual Narrative Reports.



2020 Operational Steering Committee Key Decisions:

Operational Steering Committee – 21 January 2020

- **Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan** country programmes approved

Operational Steering Committee – 24 July 2020

- Additional Pillar 6 (Women's Movements) to the **Pacific Regional Programme** approved
- **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** (inclusive of Pillar 6) approved
- **Caribbean Regional Programme** (inclusive of Pillar 6) approved
- Grant-giving programmes for civil society organizations through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund for **Papua New Guinea, Haiti, and Afghanistan** approved
- Reallocation of **USD 9.1 million in response to the Covid-19 pandemic** from the Spotlight Initiative **Sub-Saharan Africa** multi-country grants envelope of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women Civil Society Global Reference Group budget totalling USD 250,000 for 2020-2021 approved

Operational Steering Committee – 7 September 2020

- **Guatemala** country programme closure approved

Operational Steering Committee – 13 November 2020

- **Afghanistan and Ecuador** country programmes approved

Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups

Each regional and country programme has a **Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG)** that enables the systematic engagement of civil society in the design, implementation and accountability of programmes. Civil Society Reference Groups are comprised of approximately 15 diverse regional, national and local experts on eliminating violence against women and girls, as well as on women's rights and gender equality more broadly, and are selected through an open civil society-led selection process. Representatives of the Civil Society Reference Groups serve as full members on the Country and Regional Steering Committees of Spotlight Initiative programmes with at least 20 per cent membership, giving civil society full insight into and access to the highest decision-making body at country and regional levels.

3.3 Role of the Global Secretariat

This section highlights the role and contributions of the Spotlight Initiative's Fund Global Secretariat. The Secretariat ensures the servicing of the governance mechanism and decision-making processes, portfolio management and fund transfers, coordination across stakeholders, cross-functional quality assurance over programmes, results monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and capacity development, and civil society engagement. It also helps to amplify the communications and visibility of the Spotlight Initiative's programmes and messages globally, bringing coherence to the different elements of its work.

The Secretariat consists of a Management Unit and a Technical Unit. The two units work in close cooperation and in a complementary manner. The units share the functions of reporting on the Spotlight Initiative's results and resource mobilization and partnership-building as whole-of-Secretariat responsibilities.

- The Management Unit fulfils core management functions, as well as reporting and coordination. It functions as the Secretariat of the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee and coordinates inter-agency engagement. It is responsible for overseeing programming cycles, supporting the Spotlight Initiative's programme development and budgeting, operating procedures, and programme and budget revisions, including compliance and oversight.
- The Technical Unit ensures the technical quality and coherence of all Spotlight Initiative programmes, oversees programme implementation, supports capacity development, leads global monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge management efforts, drives communications and visibility, promotes cross-regional cooperation, and engages strategically with global and regional civil society partners. Cross-regional cooperation is promoted through knowledge management, communications, and programme design work.

Fund management: administering the Fund

The Secretariat is responsible for executing and coordinating all management functions of the Spotlight Initiative. In 2020, the Secretariat planned and serviced the Operational Steering Committee approval

processes to ensure proper fund governance and timely decision-making, particularly on the approval of programme components. The Secretariat ensured that key decisions were clearly communicated to programme offices and monitored the implementation of these decisions, both fund-wide and at programme-level, in coordination with the European Union and United Nations agencies.

The Secretariat also collaborated with the Administrative Agent to advise the Operational Steering Committee on strategic investment priorities, regional and country level financial allocations, implementation performance, and cash management planning in compliance with European Union disbursement policies. To do so, the Secretariat monitored delivery and implementation rates, maintaining cash balance projections and fund replenishment plans. The Secretariat also supported programme teams in cash flow management and funding requests to the Administrative Agent. In 2020, the Secretariat reviewed the required provisional narrative and financial reports from programmes to approve submissions of fund transfer requests for first tranches of funding (typically 40 per cent of their Phase I allocation) after Operational Steering Committee approval; and to receive second tranches of funding after reaching a 70 per cent delivery rate on the previously transferred amount. The Secretariat also coordinated with the Administrative Agent to



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produce a Fund replenishment report to request the next instalment of funding from the European Union in September 2020.

Across management functions, the Secretariat works closely and communicates frequently with the UN agencies, particularly the agency focal points designated to support Spotlight Initiative matters. In 2020, the Secretariat convened monthly meetings with the agency focal points to cover both technical and operational matters, to problem-solve and provide additional support to Country Offices as needed, and to ensure common expectations and priorities across the UN system.

Global portfolio management: supporting programme teams

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat supported programme teams to quickly and effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretariat offered immediate guidance and support to teams to roll out adaptation plans and develop national strategies. The Secretariat also provided flexibility to shift funds as needed to address the impacts of COVID-19 in each programme context, with a focus on directing funds to civil society organizations and other groups working on the frontlines of the pandemic. This flexibility allowed programmes to adjust to this new context that has been accelerating the incidence of violence against women and girls and impacting the ways the United Nations and its partners can work. As a result, the Spotlight Initiative was one of the most responsive initiatives in the UN system to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In November 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat finalized the allocation of the Fund's full programme portfolio with the Operational Steering Committee of nine final programme components. Funding for these programmes will complete the disbursement of the European Union's initial investment. With the programme development phase complete, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has been able to dedicate more of its focus on offering strong support to Spotlight Initiative programme teams with adequate and timely decision-making for measures to promote implementation acceleration, problem-solving and course-correction as needed and a nimble adaptation to major contextual changes.

In 2020, the Secretariat coordinated with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund to ensure portfolio analysis capacity to systematically track quarterly implementation rates. This information offered important insight into the progress of programmes and allowed for swift acceleration measures to be put in place for programmes that were off track. This financial data has served the Executive Office of the Secretary General as well as recipient agencies in their own internal decision making and allowed the Secretariat, in consultation with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, to provide more targeted support and guidance to the programme level.

The Secretariat continued to develop guidance and offer tailored support on a rolling basis to programme teams, focusing on programmes' alignment with the UN Development System Reform Agenda, contractual compliance and the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change. Key programmatic guidance was consolidated in an "Operations Manual Compendium," officially issued early 2021, offering a comprehensive programme management tool and knowledge product that will enhance implementation efficiency and compliance. This manual compiles the experience and lessons learned of the Fund so far, and codifies policies, rules of procedure and guidance and ensures compliance with signed legal agreements as well as the overall strategy of the Spotlight Initiative. It is also set to ensure that Spotlight Initiative programmes function under the United Nations Development Group standards.

The Secretariat was particularly engaged in supporting programmes in relation to annual work planning, budget revision management, securing full Spotlight Initiative teams, and accelerating and optimizing the engagement of implementing partners, particularly civil society. It worked with teams to creatively problem-solve and identify new ways of working including through surveys, focus group discussions and structured check-in calls. For example, in terms of optimizing the composition of Spotlight Initiative teams and their timely recruitment, which has been a recurring challenge, the Secretariat carried out an internal examination that has informed UN stakeholders for measures that will enable programmes to deliver on their mandate to end violence against women and girls.



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Global knowledge management: consolidating a community of practice

The Spotlight Initiative is committed to accelerating efforts through evidence-based programming. To ensure both catalytic and sustainable impact, the Spotlight Initiative serves as a knowledge platform, accessible to stakeholders within and beyond programme contexts. The Spotlight Initiative identifies best practices and lessons learned, promotes innovation, and builds the evidence base on ending violence against women and girls. Toward this end, a Global Platform is being established to amplify lessons and best practices from across the Spotlight Initiative's 25+ countries and 6 regions, facilitate knowledge exchange, and create direct links between those in positions of political power and local, grassroots activists. The Spotlight Initiative Global Platform would offer the combined power of a knowledge hub, a community of practice and an advocacy platform, founded in the practical experience of the Spotlight Initiative's programmes and a coalition of diverse stakeholders, such as the United Nations, civil society organizations, governments, researchers and non-

traditional partners to connect and form coalitions around areas of action. As a demonstration fund in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative is critically aligned to the principle of universality: recognizing that violence against women and girls exists in every region, country, and society. Therefore, as a model for comprehensive programming to end violence against women and girls, it will be essential to share the wealth of knowledge and lessons generated from the Spotlight Initiative through the Global Platform with net contributing countries for increased global impact and sustainability.

Knowledge management efforts expanded in 2020 to include the **Caribbean, Pacific, and Central Asia programmes**, and notably, strengthened exchange not just among UN staff working on the Spotlight Initiative, but across all Spotlight Initiative stakeholders. Through the wealth of knowledge cultivated across its programmes, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has continuously shared the latest evidence and resources to inform evidence-based programme development and implementation, and to support rapid responses to the spike in violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19. Established in 2019, the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI) offers a

one-stop shop continuously updated with all Spotlight Initiative platforms, resources and tools, and was expanded in 2020 to support programmes pivoting in the context of COVID-19.

In 2020, the Secretariat also supported knowledge production across programmes, including through the development of a Knowledge Product Guideline, and continued to provide capacity development resources across the six Pillars of the Theory of Change and on cross-thematic areas. Additionally, monthly newsletters were shared. These newsletters feature a variety of relevant resources as well as knowledge products developed by Spotlight Initiative programmes to showcase regional and national expertise, encourage other programmes and practitioners to build off the evidence-base, and to foster deeper learning and reflection.

Furthermore, in 2020 the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat strengthened and expanded its knowledge management focal points network across all regional and country programmes. Knowledge management focal points from **Central Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific** joined the network along with focal points across **Africa, Latin America, and the Safe and Fair programme**. This closer community of practice engages in dialogues on their experiences, promising practices, and lessons learned. Each programme developed or adapted its knowledge management strategy and workplan to build and strengthen knowledge management across all elements of implementation and to ensure teams were adequately equipped to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through an email and active WhatsApp groups, the network has fostered a greater sense of community among focal points and provided an open space to support one another in the process of knowledge generation, capture, dissemination and uptake across Spotlight Initiative programmes. The network is regularly engaged with consistent bilateral support, and in 2020 the Secretariat and knowledge management focal points drove global and country-level capacity development on knowledge management.

The Secretariat, in collaboration with regional and country programmes, held eight knowledge exchanges in 2020 that drew over 1,120 participants from the United Nations, civil society, government, the European Union and other constituencies engaged in the Spotlight Initiative. The first series of webinars focused on pivoting programming to address the

exacerbated violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19. The second included a series of global learning sprints, the first of its kind, to promote cross-regional knowledge exchange and bottom-up capacity development. These learning sprints were tailored to focus on needs-based thematic topics and technical gaps across programming. The learning sprints drew over 800 participants from the United Nations, government, civil society, non-traditional partners, the European Union and other Spotlight Initiative stakeholders, resulting in a better understanding across multiple elements of the issue, in-depth learning, and a strengthened global community of actors joined in an effort to end violence against women and girls. One learning sprint focused on lessons learned, innovations, and promising practices for programme management. This session provided a platform for programmes to showcase learnings and facilitate peer-to-peer information exchange, which is particularly critical as programmes face an inevitable learning curve as they work to become a new generation of country teams under UN Development System Reform. Feedback surveys have shown that these learning sprints have resulted in a strengthened COVID-19 response across 25+ programmes, quality evidence-based programme implementation overall towards ending violence against women and girls, and deepened connections in the Spotlight Initiative global community in 2020.

Communications and visibility: amplifying Spotlight Initiative's work

At global, regional, and national levels, Spotlight Initiative's communication and visibility efforts contribute to its programmes by raising awareness on issues related to violence against women and girls and by promoting the Spotlight Initiative's impact and results for the communities it serves. Strategic public outreach efforts also strengthen the design and delivery of prevention programmes, and help ensure appropriate visibility for the United Nations, the European Union, governments, donors and partners. Several different parts of the development system operate in unison to enable Spotlight Initiative's multilateral and multi-agency outreach operations.

At the Secretariat, the communications team is led by a communications and visibility specialist, with support from a digital communications officer and a digital editor officer. The team is responsible for the

implementation of the global communications strategy, providing guidance to national and regional teams, activating campaigns, managing owned corporate channels (web, social media), organizing high-visibility events and engaging the global media to cover our issues.

The communications unit of the European Union Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA 02) remains a vital partner for Spotlight Initiative's communications team. Together, both teams co-created major campaign activations, including the #WithHer campaign, its launch event and several media opportunities in 2020. Through weekly meetings and with a collaborative spirit, INTPA 02 routinely provides substantive feedback and support across all of the Secretariat's planned communication activities.

The United Nations Department of Global Communications and the headquarter units of United Nations agencies collaborate with the Secretariat to produce and promote high-quality content across their owned channels. An example of this collaborative effort in 2020 was [the video message featuring 10 UN agency chiefs](#) in support of the Secretary General's appeal for peace everywhere during the COVID-19 pandemic.

But, the main strength of the Spotlight Initiative's outreach abilities lies in its communication focal points – a network of more than 20 communications officers hired in each of its programmes across the globe. Applying the “issue, action, impact” model of storytelling, they source and produce the majority of the human-interest stories and content used across all channels. They work with national media outlets to promote stories and they lend their expertise in design and branding to inform social norms programme interventions.

Communications focal points coordinate national and regional communications groups where the main stakeholders for each programme (for example, government, European Union, United Nations, civil society organizations) plan communications and visibility activities, allocate resources and jointly execute the annual communications and visibility action plan.

The Spotlight Initiative also works with several partners, influencers and creative agencies to amplify its

messages and campaigns to reach broader audiences. Most notably in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative engaged the Social Good Club – a community of content creators and artists, working with experts in social impact to create a culture that engages, guides, and ignites social good – to empower content creators to leverage their influence and shape a culture that creates a safer, more equitable world for women and girls.

More details and results from the Spotlight Initiative's communications and visibility efforts in 2020 can be found in Chapter 6.

Monitoring and evaluation: supporting strategic analysis and sharing of lessons learned

In 2020, advancements were made to monitor the progress of the Fund and collect evidence in a more coherent and participatory way. The Secretariat further expanded its Spotlight Initiative monitoring and reporting online tool (SMART platform), which allows all programme teams to report qualitative and quantitative data on indicators and sub-indicators. This online platform contributes to a more integrated way of reporting by UN agencies, strengthens quality assurance and facilitates the consolidation, aggregation and visualization of results (data reported and corresponding infographics in this global annual report are produced directly using the Spotlight Initiative's SMART platform).

Moreover, the Secretariat initiated the development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy (PME), which aims to make the monitoring and evaluation tools and framework as inclusive and participatory as possible. In order to streamline this inclusive and feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation, a detailed guidance note with practical tools has been produced and pilot participatory monitoring and evaluation efforts were supported in **Belize, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Niger**. The Secretariat will convene a Global Reference Working Group meeting in 2021 on participatory monitoring and evaluation to advise on the implementation of the recently launched participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy at Spotlight Initiative.

A critical aspect of its monitoring and evaluation function, the Spotlight Secretariat, in collaboration

with European Union counterparts, launched a mid-term assessment of the Spotlight Initiative in 2020. The assessment covers all programmes, focusing, first, on programmes in **Latin America** and **Africa** with their assessment to be completed in the second quarter of 2021. Then, in mid-2021, the programmes in the **Caribbean**, **Pacific**, and **Asia** will undergo the same exercise.

Conducted by Hera, an evaluation and research company based in Brussels, the mid-term assessment offers an opportunity to assess the performance of each programme, improve programme management by informing stakeholders about the performance of the interventions, and identify lessons learned to test the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change. Finally, the assessment provides critical information to guide the Operational Steering Committee's decision on the allocation and/or reallocation of Phase II funding.

While the mid-term assessment reports are under finalization, a preliminary review of the findings shows compelling results across the 6 Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative.

- Overall, the mid-term assessments validate the assumptions and key principles of the Spotlight Initiative: the comprehensive Theory of Change, the participatory and multi-stakeholder methodology as well as the central role given to civil society in the governance, design and implementation of the Spotlight Initiative.
- Programmes' stakeholders (government, civil society, EU and UN teams), through a survey of more than 700 respondents, overwhelmingly confirmed the gender-transformative, survivor-centred and human-rights based approach of the Spotlight Initiative. In the same survey, around 90 per cent of respondents also expressed the view that they considered the Spotlight Initiative to be in line with the UN Reform's principles and to contribute to more efficient and better coordinated action on ending violence against women and girls (see below).
- Reports also highlight the efficient and nimble adaption of programmes to the COVID-19 context, including in ensuring that services for survivors of violence are seen as essential and in seeking new ways to reach communities during COVID-19 restrictions.



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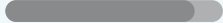

Latin America and Africa Mid-Term Assessments (Covering 2019 and 2020)

The Spotlight Initiative conducted mid-term assessments for all country programmes in Latin America and Africa over a five-month period between November 2020 and April 2021. These assessments follow a results-oriented monitoring methodology and provide an analysis of country programmes' relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as concrete recommendations for Phase II.

A system of "traffic lights" was used to assess the performance and compliance of country programmes for each of the assessment questions.

Relevance:	57 	14 	1 
Efficiency:	35 	23 	2 
Effectiveness:	19 	16 	1 
Sustainability:	8 	4 	0 

According to a survey of more than 700 stakeholders (governments, civil society, European Union and United Nations), the Spotlight Initiative was found to be or to result in...

Gender-transformative		95%
Human rights-based		94%
Survivor-centered		87%
Evidence-based		92%
Strengthening women's movement		87%
An integrated approach to SDGs		89%

The findings will be presented to the Operational Steering Committee for a decision on Phase II funding, as noted above, and to each programme's steering committee to foster collective reflection on Phase I's achievements and programming adaptations needed

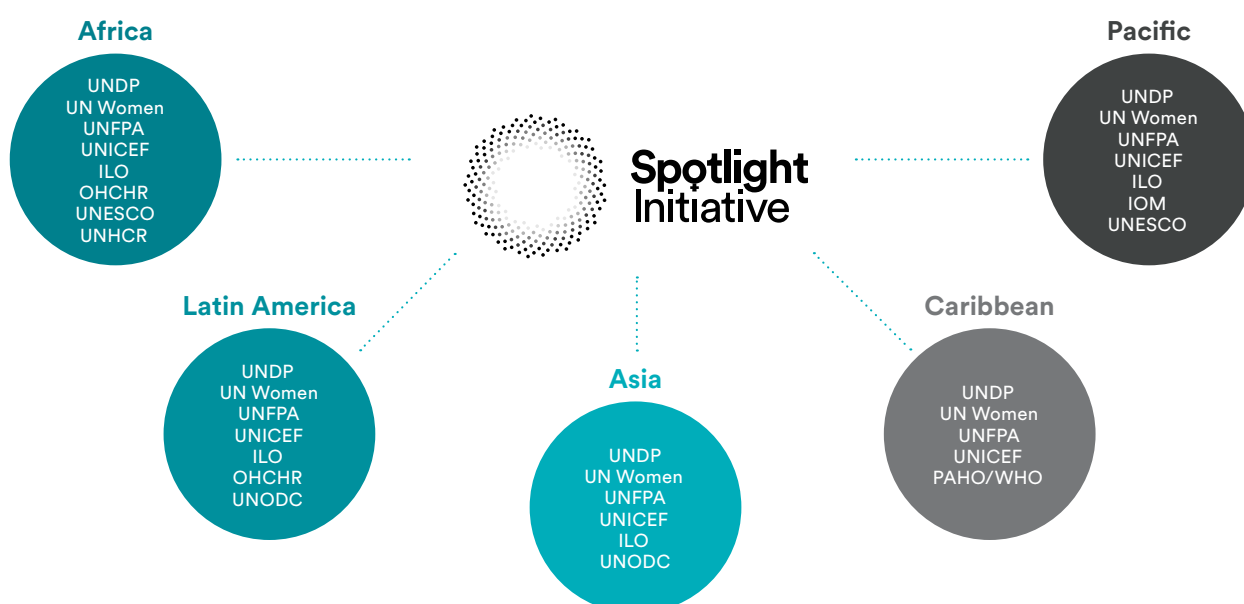
in Phase II, where necessary. The findings will also feed into a meta-analysis, which will surface trends and commonalities across programmes, and issues related to the global management of the Spotlight Initiative.

CHAPTER 4:

WHAT MAKES SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE UNIQUE: ENGAGING MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

This chapter describes the innovative model of the Spotlight Initiative, including how through its multi-stakeholder partnerships and role as a flagship programme of the UN Development System Reforms it can accelerate the implementation of the Strategic Development Goals. It includes details on the new way of working between the United Nations and European Union and a reflection on how a diverse set of programme partners supports the achievement of the Spotlight Initiative's ambitious goal to end violence against women and girls. The chapter closes with a summary of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goal on Partnerships and the Spotlight Initiative's strength in collaborating with a range of partners, including civil society, and particularly local and grassroots women's rights and feminist organizations, which is one of the signature elements of the Fund. The Spotlight Initiative also partners with media, academia, and the private sector.

11 RECIPIENT UN ORGANIZATIONS



The Spotlight Initiative relies on the expertise of the Initiative's core agencies, namely UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP – and UNICEF, with which it works closely – alongside the range of Recipient UN Agencies to implement and operationalize the work. In 2020, United Nations engagement on Spotlight Initiative included the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) and 11 Spotlight Initiative Recipient UN Organizations: UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In addition, 13 UN agencies are associated with Spotlight Initiative programmes by sharing their expertise on specific components of their affiliated programmes: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Pulse, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Information Centres (UNIC), UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP), and Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).¹¹ The involvement of a total of 18 UN agencies truly illustrates how the Spotlight Initiative is bringing in a whole of system approach to eliminating violence against women and girls. It is under the UN Resident Coordinator's leadership and assessment of the context, the programme's focus, as well as the expertise and capacities present in the country or region that the UN agencies' best fit

to achieving the goals of the Spotlight Initiative have been selected.

4.1 A Partnership to Accelerate the Implementation of the Strategic Development Goals and Implement UN Reform

4.1.1 The Spotlight Initiative as a Sustainable Development Goal Model Fund

As a Sustainable Development Goal model fund, the Spotlight Initiative directly contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) by supporting the joint achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by all development actors. Building and expanding upon the Millennium Development Goals – which did not address significant aspects of violence and discrimination faced by women and girls – the 2030 Agenda gives prominence to eliminating violence against women and girls, specifically under Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) on Gender Equality (Targets 5.2¹² and 5.3¹³), as well as under Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (Targets 16.1.1,¹⁴ 16.2.2 and 16.2.3).¹⁵

Violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and other forms of discrimination severely limit the overall achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Spotlight Initiative contributes to ensuring that violence against women and girls is fully addressed, and women's human rights are realized, by accelerating investments in, and mobilizing a wide range of stakeholders to, address this crucial and underfunded area of sustainable development. This investment yields benefits well beyond SDG 5 and SDG 16, affecting the outcome of all Sustainable Development Goals. Violence against

¹¹ Out of these 13 associated agencies, 6 agencies are also Recipient UN Organizations in other Spotlight Initiative programmes.

¹² SDG Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

¹³ SDG Target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

¹⁴ SDG Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. SDG Target Indicator 16.1.1: Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age.

¹⁵ SDG Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. SDG Target Indicator 16.2.2: Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation. SDG Target Indicator 16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

women and girls is an accelerator of poverty and furthers the marginalization of women and girls (SDG 1). The Initiative also contributes to creating a world where women and girls live free from threats to their security in cities (SDG 11) and at work (SDG 8), where they can safely and equally access key resources such as water and energy (SDG 6 and SDG 7) and where they can live a healthy life (SDG 3) and be educated (SDG 4) to become productive and active citizens, which in turn contributes to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8). Furthermore, by bringing together the United Nations and European Union to collectively advocate for the worldwide elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative supports the achievement of SDG 17, to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

4.1.2 UN Reform Demonstration Fund

Building on the Delivering as One pilot programmes, UN Reform calls on agencies to leverage a “one UN” approach in service of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and maximizing the effectiveness of the United Nations in eliminating violence against women and girls. At the global level, the Spotlight Initiative is positioned at the highest levels of the political agenda of the European Union and the United Nations, as a flagship initiative of the UN Secretary-General, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and coordinated within the United Nations by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

As a demonstration fund to illustrate the UN Development System Reform, Spotlight Initiative programmes are overseen by UN Resident Coordinators, who lead UN country teams towards an integrated working model that supports the Spotlight Initiative’s implementation with accountability and impartiality. The UN Resident Coordinator also guides the coordination with key stakeholders and partners, such as the government, EU Heads of Delegation, Civil Society Reference Groups, national religious leaders, the donor community, and Chief Executive Officers of private-sector companies. In most Spotlight Initiative teams, a dual reporting line with the UN Resident Coordinator and the respective UN agency has been established for the Spotlight Initiative Coordinator and

relevant technical officers to strengthen oversight from a managerial, technical and coordination point of view.

Reporting in 2020 shows that the Spotlight Initiative’s commitment to this “new way of working” supported deepened partnerships, including with grassroots and local organizations, and improved the Spotlight Initiative’s reach to marginalized communities. A key informant representing civil society in Zimbabwe, who was interviewed in the mid-term assessment exercise that was conducted in Latin America and Africa countries in early 2021, was quoted saying: “this is the first time that a concerted effort has been placed on giving voice to this particular vulnerable segment of society on issues that directly affect them at the national stage”. By leveraging the complementary areas of expertise of core and Recipient UN Organizations, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to stronger coordination and collaboration across the Initiative’s key technical agencies, which, in turn, has more readily fostered the development of powerful coalitions at country level, enhanced national capacities, and facilitated a better working relationship among UN agencies and with government. This was also noted in the mid-term assessments of early 2021 through a survey of more than 700 stakeholders (government, civil society, European Union and United Nations). Overwhelmingly, stakeholders identified the Spotlight Initiative as contributing to more integrated, more efficient and better coordinated UN country teams. In **Uganda**, for example, United Nations joint coordination and cooperation extended beyond Spotlight Initiative programming, positively affecting the coordination and achievements of a joint programme on gender-based violence. While in **Mozambique**, as with most other countries, the Spotlight Initiative not only contributed to a mobilization of the sectors traditionally involved in the response to violence against women and girls, but also contributed to an all-of-government approach and to significantly greater investments through the national budget.

Embodying the principles of UN Reform, country and regional teams have established innovative structures of coordination and implementation to ensure collaboration, deeper synergies, and reduced transaction costs, detailed further below in the subsection on global partnerships and inter-agency cooperation.

“I would like to invite you all to stand #WithHer, to speak up and make a difference. Help us end violence against women and girls and create a better world for all.”

– European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, 5 March 2020, at the launch of the Spotlight Initiative’s #WithHer campaign.

4.2 The Foundation of the Spotlight Initiative: the United Nations-European Union Partnership

Through the Spotlight Initiative, the European Union’s significant investment in addressing and eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, coupled with multi-stakeholder governance and commitment to collaborative action, resulted in a new partnership model that combines the comparative advantage of two multinational organizations for more transformative results.

The UN-EU partnership puts into practice the shared values of human rights, multilateral cooperation, and cooperative achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the governance level, the European Union has been a key member of the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee, contributing to programmatic and financial decision-making. The European Union played a strategic role at the Spotlight Initiative Governing Body in 2020 and maintained regular dialogue at the country and regional level with the UN teams to shape the strategic direction of the various programmes, as well as to mobilize their respective institutions and other stakeholders on the Spotlight Initiative’s objectives.

Collaborating on the day-to-day strategic direction of the Initiative, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) held weekly exchanges in 2020 to coordinate actions and jointly advise UN and EU teams at all levels. The regularity of exchanges, joint UN-EU guidance notes issued for the benefit of

programme-level coordination amongst UN country teams and EU Delegations, and candid discussions to troubleshoot bottlenecks all demonstrate the close relationship between the European Union and the United Nations.

At country and regional levels, EU Delegations actively collaborate on Spotlight Initiative programme implementation and participate in governance functions. In 2020, EU Delegations played a particularly important role in supporting UN country teams to reprogramme Spotlight Initiative funding in order to respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19, lockdown measures that impacted programming, and further exacerbated levels of violence against women and girls. On an ongoing basis, UN teams consulted their EU Delegations on major decisions and coordinated on strategic planning, partnerships (including the mobilization of non-traditional partners), monitoring, and communications and visibility, as well as strategic advocacy with national governments. In many programmes, the European Union participated in technical committees that coordinate and decide on day-to-day programme management, offering technical insights to inform decision-making. In **Jamaica**, the EU Delegation leveraged its wide civil society network to make recommendations on civil society organization engagement and provide feedback on joint calls for proposals, allowing the Spotlight Initiative to benefit from the European Union’s experience in the country and to undertake better informed strategies to secure the meaningful participation of civil society in implementation. In the **Latin America Regional Programme**, the Spotlight Initiative’s technical team has established continuous communication with the EU Delegation, based on a calendar of monthly meetings, to review progress in the work plan and jointly establish programmatic

priorities. In the context of the pandemic, the EU Delegation played an instrumental role in defining the partnerships with shelters in the region.

Additionally, EU Heads of Delegation and Heads of Cooperation have complemented the role of the UN Resident Coordinator, and jointly engaged to secure high-level political buy-in and support country and regional teams to navigate challenges. In **Nigeria**, the European Union and United Nations have worked together with the Government to develop a sustainability plan that manages risks and incorporates a financial strategy to ensure funding and services for survivors of violence continue uninterrupted. In **Malawi**, the UN Resident Coordinator led the UN team in joint efforts with the European Union to elevate the Spotlight Initiative as a priority with line ministers and to build strong alliances for the successful continuation of the programme. For the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, which does not have a predetermined modality for government engagement as country programmes do, the EU Delegation has been instrumental in identifying the best strategic approach for adequate government involvement in programme implementation.

Furthermore, the Spotlight Initiative has leveraged the partnership with the European Union to identify synergies with other EU initiatives in-country or in the region, which enables more comprehensive programming, prevents duplication of efforts, and allows programmes to build off of existing networks with local communities that are familiar with UN-EU programming and thus more open to the Spotlight Initiative's interventions. For example, the **Pacific Regional Programme's** close partnership with the EU-funded Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls has resulted in the Pacific Partnership committing to integrating technical coherence mechanisms in future technical working group meetings, with the goal of strengthening efforts in ending violence against women and girls across initiatives throughout the region.

In sum, the renewed model of partnership between the United Nations and European Union that informs the Spotlight Initiative is a collaborative example for the broader international development sector. The critical role of the European Union in communications and visibility efforts, and their contribution to results, is further presented in Chapter 6.



Through Spotlight Initiative we work on multiple levels to end violence against women and girls: with legislators and decision makers to pass new laws that protect women and girls; with grassroots and civil society organizations to help survivors and to raise awareness of the issue.

Jutta Urpilainen
European Union Commissioner
for International Partnerships

#SpotlightEndViolence

©European Commission



“The Spotlight Initiative is an unprecedented effort, through its level of funding and coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders, in the global fight to eliminate violence against women and girls.”

– Ambassador of the European Union for the Pacific H.E Sujiro Seam

4.3 Partnering Meaningfully: Engagement Across Stakeholders

4.3.1 Global Level Partnerships: Forged by the Spotlight Secretariat for Results

At the global level, forging diverse partnerships – with a focus on engaging groups from diverse segments of society, such as civil society actors, feminist groups, influencers, politicians and leaders, – supports a more comprehensive public outreach strategy.

The Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls

Established in December 2020, the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls, chaired by the European Union, collaborates in support of the Spotlight Initiative, aiming to sustain its gains in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Development System Reforms, and to end all forms of violence against women and girls, and to support substantive resource mobilization on the issue. The Group of Friends’ steering committee members include Argentina, the European Union, Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand and Namibia. Aligned with the Generation Equality Forum’s Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence, the Group of Friends brings together over 100 Member States and Observers, together with UN agencies, to coordinate action to eliminate gender-based violence. In 2021, the Group of Friends will expand its high-level membership across all UN Member States and Observers with an interest in ending violence against women and girls.

Count Me In! (CMI!) Consortium

The Count Me In! (CMI!) Consortium is a coalition of intersectional feminist groups that has supported the Spotlight Initiative and its civil society partners since 2017 to centre in its efforts women, girls and trans, non-binary, and intersex people who are most marginalized, and often face disproportionate rates of violence. Through consultative processes, engaging hundreds of women’s rights and feminist activists, the CMI! Consortium has successfully lobbied to strengthen the feminists and women’s rights activists’ role in the Initiative and to strengthen the ways and processes in which the Spotlight Initiative works with these key stakeholders. The CMI! Consortium’s support to the Spotlight Initiative phased out in December 2020, once there was a structure in place through the Civil Society Reference Groups, at global and programme level, to ensure the voices of feminist activists were heard.



©Sol Cotti

“Together,
let’s declare
in one voice:
I am #WithHer.

- Amina J. Mohammed
UN Deputy Secretary-General



Photo: Screenshot from video message

Media work and public awareness work

In addition, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with celebrities, influencers, and popular figures to promote messages to eliminate violence against women and girls and expand outreach to different communities through campaigns in both social and traditional media channels. The aim of this work was to reach the public both within and beyond Spotlight Initiative countries, given the universality of violence against women and girls. More information on these global-level partnerships, including Spotlight Initiative Champions, is detailed in Chapter 6 on Communications and Visibility.

Inter-agency collaboration

With 11 Recipient UN Organizations and 13 other agencies associated with Spotlight Initiative programmes,¹⁶ inter-agency collaboration remains one of the hallmark approaches to implementing Spotlight Initiative programming. At the global level, the Secretariat and UN headquarters agency focal points have set the tone for the new way of working by coordinating closely to operationalize the Spotlight Initiative’s core principles. This intentional coordination has had a ripple effect in strengthening inter-agency partnerships at the programme level. Embodying the principles of UN Reform, country and regional teams

have established innovative structures of coordination and implementation to promote deeper programme synergies and reduce transaction costs.

As a pooled fund, the Spotlight Initiative seeks to find avenues for efficiency and reduce transaction costs while maximizing results for women. It is able to mobilize processes and operational solutions across UN agencies to streamline implementation. At the same time the Spotlight Initiative offers flexibility to each UN agency to employ its own operating procedures for procurement and financial management and its own methods of engagement with implementing partners.

Throughout 2020, the Secretariat and agency focal points coordinated to provide timely and comprehensive support to Spotlight Initiative programmes on implementation, including on acceleration measures for programmes in **Africa** and **Latin America** and COVID-19 reprogramming efforts for all programmes. By maintaining regular contact with regional and country offices, the agency focal points were well placed to share experiences, challenges, and good practices with the Secretariat. As a result, the Secretariat and agency headquarters benefitted from a clear assessment of the status of implementation across programmes, agencies, and regions and were better able to exercise strategic oversight, adjust guidance in order to respond to changing contexts, and intervene to support programmes where needed. The Secretariat also built out the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI), a global community of practice and virtual knowledge management platform with linkages to other relevant knowledge platforms of core agencies to share learnings, as referred to in Chapter 3.

In 2020, agency focal points were instrumental in the development and approval of the **Afghanistan** and **Ecuador Country Programmes** and the **Caribbean and Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programmes**, as well as the Pillar 6 component of the **Pacific Regional Programme**. They provided inputs on programme guidance, design, and budget reviews, and undertook technical field missions as needed. The significant coordination and contributions from these inter-agency partnerships resulted in both high-quality and rapid programme design within a limited timeframe even in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹⁶ Out of these 13 associated agencies, 6 agencies are also Recipient UN Organizations in other Spotlight Initiative programmes.



©UN Women/Eva Noma Sibanda

Results from the past few years of deeper inter-agency collaboration have begun to bear fruit. In **Argentina**, the UN Resident Coordinator led the Spotlight Initiative team in instituting joint planning efforts for the UN country team and government partners regarding the development of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), to coordinate on the elimination of violence against women and girls beyond the Spotlight Initiative. In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative's joint work in the spirit of UN Reform contributed to the establishment of district communities of practice, which led to greater coordination and a more holistic approach to programme implementation. The communities consisted of the Spotlight Initiative's field staff, civil society, key government officials, community leaders and implementing partners working on sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices. Across multiple programmes, for example **Honduras, Africa Regional Programme, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea** and **Trinidad & Tobago**, programme teams launched calls for proposals for civil society implementing partners. This process embodies the One UN approach and showcases UN Development System Reforms. UN agencies harmonized and merged documents to enable incorporation of rules and procedures of all engaged UN agencies. This streamlined the process for national and grassroots organizations, which only had to submit one proposal for activities across multiple outcome areas.

4.3.2 Diverse Programme Partnerships

Across programmes, the Spotlight Initiative engages with a diverse set of partners including governments, civil society actors, women's and grassroots organizations, the media, academia, traditional leaders, the private sector, and other development actors.

Involvement of national institutions and diverse sectors in the design, implementation, and monitoring of programmes is essential. All Spotlight Initiative programmes have been designed through consultations with governments, in alignment with countries' multiannual United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

More information on the importance of the types of partnerships detailed below to the achievement of results will be provided in Chapter 5 on Results and Chapter 6 on Communications and Visibility.

Engagement at the highest level of government

The success of the Spotlight Initiative hinges on the willingness of governments to lead on this issue by setting national priorities, guiding ministries and national institutions, and mobilizing their populations

to fully eliminate violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative engages governments at the highest levels, such as Heads of States and Prime Ministers, to secure political buy-in and direction and to give visibility to leadership that promotes prevention and response to violence against women and girls as essential to attaining all development priorities. The Spotlight Initiative is then able to highlight the commitment of supportive governments while leveraging the national platform of governments to disseminate critical messages, raise awareness and contribute to deeper social norms change.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative was successful in politically elevating the issue of violence against women and girls and in supporting a whole-of-society approach by engaging all actors of a community. In **Liberia**, for example, the programme supported

extensive consultations and increased advocacy efforts with government partners that ultimately contributed to the President of Liberia's decision to declare rape as a national emergency, to appoint a Special Prosecutor for Rape, and to establish a National Security Taskforce on sexual and gender-based violence. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the programme collaborated with the Office of the Vice Prime Minister, the highest government institution that works on gender equality and violence against women and girls, to revive the National Gender Council and extend its membership to include civil society activists, and to organize a meeting with ministry-level representatives on the Rapid Gender Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on women and men. By facilitating this kind of high-level political buy-in for the elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative strengthens national ownership and increases the sustainability of its results.



©Spotlight Initiative

“Spotlight has been instrumental in mobilizing the President. We have created a quite extraordinary and really significant policy dialogue that did not exist a year ago. One that is transformative in its impact and is extremely positive.”

– EU Delegation, Nigeria

Engagement with and across ministries

Much of the Spotlight Initiative’s work with government partners takes place at the ministry level. Across the Spotlight Initiative, national governments (typically at the ministry level) co-chair National Steering Committees along with UN Resident Coordinators, an arrangement that supports coherence and coordination between the UN country teams and government. In partnering with ministries, Spotlight Initiative programmes aim to work with the ministers responsible for planning or national development, or other ministers that can draw in diverse arms of government and coordinate a whole-of-government approach. The newly empowered role of the Resident Coordinator is critical to advancing government partnerships. In **Argentina**, for example, the Resident Coordinator played a fundamental role in support of newly created government institutions, including the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity. Trust was built through regular communication with high profile authorities that ensured Spotlight Initiative’s objectives are well aligned with the National Action Plan aimed at reducing gender-based violence. The Resident Coordinator’s leadership also positioned the Spotlight Initiative as an inter-ministerial coordination facilitator for the formulation of subnational plans to end violence against women and girls. This supported all UN agencies in the country in building a common vision to advocate with government and support public policy efforts to address gender-based violence. Similarly, in **Papua New Guinea**, the Resident Coordinator’s regular meetings with the Prime Minister have set the tone and opened access for a close UN-Government collaboration at all levels and by all participating UN Agencies, facilitating a relationship whereby the Spotlight Initiative team has been able to engage and coordinate more easily with government

partners on programme implementation, and broadly to more effectively advocate to end violence against women and girls.

Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has recognized that governments must allocate resources and engage their finance ministers and treasuries to unleash financing for development, drawing from a range of sources including other ministries, investors, and the business community. This approach to mobilizing development finance or blended finance for sustainable development was reflected in a majority of Spotlight Initiative programmes. Concrete examples of how countries increased budget lines to eliminate violence against women and girls are described in Chapter 5, Outcome 2.

Additionally, Spotlight Initiative programmes partnered with a wide range of ministries in order to ensure a whole-of-government approach to ending violence against women. For example, in **Malawi**, strong partnerships have been established with the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare as well as the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, which ensures that ending violence against women and girls is strategically positioned within district development plans and strengthens the role of traditional leaders (whose work falls under the Ministry) in eliminating violence against women and girls. In **El Salvador**, the capacity of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Office of the Attorney-General were considerably strengthened in order to guarantee women’s access to justice. The Spotlight Initiative supported the Attorney-General’s Office, the police and the Procurator-General’s Office to ensure a more comprehensive and appropriate investigation of cases of violence against women. In **Belize**, the Spotlight Initiative is mobilizing the

Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth, Sports and E-Governance to roll out a strategy addressing significantly high rates of violence against girls aged 10-19. In **Jamaica**, the programme partners with the Ministry of Education to engage students and teachers in the elimination of violence against women and girls, such as by supporting the National College for Educational Leadership to design and implement a programme on ending gender-based violence in schools and educating school leaders on topics of violence. Finally, the **Africa Regional Programme** is building on existing partnerships with the National Statistics Offices in the majority of countries on the African continent. The partnership aims to strengthen, through training and provision of analytical tools, the capacity of national statistical officers in data collection and analysis of household survey data such as the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) and the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), under Outcome 5.

Engagement with other national institutions: legislation, judiciary, and parliament

The Spotlight Initiative also partners with legislative bodies to bring about transformative and systemic change in legal frameworks and practices that impact violence against women and girls. These national entities play a critical role in addressing the impunity of perpetrators and protecting survivors' rights. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative worked to mainstream a gender perspective and facilitated the drafting of numerous bills and the implementation of regulations promoting the elimination of violence against women and girls. In **Zimbabwe**, the Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the Parliament has influenced the body to apply the principle of "leaving no one behind" to its work. In 2020, the Parliament welcomed the participation of women and girls with disabilities, which the Spotlight Initiative facilitated, in parliamentary consultations and hearings on a draft bill and is considering their recommendations for stronger provisions on discrimination against women and girls with disabilities.

The Spotlight Initiative also aims to address diverse barriers to women and girls obtaining justice, from discrimination to corruption and impunity, in order to ensure that all survivors have equal access to justice. In **Uganda**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative programme partnered with the Justice Law and Order Sector Secretariat to build the capacities of the Uganda

Police Force and the Directorate of Public Prosecution in the case management of gender-based violence cases. Several Spotlight Initiative programmes trained officials from legislative bodies and duty bearers, such as police, on gender awareness and gender-based violence issues.

Additionally, the **Caribbean Regional Programme** is supporting the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Secretariat to hold consultations with its relevant organs, including the Council for National Security & Law Enforcement, the Regional Security System, and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, to align efforts and interventions across sectors and to leverage each organ's comparative advantage in implementing under Pillar 2. One particular goal of these consultations is to integrate gender perspectives in the revision of regional citizen security frameworks and the standards for policing and justice sectors.

From local to regional: engagement across all levels of government

Decentralizing the response to eliminating violence against women and girls to local governments and institutions has occurred across the majority of Spotlight Initiative programmes. This is important because subnational authorities and networks are often the first interface for survivors of violence. As such, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative worked to strengthen the capacity of local-level institutions and organizations to implement strategies for eliminating violence against women and girls and to shape successful prevention and response programmes. This partnership has been crucial for local ownership, community buy-in, and more relevant (and efficient) response mechanisms to protect against and prevent violence. In **Nigeria**, **Mexico** and **Argentina**, Spotlight Initiative teams supported federal and national actors to address contradictions between national and federal laws as well as to better delineate the roles and responsibilities of the different levels. In **Niger** and **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative supported dedicated trainings of local government officers on gender equality and violence against women and girls and supported districts and municipalities to design plans that include prevention strategies. In **Malawi**, the government led training on gender and disability at five community-based decision-making structures that were developing village action plans to enhance local strategies and ensure that marginalized groups

“It is a very beautiful space, I never thought I could be in such a place,” she said of the accommodation. “The people at the hotel have been very kind to me and my children. At first I was afraid that we might be discriminated against, but it has been the opposite. This time in the hotel has helped me to talk with my children... It has been a space to get to know them better, I feel less fearful than when we started this nightmare. We are very grateful for the treatment and the space.”

– a 27-year-old indigenous woman who fled her violence from her husband in Chiapas, Mexico, and found safe accommodation with Grupo Posadas

were addressed. In the **African Regional Programme**, the African Union Commission (AUC) is a key partner in programme implementation and governance. The African Union Commission co-chairs the highest governance structure, the Africa Regional Steering Committee and plays a critical role as the main partner in implementing the programme’s activities with overall engagement. For instance, the African Union Commission and its Member States validated two five-year strategies for the *Saleema* Initiative on Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation and the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage. These strategies articulate the African Union Commission’s vision and agenda to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation and child marriage on the continent, capitalizing on the organization’s mandate, enhancing greater coordination, and amplifying regional- and country-level efforts, making important links to the 55 Member States of the African Union. See Chapter 5 for more examples.

Private sector

In order to further connect the elimination of violence against women and girls to other development goals¹⁷ and to advance its comprehensive Theory of Change, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative forged partnerships with the private sector to address gender-based

violence. The goal of this partnership is to convince private-sector actors to become change agents against gender-based violence and harassment, especially given that workplaces present unique potential to reach vulnerable or isolated women who have limited contact with community networks and organizations. To this end, the Spotlight Initiative collaborates with companies and entrepreneurs to ensure that the private sector is working to eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination, particularly sexual harassment, in the workplace.

In 2020, the **Safe and Fair programme** co-hosted a workshop with the Malaysian Employers Federation to identify good practices on addressing violence and harassment in the world of work. This partnership is important, as some employers may not have an understanding of violence and harassment as issues in their businesses and may be unaware of the specific needs of women workers and migrant workers. In **Belize**, the Spotlight Initiative launched a campaign to share information on access to services with 15 private-sector organizations by hanging posters on domestic violence, human trafficking, and early and child marriage in and around these private-sector establishments. Additionally, the programme trained 16 private-sector representatives on family violence and challenged the entrenched ideas about gender roles that promote family violence, with the goal of

¹⁷ Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG 17 focused on global partnership as essential to the mobilization of diverse financial and in-kind resources from multiple sources, including the private sector.

encouraging men in community leadership positions to speak out against violence against women and girls in their communities. In **Mexico**, the team established a partnership with Grupo Posadas, one of the largest hotel chains in the country, to provide free accommodation to women and girls who were victims of violence in four Spotlight Initiative municipalities, as part of the programme's COVID-19 response plan. An employee of Grupo Posadas commented on this partnership, "the value of this initiative is immeasurable in financial terms because, by offering a safe space, we are saving lives." In the **Latin America Regional Programme**, the Spotlight Initiative developed an innovative partnership with the private sector to prevent cases of violence against women and girls in the workplace and strengthen the referral pathways for survivors. Currently, the Spotlight Initiative is contributing to the capacity building of nine private companies across five countries (Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and the Dominican Republic).

Media, religious institutions, academia and other stakeholders

The Spotlight Initiative has collaborated closely with the media and arts and culture organizations as key allies in debunking gender stereotypes and raising awareness about women and girls' rights

across communities. In 2020, in **Honduras**, a unique partnership was established with Women in the Arts, an organization that promotes equality and social-norms change through technology, culture and art. The joint objective of this partnership is to equip municipal councils to lead strategies on norms change and prevention in their communities through collective mobilization and reflection.

Indeed, the Spotlight Initiative emphasized the important role that traditional and religious leaders play in "moving the needle" to end harmful practices and transform cultural norms around violence against women and girls. Women faith leaders play a paramount role in ending gender-based discrimination and violence and influencing male religious leaders to address these issues vocally, in churches and in other spaces where faith-based leaders have influence. In **Mozambique**, the programme has worked closely with community and religious leaders, who in the past accepted and even promoted traditional harmful practices but are now agents of change, working with civil society organizations and community based organizations to prevent child marriage and violence against women and girls, and serving as the linkages between families and referral services. In one district, community and religious leaders supported the rescue of 15 girls from forced unions. In **Mali**, innovative



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“As the custodians of culture and traditional practices, traditional leaders play an important role in ending all forms of violence against women and girls. We commend the European Union and the Government of Liberia for providing the platform to eliminate harmful practices.”

– Marie Goreth Nizigama, UN Women Country Representative for Liberia

television and radio messages denouncing violence against women were shared through both Muslim and Christian faith perspectives. The messaging ran for two months, during which time the television message was viewed more than 40 million times and the radio message was heard more than 4 million times. More details are provided in Chapter 6.

Academia, research institutes and universities also play an important role in forming the next generation of leaders and policy-makers and in designing inclusive and non-discriminatory public policies; as such, these institutions have been a focus of Spotlight Initiative programme interventions, as well. For example, the Spotlight Initiative’s **Pacific Regional Programme**, engaged in a multi-stakeholder partnership among UN agencies, University of Melbourne, and civil society to coordinate the roll-out of gender-based violence information management systems across countries in the region. Additionally, the **Caribbean Regional Programme** is partnering with ECLAC to fund a “young researcher attachment,” for five young CARICOM-based researchers to shadow the lead researchers conducting a study on the economic costs of violence against women and girls. In support of a participatory approach to data collection efforts at the regional level, the objective of this work is to expand the pool of young researchers in CARICOM

with the skill sets required to undertake studies on this topic, as analyses of economic costs will generate an understanding of the wider effects of family violence on society, beyond the immediate victim.

The wide-reaching set of results from the above-mentioned diverse set of prioritized partnerships, as noted, are further detailed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

4.3.3 A Critical Partnership: Investing in and Recognizing Women’s Movements and Civil Society

Broader landscape: the importance of civil society in ending violence against women and girls

Since its inception, women’s rights and feminist activists have called for a deep partnership with the Spotlight Initiative, both in the governance structure and as recipients of funding. The recognized expertise and leadership of civil society is critical for the Spotlight Initiative to achieve transformative and sustainable change in eliminating violence against women and girls and advancing gender equality more broadly. Civil society is significantly represented at every phase of



USD 146 million

**allocated to civil society organizations so far
(48% of activity funding)**

the Spotlight Initiative, at the advisory and decision-making levels, and as programme implementers. This key partnership demonstrates the Initiative's relevance, impact, and sustainability.

Centring the partnership with civil society across global and programme levels, the Spotlight Initiative has embarked on a transformative new way of engaging with civil society, guided by the principle of “leaving no one behind” and the Sustainable Development Goal on Partnerships. The Spotlight Initiative's partnership with civil society is a unique differentiator and is a fundamental aspect of its structure and functioning. The Spotlight Initiative aims to demonstrate a new paradigm of working with civil society that is equal, inclusive and transparent, and underpinned by an anti-colonial, human rights-based and feminist approach, and rooted in broad-based national ownership.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit globally, affecting lives and livelihoods around the world, exacerbating gendered inequalities in all spheres and contributing to a horrifying increase in already high levels of violence against women and girls. As a result of the pandemic, frontline civil society organizations and women rights organizations had to find ways to adapt to meet the urgent needs of women and girls and to implement measures to mitigate the risks of violence. Despite this unprecedented context, civil society organizations and women rights' organizations more specifically, have been the first responders and essential service providers to survivors of violence. Civil society organizations also play a vital role in ensuring that the voices of structurally stigmatized, marginalized and socially excluded groups are heard and centred in both recovery plans and emergency policies.

In parallel, the resistance to women's rights has continued in some quarters, closely linked to a patriarchal backlash to the advancements in women's rights and gender equality. This is reflective of political developments, including the rise of populism, violent extremism and intersecting fundamentalism across the world, linked to increased repression, violence and impunity. Reflecting a deepening trend, civic space is continuing to be threatened and further diminished in an increasing number of contexts where administrative

and legal reforms are being implemented to restrict rights to freedom of opinion, expression, association and assembly.¹⁸ The use of violence against women in political life, women human-rights defenders and environmental activists has also increased, including online.

Investing in feminist and women's movements: why it matters

The Spotlight Initiative's work is rooted in the evidence-based belief that the leadership and deep engagement of civil society, in particular women's rights and feminist activists, networks and movements, is at the core of transformative and sustainable change to eliminate violence against women and girls. Evidence demonstrates that the autonomous mobilization of feminists in domestic and transnational contexts is a critical factor accounting for policy change to eliminate violence against women and girls. The active presence of feminist movements in countries was associated with states where legal reforms on violence against women and girls had occurred, pointing to the fundamental importance of activism and a vibrant civil society.¹⁹

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic's heightened inequalities, civil society organizations have been pushing for a bold feminist response and fair recovery to the crisis. Their policy demands, which are directed to international organizations, donors and governments, include the need to promote a paradigm shift when it comes to resourcing civil society organizations: greater flexibility and core funding is required to ensure that grassroots organizations can pursue their instrumental role in promoting and protecting women's and girls' fundamental human rights.

Despite evidence of their relevance and critical edge in making legal, policy, and normative changes, women's rights organizations and movements remain severely underfunded. Studies show that 1 per cent of gender-focused aid from governments goes to autonomous women's organizations.²⁰ Most gender equality funding tends to be invested in international organizations based in donor countries rather than grassroots feminist organizations leading their own,

¹⁸ The Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, [Situation of women human rights defenders](#) R – A/HRC/40/60, page 6, para 23-24

¹⁹ S. Laurel Weldon & Mala Htun, [Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women](#).

²⁰ OECD, (March, 2019). Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Donor Charts. Available online [here](#).

context-specific solutions.²¹ To address this challenging funding landscape and resource gaps at the local level, the Spotlight Initiative has committed to deliver 30 to 50 per cent of its programmatic funds through civil society organizations, with the majority targeting national, local and grassroots women's organizations, as discussed further below and in [Annex C](#) of this report. The results achieved so far in supporting the women's movement can be found in Chapter 5 under Pillar 6. In November 2020, as part of the Initiative's global learning sprints, a session was dedicated to fostering exchange, lessons learned, promising, and best practices on how to provide flexible and demand-driven funding and better access to funding to the women's movement. The key lessons learned from the sprint can be accessed [here](#).

Civil society's role in governance, advising, and monitoring of Spotlight Initiative

Governance and Advice

Representatives of women's rights groups and human rights-based civil society organisations (including those representing groups facing intersecting forms of discriminations²²) have been critically engaged in shaping the Initiative from its inception through advisory and governance activities. Spotlight Initiative teams have established **Regional, National and Global Civil Society Reference Groups** engaging diverse women's rights and feminist activists as well as subject-matter experts and marginalized groups from local to global levels to advise on and monitor the implementation of the programmes, recommend changes, and hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable for its commitments. The Spotlight Initiative has secured full voting representation by civil society on the National, Regional, and the Global Operational Steering Committee, the highest decision-making bodies at each level, and the Governing Body, the highest advisory body at the global level. In 2020, civil society partners were engaged in key decision-making related to budget reallocations, COVID-19 response plans and annual work plans, including, as noted above, through their

membership on the Steering Committees. Reflective of decades of work and advocacy, and to hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable to the transformative principles it espouses, to date, civil society activists have shared [53 recommendations](#) on how to strengthen the engagement of civil society and better support organizations and movements, of which the Spotlight Initiative has fully or partially addressed 48.²³

On 11 March 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat held its annual civil society consultation on the sidelines of the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The consultation highlighted gaps in the Spotlight Initiative's engagement with civil society and provided concrete action points for improvement. Based on the feedback, the Secretariat, in close collaboration with Reference Group members, developed a Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement of Reference Groups (available [here](#)). This note aims at guiding and strengthening the partnership between programme teams and Reference Group members, with concrete guidance on work-plan development, budgeting, and monitoring. This note was followed up in September 2020 with a Reference Group survey and cross-regional calls, to further strengthen communication, collaboration and community across Reference Groups (a summary of meeting outcomes can be found [here](#)). These calls are held on a twice-yearly basis and serve as a platform for feedback and exchange of experiences.

Transparency is a key principle of the Spotlight Initiative. To ensure the timely and accurate flow of information and to establish a community of practice, during 2020, the Secretariat launched a set of diverse online platforms to facilitate communication mechanisms across Reference Groups, including a Civil Society Reference Group Community of Practice page on Facebook with over 170 members and a dedicated page on the Spotlight Initiative website.²⁴

²¹ Foundation centre, [State of Global Giving by U.S. foundations the state of 2011-2015](#), showing that of USD 4.1 billion that US foundations donated between 2011 and 2015, only 11,7 per cent went directly to local organizations based in the country where programming occurred.

²² These include, but are not limited to, women and girls living in rural communities, women and girls from ethnic minorities and indigenous communities, women and girls who are survivors of violence, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, LGBTQI+ persons, women and girls living with disabilities, sex workers, domestic and informal workers, women of diverse sexual orientations, gender diverse women, etc.

²³ Three recommendations are in the process of being discussed and two recommendations are not addressed.

²⁴ The Civil Society Engagement page can be accessed [here](#).

“Spotlight Initiative cannot be successful without the central leadership and ownership of civil society. The progress made in ending violence against women and girls is thanks to the boundless work of civil society, in particular the local, community-based, grassroots women’s rights organizations, groups and movements, who will continue doing this important work after the Initiative. This Spotlight Initiative is for you and with you.”

Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director, Global Civil Society Consultation, 11 March 2020

Taken together, these efforts have helped foster more meaningful engagement of Civil Society Reference Groups in 2020. Examples across programmes include:

- In **Belize**, meaningful engagement of Civil Society Reference Group members was codified in the Standard Operational Procedures to include the Civil Society Reference Group in periodic technical team meetings for joint planning and monitoring activities, thereby ensuring their engagement is institutionalized in the programme
- In **Malawi**, the Civil Society Reference Group members participated in the internal mid-term assessment and Phase II planning process. Each Civil Society Reference Group member was assigned a specific Pillar based on their area of expertise and was invited to partake in quarterly Pillar coordination meetings, deepening participatory monitoring and evaluation and improving the relevance of programming
- In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Civil Society Reference Group receives monthly work-plan updates to ensure that Civil Society Reference Group members are aware of the programme’s day-to-day priorities and how the group’s mandate fits into implementation.

These improved arrangements continue to strengthen the partnership and contribution of the Civil Society

Reference Group to the entire Spotlight Initiative programme cycle.

The partnership with the Count Me In! Consortium²⁵ has actively advised the Spotlight Initiative since its inception in 2017. Through their advocacy, advisory and monitoring roles, the Consortium helps ensure that no one is left behind by guiding Spotlight Initiative programmes to attend to important diversities in identities and experiences. In 2020, the Consortium continued to provide regular guidance mainly through a dedicated Spotlight Initiative consultant who was resourced by the Consortium. The partner was instrumental in the development and implementation of the [Civil Society Monitoring Toolkit](#), the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and the Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement with Reference Groups, to name a few of its achievements. On 14 April 2020, the Initiative publicly [responded](#) to the [Open Letter](#) regarding accessibility of Spotlight Initiative funding that was shared by the Count Me In! Consortium in November 2019. While acknowledging that structural barriers currently hinder direct funding of unregistered groups, the Spotlight Initiative is continuously working with country and regional programme teams to find innovative ways to make the partner engagement processes more inclusive. For example, Spotlight Initiative has extended deadlines for calls for proposals, offered open days workshops

²⁵ Mama Cash, [Count Me In! Consortium](#).

“The CSNRG has facilitated positive conversations at the national and provincial levels. The group has a close working relationship with the Technical Coordination Team and has an active WhatsApp chat for information-sharing and coordination on events. Members actively participate in meetings with stakeholders and in the National Steering Committee, and want to believe their contributions are taken seriously.”

CSRG member from Zimbabwe, Global Civil Society Consultation, 11 March 2020

for applicants and ensured calls for proposals are accessible in official languages.²⁶ Aligned with its commitment to a feminist funding approach, the Spotlight Initiative is working to transform the partner selection and reporting processes within the UN system to become more agile and flexible to further reach and fund national and grassroots organizations.

Monitoring

Independent monitoring and reporting by civil society on the Spotlight Initiative’s contributions are also critical for the legitimacy of the Spotlight Initiative. In 2020, the Count Me In! Consortium, discussed above, and several members of Civil Society Reference Groups collectively developed a [Civil Society Monitoring Toolkit](#). The toolkit includes a set of 26 indicators that Reference Groups can use to monitor the implementation process of the Spotlight Initiative at country, regional, and global levels. Indicators focus on three key areas: participation of civil society and intersectional feminist movements in governance, decision making, and programming; funding mechanisms and the disbursement of funds to feminist organizations and networks; and implementation, including how well the Spotlight Initiative integrates the perspectives of feminist activists, and constituency led organizations. The monitoring may result in an Advocacy Scorecard, as illustrated, for example, by the [Zimbabwe](#) Reference Group’s Scorecard [here](#).

In February 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat initiated the development of a Participatory Monitoring

and Evaluation Strategy (PME), which aims to make the monitoring and evaluation tools and framework as inclusive and participatory as possible. The Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy adopts a feminist, human-rights based, and grassroots approach to monitoring and evaluation, ensuring that local stakeholders, including feminist and women’s rights activists and organizations, are meaningfully engaged and have decision-making power in the process from the design stage to the implementation of corrective actions. By valuing and centring primary stakeholders’ knowledge, experience and expertise, participatory monitoring and evaluation actively reframes monitoring and evaluation from a top down exercise, to one of mutual engagement and learning. Through participatory monitoring and evaluation, programmes actively contribute to enhancing the rights, empowerment and autonomy of historically marginalized groups, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, ensuring proper alignment with the principle of “leave no one behind”.

During the reporting period, several Reference Groups engaged in monitoring activities. The Civil Society Reference Group in **Niger** developed a national strategy to lead participatory monitoring and evaluation. As part of this initiative, the Civil Society Reference Group will independently monitor the functioning of Spotlight Initiative’s processes and systems, including through field visits and the development of advocacy dashboards. In **Malawi** and **Mozambique**, the group members conducted independent monitoring visits to Spotlight Initiative districts, the results of which will

²⁶ For example, Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Funds calls for proposals in Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea were advertised for 8 weeks each in 2020.

inform any programmatic adjustments in year three of the programme.

Funding for civil society through Spotlight Initiative country and regional programmes: more than a twin track approach

The Spotlight Initiative aims at addressing deep-rooted power imbalances often reproduced by international development programming by working towards an inclusive, human-rights based and feminist funding ecosystem that shifts money and decision-making power to grassroots and local women's organizations. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the vulnerabilities and scarce funding of women's organizations, reaffirming organizations' need for flexible funding to sustain themselves, strengthen their institutional capacity and remain resilient throughout and beyond the pandemic.

With the aim of contributing to this transformative funding landscape, and in line with the Spotlight Initiative's comprehensive Theory of Change – which aims to centre support to civil society to ending violence against women and girls and advance the Sustainable Development Goals – the Spotlight

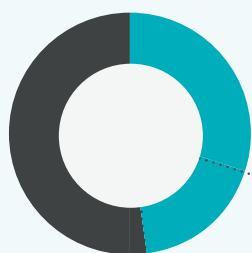
Initiative invests in civil society through a twin track approach: directly through its Pillar 6, focused on supporting autonomous women's movements; and through mainstreamed support across all other Pillars of the programme through partnering with civil society organizations to implement programmes. The Spotlight Initiative's civil society grant-giving programmes complement this approach in partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

Spotlight Initiative has made the following commitments to civil society in terms of funding:

- Civil society organizations will receive and deliver 30 to 50 per cent of the programmatic funds across all Outcome Areas, of which it is recommended that 50 to 70 per cent be delivered by national, and in particular, local and grassroots women's organizations
- 10 to 15 per cent of all country and regional programmes must be dedicated to Outcome 6 on supporting women's movements
- 10 per cent of each regional investment envelope is dedicated to direct grants or support to women's organizations through regional grant-giving programmes (the following section has more details on this)



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30% target
commitment

48% allocated

USD 146 million

allocated to civil society organizations so far
(48% of activity funds)

Almost **USD 100 million** was delivered to
civil society, women's and national organizations

* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

Our commitment to delivering 30 to 50 per cent of Spotlight Initiative programme funds through civil society organizations

The Spotlight Initiative programmes portfolio allocated 48 per cent, about USD 146 million, of its Phase I activity funds across all five regions directly to civil society organizations as of December 2020. All regions are exceeding the minimum target of 30 per cent, with Central Asia leading at 58 per cent.

By reaching the set commitment close to the higher bracket, the Spotlight Initiative sent a strong signal around the importance of investing in autonomous women's movements and in national and grassroots civil society organizations as essential partners in eliminating violence against women and girls. As of December 2020, programmes that have completed their first or second year of implementation have delivered about 78 per cent²⁷ of the total allocated for civil society organizations. In all regions, the high implementation rate of funding through civil society organizations demonstrates how Spotlight Initiative is prioritizing engaging civil society organization partners as effective implementation partners.

²⁷ This figure reflects all programmes for Africa and Latin America that completed their first two years of implementation, as well as programmes for Pacific, Caribbean and Central Asia that completed their first year of implementation. Please see methodology for additional information.



* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

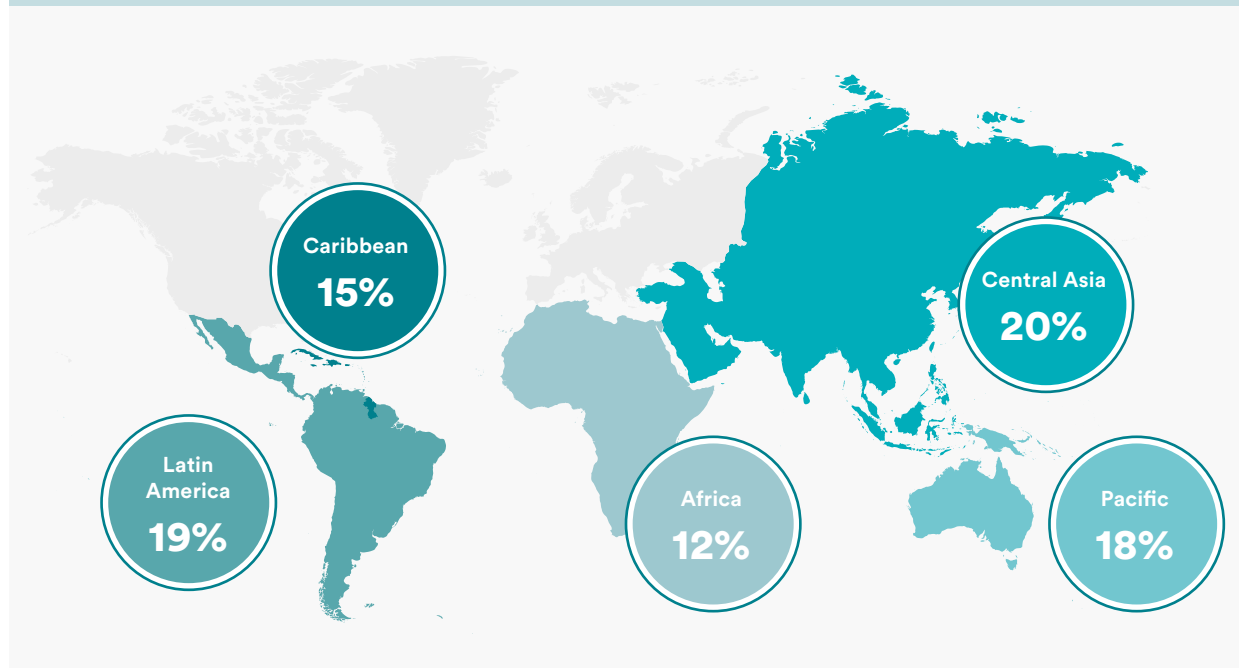
Our commitment to key stakeholder groups: national and grassroots organizations, women's organizations, and new partners

Of the USD 96 million delivered to civil society organizations in the first phase of programming, 77 per cent went to national and grassroots organizations, underscoring the Spotlight Initiative's dedication to resourcing and supporting local actors that are at the forefront of the transformative and sustainable change in the elimination of violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative is committed to delivering 50-70 per cent of civil society organization funding to national and grassroots organizations. All regions are currently exceeding the 50 per cent minimum threshold, with Africa leading at 82 per cent.

Partner organizations that are either led by women, feminist organizations, or women's rights organizations received 82 per cent of funds delivered through civil society organizations. This ranges from 66 per cent in the Pacific to 81 per cent in Central Asia. This demonstrates the Spotlight Initiative's recognition of the women's movement and dedication to centring women and girls as leaders in its work.

Lastly, Spotlight Initiative programmes delivered 46 per cent of civil society funding to new partners, which had not previously worked with the respective UN agency. In this field, Latin America led with 54 per cent. This demonstrates the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to support an expanded range of partners, in particular when looking at working under the leave no one behind principle, as well as increasing the number of women's organizations and other civil society organizations that have access to UN partnership opportunities.

Allocation to Pillar 6 – Women’s Movements



* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

Our commitment to supporting the women’s movement through a dedicated outcome area

The recognition that the women’s movement is at the core of efforts to end violence against women and girls and harmful practices led, in 2017, to the expansion of the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change with the inclusion of Outcome 6 focusing investments on strengthening the women’s movements. This includes network building, capacity strengthening, institutional funding of organizations and efforts to increase civil society organizations’ influence and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls.

All Spotlight Initiative programmes commit to investing 10-15 per cent of total activity funding to Outcome 6, which is focused on supporting women’s movements. Across all five regions, the Spotlight Initiative has achieved this target, with 14 per cent, about USD 33 million, of activity funding currently allocated to Outcome 6, and exceeding the target range in three out of five regions.²⁸

A complete analysis on civil society organizations funding through Spotlight Initiative can be found in [Annex C](#) of this report. This includes a region-by-region analysis, further details on civil society grant-giving programmes through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women Peace and Security Fund, and detailed methodological notes and definitions related to this analysis.

²⁸ Data on implementation of planned funding at outcome level was not available for the production of this report.

Leveraging Existing Granting Mechanisms to Reach Civil Society

The Spotlight Initiative has committed to channelling 10 per cent of the overall regional envelope of each of the five regions for civil society grant-giving programmes. The partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund helps to mobilize resources to reach smaller and grassroots feminist organizations and to support women's movements.²⁹ The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women brings 25 years of experience in funding women's organizations and movements to prevent and end violence against women and girls, including well established systems to reach vulnerable groups and build capacities of partners. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund further helps bridge the development, peace and security, and humanitarian nexus by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership, and empowerment across all phases of crisis, peace and security, and development.

In 2019 and 2020, the **UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women** awarded about USD 24 million in direct grants to 55 civil society organizations in 25 countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. 72 per cent of the funding went to national and grassroots organizations, 93 per cent went to women's organizations and 70 per cent to first time partners to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. In July 2020, as a COVID-19 response, USD 9.1 million was repurposed to institutional funding of existing Spotlight Initiative and UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

During the reporting period, the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund** delivered USD 4.4 million to 48 grantees in Africa, of which 100 per cent were national and grassroots organizations and 97 per cent were women's organizations with 68 per cent of funds being delivered to first time partners of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. In July 2020, the Operational Steering Committee approved an additional USD 6 million for civil society grants channelled through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund in **Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea**. The related calls for proposals were designed to respond to the dire impacts of COVID-19 by offering organizations the option to apply for institutional and programmatic funding. In response to COVID-19, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund also provided the flexibility for existing grantees in Africa to reallocate funds in their budget to build their institutional capacity.

Further information on grant giving programmes through these two civil society grant-giving UN Trust Funds can be found in [Annex C](#) and also in Chapter 5, under Outcome 6.

Adapting UN systems and processes to improve access to funding

Aligned with Spotlight Initiative's commitment to a feminist funding approach, the Spotlight Initiative is also working to transform the partner selection processes within the UN system to become more agile, flexible and responsive to specific contexts.³⁰ UN agencies capitalized on simplified and joint partner selection and procurement processes to further reach and fund national and local organizations. In **Grenada**, funding

was made more accessible to all groups by including the participation of civil society representatives in the design phase of the programme. This meant that the extensive requirements for those types of partners are not included in this funding modality, and it is geared towards grassroots organizations.

The team also conducted market research to develop a list of civil society organizations that could be directly invited to apply, and simplified application processes were utilized for the COVID-19 response

²⁹ The civil society grant giving programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and Pacific are integrated as a Pillar 6 in their respective Spotlight Initiative Regional Programmes.

³⁰ For example, by simplifying requirements and application templates, providing support for legal registration of small organizations, offering a webinar on the application process, conducting extensive local outreach, etc.



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and small grants processes (for example, risk-capacity assessment was not required and extensive requirements were not included). In **Papua New Guinea**, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund developed a pilot tutorial video,³¹ which was also streamed online for prospective applicants to provide additional support in the application process, especially for those applicants with no prior UN funding experience. This led to an increased number of new partners. In **Guyana**, in the context of the COVID-19 response plan, implementing partners were selected through a competitive process that used a joint call for proposals. In **Liberia**, responding to 2019 concerns raised by civil society organizations that the different UN processes to apply for calls for proposals as implementing partners were time-consuming, complicated and cumbersome, the United Nations conducted extensive civil society organization capacity-building and held open-day orientation sessions to train potential applicants. A major achievement was a joint call for potential civil society organizations to apply for partnerships through

an Expression of Interest using a single partnership platform. More than 50 civil society organizations and 100 civil society organization representatives participated in the orientation session and gained knowledge on using the platform, including the registration process and submission of Expressions of Interest and concept notes. This resulted in the use of one standard process by all civil society organizations through one platform.

In the **Caribbean, Central Asia, and the Pacific**, several programmes pivoted toward a small grants programme that provides core institutional funding to civil society organizations. The small grants are geared towards funding grassroots organizations and fund groups traditionally unreached by funding for ending violence against women and girls. However, challenges still remain with complex proposal templates, the need for official registration and audits, resource-heavy assessments and short deadlines that may exclude small organizations from accessing funding.

³¹ United Nations Papua New Guinea, [Call for Proposals: Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund & Spotlight Initiative Partnership](#).

A Small Grants Programme: Examples from Regional Programmes

Through a small grants component, the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** was able to prioritize and select 12 organizations working with vulnerable women at national and grassroots levels. Members of the regional civil society reference group were particularly helpful in the targeted outreach of small grants organizations in Turkmenistan, where existing legislation on the activity of civil society organization, that regulates mechanisms on grant provision from foreign donors, might have resulted in a limited pool of civil society organization applicants in the country. One of the mandatory requirements for the applicants was the creation of information and knowledge materials with a further aim of building a regional knowledge hub, and documenting and sharing best practices among women's rights organizations and activists in the region.

In the **Pacific Regional Programme**, resourcing civil society, especially smaller civil society organizations in Pacific Island Countries that often receive less funding opportunities and investment, encourages their engagement in advocacy at national and regional levels. By targeting countries that have little to no access to funding for ending violence against women and girls, the programme was able to break the mould on feminist partnerships and support groups with a more intersectional focus. To better reach small organizations, the application process was simplified, with the requirements limited to an Expression of Interest form and the organization's registration certificate. Other supporting documents were required only from shortlisted candidates. The process aimed to reduce access barriers to funding due to bureaucratic requirements, access to technology to apply online and accessible language of funding calls and applications. Targeted technical support and mentoring throughout the process was also facilitated, in addition to learning sessions on topics of interest to grantees.

CHAPTER 5:

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE RESULTS – CONTRIBUTING TO CHANGE IN ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS

This chapter opens with the Theory of Change and intended Outcomes of the Spotlight Initiative and then presents the results for each of the six Pillars. This chapter will also include an analysis of and specific results on the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the Spotlight Initiative's programmes in Africa; sexual and reproductive health and rights featured prominently in these programmes, with dedicated funding to ensure the links between ending violence against women and girls and eliminating harmful practices, and the advancement of sexual and reproductive health (including a reduction in teenage pregnancy). More detailed case studies appear under each Outcome to illustrate compelling examples of change and innovative programming examples.

5.1 Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change

The Spotlight Initiative's overarching goal is to *ensure that all women, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable, live free from violence and harmful practices*. In order to achieve this, we have engaged multi-stakeholder partnerships across governments, UN agencies and the European Union, and civil society (focusing on women's and feminist movements in particular), as well as the media and the private sector.

Together with its partners, the Spotlight Initiative aims to make concrete changes in six Outcome Areas or Pillars of work:

Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

Pillar 2: Institutions

Pillar 3: Prevention

Pillar 4: Services

Pillar 5: Data

Pillar 6: Women's Movements.

Changes in these six Outcome Areas contribute to achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but in particular, make significant contributions to SDG 5 and SDG 16.

The Spotlight Initiative's work is rooted in empirical evidence that demonstrates that the leadership and deep engagement of civil society, and particularly progressive movements, including women's rights and intersectional feminist activists and movements, is at the core of transformative and sustainable changes to eliminate violence against women and girls. This is reflected across the design and operations of the Spotlight Initiative, including in its governance structures, and features as a dedicated Pillar in the Theory of Change: Pillar 6 of the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change that aims to strengthen women's movements and amplify their impacts across all Outcome Areas. This work is particularly relevant given the current global context of intersecting crises, including the COVID-19 global pandemic. Globally, rates of violence against women and girls have increased, as has the economic vulnerability of women. Concomitantly, feminist, women's human rights defenders, and progressive movements have continued to face a backlash, with an uptick in the influence of right-wing conservative groups and populist political leaders whose ideologies include restrictions and rollbacks on women's rights and bodily autonomy. Research and practice have shown that the most effective way to advance policies on eliminating violence against women and girls is by supporting and strengthening progressive civil society organizations, including local and grassroots groups, and strengthen feminist movements.

Violence against women and girls manifests in different ways across local, country and regional contexts. However all forms of violence against women and girls are interlinked, and addressing the root causes in one area will impact across others. For this reason, the Spotlight Initiative has focused on and prioritized certain forms of violence in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific as entry points to addressing all violence.

- Africa: Sexual and gender-based violence (with a focus on harmful practices including female genital mutilation and child marriage)
- Asia: Sexual and gender-based violence and child marriage
- Caribbean: Family violence
- Latin America: Femicide
- Pacific: Domestic violence and intimate partner violence

To more fully support the ecosystem to end violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative programmes address three cross-cutting themes, reflected below in the Initiative's Theory of Change: *mainstreaming women's rights* to ensure the equitable distribution and access to resources and opportunities and gender equality; *leaving no one behind*, ensuring that all women and girls' needs are addressed regardless of status due to poverty, geography, sexual orientation, health status, race, migratory status, profession, etc.; and *civil society organization engagement*, supporting a human rights and participatory approach to change.

5.1.1 The Context

Globally, the status of women's rights has experienced significant regression over the past year. Women have been the hardest hit by unemployment and economic impacts, owing to the precarious nature of their employment, the sectors worst impacted by the crisis, and the increased toll of unpaid care responsibilities in the home with schools shut and health facilities overwhelmed. Reports point to the possibility of a generation of gains lost on labour force participation and advances on equality. Rates of violence against women and girls have increased exponentially, with movement restrictions and lockdowns leaving many women and girls trapped inside their homes with their abusers, and without adequate opportunities to seek safety and care. Violence has increased in all quarters however, not just inside the home. Moreover the worst economic crisis in a generation has exacerbated harmful coping mechanisms, including child marriage. All of this while services and support were constrained, shut down, or overwhelmed.

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE THEORY OF CHANGE

Initiative Goal:

**ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST VULNERABLE,
LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES**



Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

PILLAR 1 – POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

Legislative and policy frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans

- 1.1 Partners have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination
- 1.2 Partners are better able to develop evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending VAWG
- 1.3 Partners have greater knowledge and awareness of human rights obligations and are able to draft laws and/or policies that guarantee the ability of CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda

PILLAR 2 – INSTITUTIONS

National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including in other sectors

- 2.1 Officials in relevant institutions are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG
- 2.2 Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms established at the highest level that are adequately funded and include multi-sectoral representation and representation from the most marginalized groups
- 2.3 Partners have greater knowledge, capacities and tools on gender-responsive budgeting to end VAWG

PILLAR 3 – PREVENTION

Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices

- 3.1 Evidence-based programmes are developed to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours for in and out of school settings
- 3.2 Community advocacy platforms are established to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours
- 3.3 Key decision makers are better able to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending VAWG

PILLAR 4 – SERVICES

Women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long term recovery from violence

- 4.1 Government authorities and women's rights organisations have better knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services
- 4.2 Survivors of violence and their families are informed of and can access quality essential services

PILLAR 5 – DATA

Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes

- 5.1 Partners have strengthened capacities to regularly collect data related to VAWG
- 5.2 Quality prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG is analysed and made publicly available

PILLAR 6 – WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and civil society organisations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending VAWG

- 6.1 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate
- 6.2 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs are better supported to use social accountability mechanisms
- 6.3 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement and monitor their own programmes on ending VAWG

“The COVID-19 pandemic has been like an X-ray – it has shown us the strengths but also the weaknesses of our societies... What we are trying to do through the Spotlight Initiative is work at two different levels: to influence legislators and decision-makers... [and] at the grassroots level, to work with civil society organizations in order to provide help and raise awareness of the issue.”

– European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, 15 September 2020, Al Jazeera ‘Inside Story’

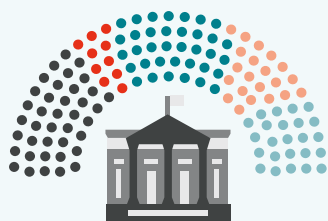
At the same time, this past year has also seen robust movements and demands for rights and justice globally, including gender, racial and climate justice. Social justice movements took centre stage in 2020, and activism increasingly became a part of more and more people’s lives: demonstrations and protests to address the climate crisis coalesced globally, as did collective action against police brutality – from Black Lives Matter in the United States, to the End SARS protest in Nigeria, among others – with demands for an end to femicide in Mexico and France, as well. The COVID-19 pandemic generated calls for social justice, too, with health care workers demanding social protections and, in some countries, organizations pushed for legislation to cancel evictions. The Spotlight Initiative has embraced and supported this momentum, amplifying its comprehensive and unique

approach, which centres civil society organizations and support to women’s and feminist movement, and focuses on social-norms change.

COVID-19 realities highlight the relevance and importance of the way that the Spotlight Initiative is working and its focus on civil society organizations, and feminist organizations and movements in particular. It underscores the need to invest heavily in ending violence against women and girls, the most pervasive and universal human rights crisis in the world, and in particular the need to direct resources to the actors that have been shown to make the biggest difference in achieving gender equality and legal, policy, and normative results: women’s rights and feminist organizations, and progressive movements.



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6,347 parliamentarians in 9 countries* with strengthened capacities to support the design of laws and policies to end violence against women

* The 9 programmes are Argentina, El Salvador, Grenada, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, and the Latin America Regional Programme.

5.2 2020 Results: Contributing to Changes at Outcome Level

This section captures the high-level results under the Initiative's six Outcome Areas and closes with reflections on how Spotlight Initiative programmes adapted to COVID-19 realities. To see more detailed programme level information, please see the two-page summaries of the programme annual reports in [Annex B](#).

5.2.1 Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

Legislative and policy frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans.

Adequate responses to violence against women and girls require comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that ensure effective rights protection and specific and coordinated response mechanisms. Under this Pillar, the Spotlight Initiative focuses on developing and strengthening policies and legislation on violence against women and girls, and establishing and strengthening existing mechanisms for implementation – including through the development of national and subnational action plans – as well as ensuring alignment with international standards.

The main results achieved include:

- Laws developed or further strengthened to end violence against women and girls
- Strengthened legal and policy analysis to promote gender sensitive laws and policies
- Mobilized a range of stakeholders to strengthen implementation
- Strengthened capacity to advocate for, and input to, legislative processes

Developed new or strengthened existing laws and policies

To ensure a comprehensive legislative approach, the assessments of legal and policy frameworks served as a valuable tool that contributed to new laws, draft bills and amendments. Given that evidence shows that patriarchy is the root cause of violence against women and girls, and that ending violence requires a comprehensive approach, the Spotlight Initiative has worked on both laws and policies on violence against women and girls specifically, as well as those that promote gender equality more broadly, including family laws, personal status laws, and property laws, such as those in relation to the minimum age of marriage, divorce, child custody, identity, nationality, inheritance, and access to or control over assets and services. In 17 countries, 84 laws and policies have been signed or strengthened, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, to address violence against women and girls or to improve gender equality and women's rights.



84

laws and policies have been signed or strengthened across 17 countries

Important achievements in legal and policy frameworks were made in 2020. The Spotlight Initiative in **Mozambique**, contributed to the finalization of critical legislation and policies, including the Gender Strategy for Public Administration, HIV and AIDS Strategy in the Public Sector, and the one-stop Integrated Assistance Centres Regulation. These policies ensure that the country has an evidence-based legislative and policy framework that protects women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, and ensures the provision of integrated, survivor-centred care, increasing access to justice. Key legislative measures

were taken in **Trinidad and Tobago**, as well, including the adoption of the Ministry of Health's National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, and the development of the country's first National Child Policy and Child Protection Plan in Parliament. Taken together, these advances help to alleviate the incidence of family violence. The **African Regional Programme** also supported Mozambique, Zambia and Burkina Faso in developing new laws and strengthening existing ones to end child marriage to ensure alignment with international human rights standards.

CASE STUDY

A Survivor-Centred Approach to Legislative Development

Together with its civil society organization partners, and the strong engagement of survivors, the Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** provided support to the improvement of four legal and policy frameworks: 1) legislation relating to domestic violence, 2) alimony, 3) free legal aid, and 4) the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace, resulting in amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code. A parliamentary working group under the Committee on Public Order, Counter-Crime and Corruption was established, which included members of the Spotlight Initiative team, that continuously consulted with survivors to develop effective measures to increase protection against domestic violence and mechanisms for its implementation. The amendment to the Law on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid encompasses a specific provision ensuring, for the first time ever, that state-funded free legal aid be made available for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Just as meaningful as the eventual promulgation of these new laws and policies were the programme team's work to integrate the perspectives of survivors of gender-based violence in these legal processes and encouraging the use of adaptive, evidence-based approaches in governmental policy planning.

In **El Salvador**, the programme supported efforts to harmonize laws and policies on violence against women, which resulted in nine reform proposals to enhance existing policies, including ensuring reparations and addressing online violence, as well as violence against women in the political sphere.

In an effort to address a form of violence that remains largely neglected, the Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi** supported the renowned Msundwe case,³² which resulted in groundbreaking legal precedents to protect survivors from sexual violence perpetrated by the Malawi police, and establish mechanisms to prevent such incidents.

³² The State v The Inspector General of Police and Others Ex parte M.M. and Others Judicial Review Cause No 7 of 2020 –commonly referred to as the Msundwe and Mwatalika case. The case entails the rape of 14 women and 4 girls by the Malawi police during the post electoral violence that erupted in October 2019.

Given the importance of leaving no one behind and due to the intrinsic linkages between violence against women and violence against children,³³ Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as those in **Papua New Guinea, Uganda and Nigeria**, worked to promote legislation and policies addressing these intersections with a focus on violence against young girls and adolescents. For example, in **Papua New Guinea**, the Spotlight Initiative team supported its partners to review the draft National Youth Policy, ensuring entry points for youth support, and to seek their approval for its finalization. The policy is explicitly framed within and links with the provisions of the Disability Policy, the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence and the National Lukautim Pikinini Policy (national child protection policy). It calls for youth-led advocacy for girls' equal education and their participation in its proposed youth governance and decision-making architecture, which includes the establishment of Provincial and District Youth Councils, five-year Youth Development Plans for all provinces, a National Youth Forum and Youth Parliament, and biannual Youth District Conventions. The policy also addresses a specific focus on young people who face multiple and intersectional forms of discriminations, including those living with disabilities, those in conflict situations, and young girls and young mothers.

Women migrant workers often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination as well. Through the support of the **Safe and Fair programme**, 17 adopted or drafted legal and policy instruments were strengthened in addressing violence against women migrant workers, sexual harassment and human trafficking in **Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam**. Safe and Fair's inputs included a specific focus on women's rights in line with normative standards from the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as the inclusion of measures for the prevention of violence and harassment in line with the recent ILO Convention C190.

Religious and traditional leaders also represent key partners with whom the Spotlight Initiative continuously engages, as customary or religious laws – regularly practiced through informal courts – provide the main avenue to address violence against women in numerous countries. Through these partnerships, the Spotlight Initiative works on advocacy and attaining commitments from traditional and religious leaders to ensure the mainstreaming of a gender-responsive approach in laws and policies addressing violence against women and girls. For example, in **Uganda** in recognition of the common use of the informal justice courts as the first recourse for communities, Spotlight Initiative supported the engagement of the Council Courts, as well as cultural and traditional leaders in gender-sensitive alternate dispute resolution techniques that are aligned with normative human rights standards.

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative recognizes that women and girls standing up for human rights have been facing increased repression and violence. Throughout its programmes, the Spotlight Initiative has been tirelessly working to ensure that governments recognize the specific challenges and risks women defenders face and has advocated for laws and policies to ensure that such defenders are recognized, supported and enabled to participate equally, meaningfully and powerfully in the promotion and protection of human rights. During the reporting period, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 21 laws and policies were developed to guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and women human-rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda.

³³ Existing global research demonstrates important intersections between violence against women and violence against children that have significant implications for health programmes, policies and research. In "Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children" (Guedes A, Bott S, Garcia-Moreno C, Colombini M, Global Health Action, 2016), the authors identify six areas of intersection between violence against women and violence against children: 1) shared risk factors for perpetrating violence against women and violence against children, 2) social norms; 3) co-occurrence; 4) intergenerational effects; 5) common and compounding consequences; and 6) adolescence (the social constructs of 'violence against women' and 'violence against children' intersect at adolescence).



21

laws and policies were developed to protect women human rights defenders

Conducted legal assessments, reviews, and studies to promote gender sensitive frameworks

More than 13 Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Grenada, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan**, conducted assessments and reviews of legal and policy frameworks related to violence against women and girls, as well as harmful practices, identifying gaps, inconsistencies, barriers to implementation, and overlap with existing frameworks. These reviews engaged a wide range of stakeholders – including survivors and marginalized groups – to ensure that a plurality of perspectives were taken onboard. The assessments and reviews leveled a deeper analysis on the drivers of violence related to gender inequality and discrimination, and the various forms of violence that impact different groups differently.

Through the **Safe and Fair programme**, a review of Thailand’s legal framework was finalized, covering harassment and violence in the world of work, in alignment with the Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (ILO-C190). To support a regional standardization of legal frameworks and a comprehensive approach to addressing violence against women and girls, the **Latin America Regional Programme** conducted a multidimensional research study covering eighteen countries. The study explored different forms of violence in the public sphere, including femicide, human trafficking, cyber violence, and mixed migration movements, and examined their linkages with organized crime (as well as the impact of COVID-19). The study also investigated the discriminatory elements that persist in laws and legal frameworks in the region, and proposed concrete recommendations for their reform. Finally, in **Argentina**, the programme supported the country’s first attempt to systematize and assess the level of implementation of the legal protection frameworks that acknowledge the rights of the families of femicide victims, and incorporates an examination of reparations for their children and extended families.

These assessments show that significant challenges – often similar across countries – remain, including limited implementation of laws and policies, the lack of a comprehensive approach to tackle violence against women and girls, inadequate enforcement of laws, the persistence of discriminatory laws, and a lack of resources and coordination. Assessments provide a crucial source of data to inform the Spotlight Initiative’s targeted approach and strategic advocacy related to strengthening and enforcing legislative and policy frameworks that are evidence-based on violence against women and girls.

Mobilized a range of stakeholders to strengthen implementation

To ensure the adequate follow up and implementation of laws and policies on violence against women, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the creation of mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of laws, strengthen legal literacy, and enable the localization of laws to community levels. In response to government resolutions, for example, the programme in **Mozambique** supported the creation of Gender Units within the Justice System Administration Institutions, which support a more coordinated gender-responsive approach and, as such, promote the rights of victims of violence against women and girls to access quality justice services. Similarly in **Haiti**, the Initiative is supporting the Office for the Protection of Citizens to strengthen its expertise in conducting inquiries on violence against women and girls.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the Spotlight Initiative team supported the organization of the first ever “National Summit on Ending Gender-Based Violence 2020: Focus on Women and Children.” This resulted in the establishment of the first Parliamentary Committee on Ending Gender-Based Violence, a long-awaited mechanism to address concerns about the high prevalence of violence against women and children. The **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**

is supporting the establishment of a regional network, representing the first attempt in Central Asia to develop a road map for generating and consolidating political will to address violence against women and girls. The network will work on accelerating the delivery of commitments on gender equality and on providing key recommendations to decision-makers to support progressive policy development on violence against women and girls in the region.

Partnership building and engagement with women's organizations is also a crucial Pillar of the Spotlight Initiative. Facilitating the space for women migrant workers to engage in policy advocacy, the **Safe and Fair programme** supported the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and migrant worker associations Persatuan Pekerja Rumah Tangga Indonesia Migran (PERTIMIG), Indonesia, and Asosasyon ng mga Makabayang Manggagawang Pilipino Overseas (AMMPO), Philippines to initiate an online dialogue with the Malaysia Government on Inclusive Labour Law Reform "Domestic Workers Have Their Rights Too!" This was attended by 69 participants, including the Ministry of Human Resource, Indonesian and Filipino migrant domestic workers (MDWs), Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC), and local civil society organizations in Malaysia. The dialogue series pushed for legal protection of migrant domestic workers through the existing labour law reform, as well as to strengthen the dialogue among different stakeholders on migration issues. IDWF-facilitated dialogue also followed up on the pending Memorandum of Understanding on recruitment and protection of migrant domestic workers between Malaysia and Indonesia. The Indonesian ambassador subsequently committed to ensure key provisions are integrated: the embassy now requires the presence of both the worker and the employer in renewing the contract; and embassy staff will conduct interviews with both parties to make sure workers are getting the minimum protection, such as standard wages, holidays, and access to communication.

Since lack of legal literacy represents a key challenge to upholding the rights of victims, Spotlight Initiative programmes also worked to sensitize the public on legislative frameworks, including by presenting policies in an easy-to-understand way, raising awareness and translating laws and policies into local languages. For example, in **Nigeria**, the programme contributed to the translation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition into four local languages and promoted



©Refuge des Femmes d'Haïti

its dissemination, which has resulted in improved knowledge among various communities, including people living with disabilities. In **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative programme supported the distribution of pamphlets detailing various legislative frameworks on preventing violence against women and girls (translated to Liberian English for the first time) to 150 communities, and it also supported stakeholder sensitization workshops which contributed to an increase in survivors' reporting of violence in 23 communities, with more perpetrators arrested.

Strengthened capacity to advocate and influence laws and policies

Partnership with civil society organizations is a crucial principle of the Spotlight Initiative. Through the support of the programme in **Nigeria**, seven laws and policies received direct inputs from civil society organizations, while in **Niger**, the Civil Society Reference Group leveraged and combined the experience of a range of stakeholders to develop common policy recommendations to prevent the risk of violence during the electoral process. In **Jamaica**, the programme held multisectoral dialogues to facilitate a more coordinated approach between civil society organizations and the Government to develop laws and policies that promoted gender equality and the advancement of human rights. In **Grenada**, a National Victim's Rights Policy is being drafted by civil society organizations in consultation with survivors to ensure high quality services are survivor centred, timely, accessible, and of high quality.

In an effort to ensure that no one is left behind, Spotlight Initiative programmes – including in **Zimbabwe, Honduras, Nigeria, Niger, Jamaica, Uganda** and **Grenada** – engaged and mobilized a wide range of

CASE STUDY

Leave No One Behind in Zimbabwe

Aligned with the principle of leaving no one behind, the Spotlight Initiative in **Zimbabwe** supported more than 200 women and girls with disabilities to engage in law and policy making, enabling their participation (for the first time) in several public consultations, including hearings on the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.2 Bill. Women and girls with disabilities and organizations representing people with disabilities prepared and submitted a Position Paper to Parliament on the No.2. Bill in July 2020.

Diverse women's demands were heard, including on economic empowerment, access to loans and the need to ensure government budget allocations across ministries. Advocates also called for a budget that approaches disability as a human rights issue rather than a charity or medical one and also shared their views on the disability grant, income tax threshold, tax rebate, allocation of funds to ministries, and their disability and gender priority areas for funding through the national budget.

stakeholders in dialogue and consultation to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks and enhance the capacity of women, civil society organizations and marginalized groups to advocate for and claim their rights. In Nigeria and Uganda, the capacity of 688 women's rights advocates were enhanced to lobby for enacting pending bills, for improving safety and protection of women and increasing accountability from stakeholders especially during the COVID-19 lockdown.

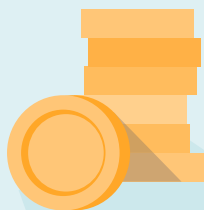
The Spotlight Initiative supported improved capacity in legislative drafting, analysis, and policymaking across programmes, including in **Niger, Mali, Nigeria, Malawi, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**. **In 2020, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 6 347 parliamentarians, including more than 4,000 women, in nine countries received training and information on how to draft and review legislation related to violence against women and girls and other forms of discrimination.** As a result, with enhanced capacity, trained parliamentarians contributed to passing and strengthening more than 84 laws during the reporting period. In 2020, 2,392 key government officials were targeted and exit interviews demonstrated increased awareness of human rights standards and obligations and strengthened capacities to develop laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and women human-

rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda. A total of 1,733 of those key government officials reported that they later participated in the development of new laws and policies.

In **Nigeria**, the programme conducted training sessions for 470 women's rights defenders, enhancing their ability to influence laws and policies and to independently monitor Nigeria's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including those related to sexual violence and violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. As a result, these partners have demanded government accountability, and contributed to the development of laws and policies that address violence against women. The Spotlight Initiative also supported ten inquiries conducted by human rights institutions on violence against women and gender equality.³⁴ More generally, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 1,525 staff from human rights institutions in national and regional programmes have received trainings on gender equality, non-discrimination and ending violence against women and girls.

Throughout the efforts of Spotlight Initiative programmes to strengthen laws and policies on violence against women partnership building plays an important role in achieving substantive results.

³⁴ The Spotlight Initiative supported 10 inquiries on gender-based violence from National Human Rights Institutions in Argentina, Liberia and Zimbabwe.



58%

of national multi-sectoral programmes included a proposed budget allocation to end violence against women and girls

5.2.2 Pillar 2: Institutions

National and subnational systems and institutions plan, fund, and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including in other sectors.

Institutions at the national and subnational levels play a critical role in ensuring that laws and policies are implemented and adequately funded. Addressing violence against women and girls requires a multisectoral, multi-layered, and coordinated approach, involving actors across all levels and branches of government, as well as across ministries (health, social services, education, finance, justice, security, and culture). Such an approach ensures that efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls are coherently incorporated across plans, policies, budgets and activities, and that responses are efficient and effective.

The main results achieved include:

- More countries integrate ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices into sector development plans, and more national action plans on violence against women and girls are strengthened or developed
- Strengthened institutional mechanisms or bodies designed to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices
- More countries engage in gender-responsive budgeting to eliminate violence against women and girls and increase budget lines for this work
- Improved capacity of decision-makers to address violence against women and girls

More countries integrate ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices into sector development plans, and have developed or strengthened national action plans on violence against women and girls

Although COVID-19 and the resultant mitigating measures, including lockdowns, made progress more difficult, Spotlight Initiative programmes created new possibilities through the COVID-19 response to mainstream the elimination of violence against women and girls in national and regional institutional development efforts. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the design of 88 strategies, plans, or programmes – at national or sub-national levels – aimed at preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, in 19 countries.

Nearly 40 per cent of Spotlight Initiative countries have integrated the elimination of violence against women and girls and harmful practices into other sectors' development plans (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture), in line with globally agreed standards. In **Argentina, Honduras, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria** and **Zimbabwe**, this led to the design of 73 sector-specific strategies, plans and programmes. This is critical as it ensures that violence against women and girls is taken seriously in all areas of work of governments, and it provides more assurance that interventions will have a sustainable impact across all key sectors.

In addition to ensuring violence against women and girls is reflected in sectoral development plans, the Spotlight Initiative has emphasized the obligation of states to adopt and implement specific national action plans (NAPs) to address violence against women and girls, as well. National action plans are concrete tools



19 National Action Plans to eliminate violence against women and girls were strengthened with the support of the Spotlight Initiative

to ensure an effective, comprehensive, and nationally relevant response to violence against women and girls. They demonstrate a government's accountability to rights holders, and to the international community, helping to facilitate reporting to international bodies and treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In addition, a focus on addressing informal and religious policies and laws are critical to national uptake and cultural adoption.

Through advocacy at the highest level, Spotlight Initiative and partners have supported more decision-makers in government to take violence against women and girls seriously and address the issue

in national plans and across diverse government sectors. Multi-stakeholder collaboration led to successful national action planning across multiple country contexts including **Zimbabwe**, **Timor-Leste**, **Tajikistan**, and **Vanuatu**. In **Zimbabwe**, Spotlight Initiative supported the first costed National Action Plan on Ending Child Marriages. In collaboration with service providers and the Justice, Law and Order Service (JLOS) Secretariat, Spotlight Initiative supported the development of a roadmap toward implementing a constitutional provision that sets 18 years as the legal age of marriage. In **Vanuatu**, Spotlight Initiative supported the implementation of an action plan to support women and girls with disabilities, particularly in emergency settings, in cooperation

CASE STUDY

Challenges and Possibilities Emerged During COVID-19: Safe and Fair's Adaptation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for political advocacy initiatives of the **Safe and Fair programme**. However, while it caused major delays to national action plans, and to the passing of laws and strategies that were in progress prior to the pandemic, it did open new windows for better political frameworks to protect women, including migrant worker survivors of violence. The importance of allocating resources for essential services for responding to violence and the inclusion of women migrant workers in national COVID-19 responses were among the key focuses of Safe and Fair advocacy interventions. Safe and Fair advocated for the importance of maintaining or strengthening the availability of coordinated quality essential services for women migrant workers, including survivors of violence in an emergency context like COVID-19, through the provision of technical inputs on national and regional COVID-19 strategies and action plans. In Indonesia, the programme supported the development of the "[Protocol for Handling Cases for Gender-based Violence and Human Trafficking of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers during the 19 Pandemic](#)", which successfully addressed the specific needs of women migrant worker survivors of violence. As a result of its dissemination, a formal request by the government in Viet Nam was issued for the programme to support a similar protocol in the Viet Nam context.

with disabled people's organizations. The action plan increased access to and availability of survivor-centred and quality essential services for women and girls with disabilities. In South East Asia, the Spotlight Initiative, through the **Safe and Fair programme**, provided technical support to 4 national action plans in 3 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia and Lao People's Democratic Republic) on violence against women and human trafficking, ensuring the integration of a survivor-centred approach, the inclusion of prevention of violence and of coordinated multi-sectoral service provision and a focus on the specific needs of women migrant workers, among all women.

During the reporting period, a range of Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Belize, Timor-Leste, El Salvador and the Africa Regional Programme**, worked on reviewing and updating existing national action plans on violence against women and girls. Based on the advocacy and technical support provided by the **Africa Regional Programme**, five countries (**Eritrea, Central African Republic, Kenya, Niger, and South Sudan**) have costed and launched their evidence-based national action plans with monitoring and evaluation frameworks to end child marriage, and five additional countries (**Angola, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and South Africa**) are currently developing national action plans to end child marriage. Given the increase in violence against women and girls driven by the global pandemic, several countries worked to ensure an effective response to violence against women within national action plans on COVID-19. In **Haiti**, for example, a COVID-19 Action Plan in support of the national response was developed by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, which integrated violence against women as one of its key areas, and sought to strengthen planning, coordination, advocacy, resource mobilization, and women's leadership in the COVID-19 response.

In **Liberia**, the President declared rape to be a national emergency for 2020–2022, and outlined specific measures to address sexual and gender-based violence, including the appointment of a Special Prosecutor for rape and the establishment of a National Sex Offender Registry and a National Security Taskforce on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. An initial allocation of USD 2 million was made by the government to roll out the Anti-Gender-Based Violence Road Map. The Spotlight Initiative influenced these processes, holding extensive consultations during the development of the

Comprehensive Prevention Strategy, raising awareness and supporting advocacy efforts.

Strengthened institutional mechanisms or bodies designed to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including during COVID-19 and other crises

Spotlight Initiative programmes have focused on strengthening or creating new institutional mechanisms or bodies that address violence against women and girls across sectoral plans, supporting coherent multisectoral prevention and response, including through programmes in **Argentina, Mozambique, Tajikistan and the Latin American Regional Programme**. In **Mozambique**, Gender-Based Violence Response Units were established in the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, the National Criminal Investigation Service, the National Human Rights Commission, and in the Ombudsman's Office, and Spotlight Initiative supported a Gender Unit in the Attorney General's Office. These bodies helped ensure coherence (and formalization) across sectors, and improved the ability of the justice sector and duty bearers more generally to respond to violence against women and girls. In **Tajikistan**, government and national-level partners (Committee on Women and Family Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Prosecutors' Office), with the participation of civil society members representing marginalized groups, drafted regulation to establish a well-functioning national and subnational coordination and oversight mechanism at the highest level of government to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices. Currently being reviewed by other government partners and civil society organizations, the final version will be submitted in 2021.

Other Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as those in **Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago**, established high-level political oversight mechanisms to focus attention on the elimination of violence against women and girls and service options.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, for instance, together with government focal points and civil society, significant progress was made in the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee, a national coordination and oversight mechanism at the highest level of government to address violence against women and girls. A Multi-Stakeholder Case Management Committee sub-committee was also approved and



56%

of targeted countries have a multi-stakeholder national level **coordination mechanism** – often at the highest level of government – on violence against women and girls

TABLE 2.2.1. STATUS OF COORDINATION MECHANISMS IN 2020*

Status of multi-stakeholder national coordination mechanisms, in 2020					
	Established at the highest level	Composed of relevant stakeholders	With a clear mandate and governance structure	With annual work plans	N/A there is no coordination mechanism
Grenada				●	
Guyana	●	●			
Haiti		●	●		
Jamaica	●	●	●	●	
Kyrgyzstan	●	●			
Papua New Guinea	●	●			
Tajikistan					●
Timor-Leste	●	●	●		
Trinidad and Tobago	●	●	●		
Argentina	●	●	●	●	
El Salvador	●	●	●		
Honduras	●	●	●	●	
Mexico	●	●	●		
Liberia	●	●	●	●	
Malawi	●	●	●	●	
Mali					●
Mozambique	●	●	●		
Nigeria					●
Uganda	●	●	●		
Zimbabwe	●	●	●		

* This table only shows those countries that selected these specific indicators, i.e. who committed to supporting national coordination mechanisms, in 2020.

will be established in 2021 to ensure coordinated and targeted case management and referrals. The Inter-Ministerial Committee involves groups from multiple sectors, including marginalized groups, who provide technical support and advice to the Inter-Ministerial Committee in order to ensure that efforts to address violence against women and girls are inclusive and responsive to the needs of those who face multiple forms of discrimination and violence.

Spotlight Initiative programmes also worked to integrate the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies into institutional bodies and mechanisms. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Spotlight Initiative helped conduct a Rapid Gender Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on, inter alia, vulnerable groups. Recommendations were presented to the Vice Prime Minister and members of line ministries to enable a coordinated response by state institutions and crisis centres to violence against women and girls. An inter-agency working group inclusive of several ministries was established, addressing long-standing challenges in coordinating a national-level institutional response to violence against women and girls during states of emergency. In **Vanuatu**, Spotlight Initiative made advances in ensuring gender equality and violence against women and girls were systematically addressed following natural disasters and emergencies. In partnership with the National Disaster Management Office, Spotlight Initiative began institutionalizing protection for women, girls, and those most vulnerable and marginalized in disaster and emergency settings through the national disaster management guidance, the development of standard operating procedures, and the use of training manuals.

As evidenced, Spotlight Initiative programmes have either newly established or strengthened existing

multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms in the last year to coherently address violence against women and girls. These efforts have not only improved coordination across activities, but also helped to ensure that issues related to violence against women and girls are reflected in other sector plans. Experience now also shows that the representation of survivors of violence and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination, usually by civil society, makes a critical difference in terms of these mechanisms integrating a survivor centred and human-rights based approach, and responding to the needs of women and girls. To date, 56 per cent of targeted countries have coordination mechanisms that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

More countries engage in gender-responsive budgeting activities to eliminate violence against women and girls and increase budget lines for this work

Programmes and services dedicated to eliminating violence against women and girls are often insufficiently resourced. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) helps ensure that priorities and programmes addressing violence against women and girls are adequately financed and appropriately monitored for full implementation.

During the reporting period, in the ten countries that prioritized these activities, 180 parliamentarians, 995 government officials and 4,607 women's rights advocates were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and are now better equipped to advocate for the allocation of resources for eliminating violence against women and girls.





32%

increase in the **national budget** of targeted countries to prevent violence against women and girls

As a result, there was a 32 per cent increase in the proportion of national budgets allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls reported across ten countries targeted by the Spotlight Initiative, compared to last year. On average, 0.24 per cent of the national budgets of **Kyrgyzstan, Timor-Leste, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, and Uganda** were dedicated to ending violence against women and girls.

As a first step to ensuring dedicated budget lines, a range of Spotlight Initiative programmes supported governments in gender-responsive budgeting. Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Argentina, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, and Zimbabwe** focused on supporting awareness of gender-responsive budgeting through trainings. A diverse set of stakeholders, from government officials in ministries and parliamentarians to civil society organizations were engaged across programmes. In **Niger**, for example, progress was made to institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting through a multi-pronged partnership among government ministries (Gender, Planning and Finance) and the Spotlight Initiative. As a result, a national strategy was developed as well as two methodological guides to support the integration of gender equality into plans and budgets at the national and local levels.

Some countries, such as **Nigeria, Malawi, and Liberia** helped ensure dedicated budget lines to advance gender equality, translating improved awareness on gender-responsive budgeting into resourced action. Through trainings with 4,607 women's rights advocates on gender-responsive budgeting and advocacy to integrate the elimination of violence against women into national budgets and plans, two Nigerian states (Adamawa and Ebonyi) have committed to the inclusion of budget lines for sexual and gender-based violence

in 2021. In **Liberia**, gender-responsive budgeting was implemented in three additional ministries, for a total of six ministries. In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative developed a Gender and Disability Analysis Tool to ensure the integration of the analysis of ability status and sexual and gender-based violence in district and local development plans. Using the tool helped to ensure the inclusion of gender and disability in three district development plans in Nsanje, Ntchisi, and Mzimba, and substantially increased budgetary allocations, between 35-45 per cent depending on the district, supporting efforts to leave no one behind.

Other key achievements related to gender-responsive budgeting included assessments and research that detailed key gaps in attention to, and funding of initiatives to end violence against women and girls, carried out in **Uganda, Honduras, and the Pacific Regional Programme**. For example, in **Uganda**, an assessment by the Civil Society Budget Advocacy group found that 80 per cent of the ministries, departments and agencies and local governments did not have budgets specific to addressing violence against women and girls and harmful practices. This data was used for advocacy and resulted in integrating indicators on violence against women and girls and sexual and reproductive health and rights into local government performance assessments.

Spotlight Initiative teams built collaboration and partnership structures for ongoing support, collective research and mentoring and, through these strategies, common advocacy agendas to influence formal policies, procedures, actions and programmes. For example, through the **Pacific Regional Programme**, in **Solomon Islands and Fiji**, discussions with government and civil society partners on planning and preparation in order to cost policies linked to addressing violence gave a spur of momentum to a regional discussion on

gender-responsive budgeting that has been lagging for several years. These discussions helped elevate the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat's regional gender-responsive budgeting priority area as well as add increased validation to plans in Fiji to develop a National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls with resourcing from the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls. These innovative policy endeavours and string of high-level engagements set examples for the region and help to give credibility to a regional dialogue on what could work in the Pacific region based on national experiences.

Not all countries, however, saw progress on gender-responsive budgeting in 2020, underscoring the continued relevance of advocating for its adoption. In **Timor-Leste**, for example, the Government decreased funding to gender-based violence from 0.6 per cent of the budget (USD 10.4 million) in 2019 to 0.1 per cent of the budget and (USD 1.4 million) in 2020, with the decrease expected to be maintained through 2021. To respond, the Spotlight Initiative engaged a gender expert to advocate in parliament for greater funding for women's human rights and ending violence against women and girls in 2021, and in particular to

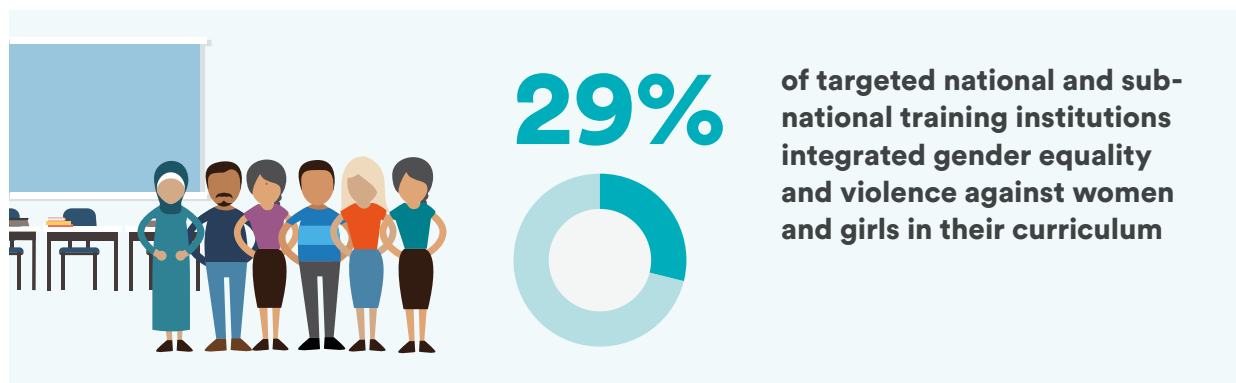
underscore the importance of maintaining lifesaving survivor-centred services.

Improved capacity of decision-makers to address violence against women and girls at the local and national levels

Across programmes, Spotlight Initiative has worked to better equip decision-makers in targeted institutions to design and implement policies, programmes, and activities aimed at preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women and girls. Duty bearers, such as police, the justice sector, and other ministries have received trainings to increase their ability to address violence against women and girls in **Mali, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, and Trinidad and Tobago**. In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, a mandatory police training programme is under development to support gender-sensitive and survivor-centred justice processes and mechanisms. As part of the programme, an inter-agency working group and the Police Academy are working in partnership to collate best practices on addressing violence against women and girls, and, as a result, several updates have been made to the mobile application "My community police officer", which facilitates improved communication



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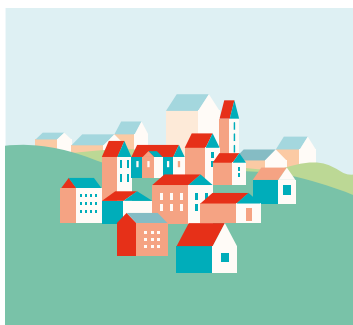
between citizens and police officers and increases access to emergency hotlines for domestic violence. In **Timor-Leste**, the programme made advancements in strengthening the skills of national- and municipal-level community police officers to investigate, document, and report domestic violence cases, especially related to marginalized women living in rural areas.

To achieve this, the Spotlight Initiative specifically targeted training institutions involved in the education of decision-makers, civil servants, and other practitioners across all sectors involved in the elimination of violence, harmful practices and discrimination. These efforts included the design of specific curriculums, the integration of key case-studies in syllabuses as well as the inclusion of experts, activists and survivors of violence in training processes. In the seven countries where these efforts have been prioritized (**El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**) 29 per cent of targeted national and subnational training institutions for public servants have now integrated gender equality and ending violence against women and girls in their curriculum, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative. More generally, a total of 6,291 key government officials, including 5,076 women, demonstrate increased knowledge and capacities on human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and 6,934 government officials (5,162 women) strengthened their capacities to develop and deliver programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

Across many Spotlight Initiative programmes, responsibility to address violence against women and girls has been decentralized to local governments or institutions, with subnational authorities or networks often the first point of contact for survivors. It is thus

paramount that the roles and responsibilities among various levels of government are clearly delineated to ensure no overlap. A number of Spotlight Initiative countries have integrated a bottom-up approach to strengthening local government capacities to deliver, including **Malawi, Mali, Papua New Guinea and Uganda**. In **Malawi**, the Government deployed training on gender and disability at five community-based decision-making structures that were developing village action plans. Results from the trainings included sexual and gender-based violence, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights indicators being integrated into village action plans, supporting deeper attention and increased budgets for gender and disability issues at the village and district level.

In **Uganda**, in 2020 progress was made towards long-term sustainability through integrating gender-based violence response interventions into the Programme Implementation Action Plans in the Country Programme Joint Work Plans of the National Development Plan III and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021 – 2025) under the themes of Human Capital Development and Community Mobilization and Mindset Change. In 2021, this work will be deepened and there will be an assessment of the integration of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights, resulting in findings being integrated into district work plans. Further linking to provincial levels of government and deploying responsibility closer to people in communities related to social welfare services, Spotlight Initiative in **Papua New Guinea** continued providing provincial technical support to the Government to implement the Lukautim Pinkini Act (LPA) 2015. While technical assistance was provided in 2020, other concrete actions to decentralize social welfare services and responsibilities from the national to the provincial level were stalled due to COVID-19 and will continue in 2021.



3,405 villages, districts and other communities have advocacy platforms for the prevention of violence

5.2.3 Pillar 3: Prevention

Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices.

The drivers of violence against women and girls are socially constructed, with extensive evidence demonstrating that this violence can be prevented. Investing in prevention promotes protection and complements response efforts, ensures women's and girls' rights, and disrupts the cycles of violence that further result in the erosion of these rights and the loss of life. As such, this Pillar is central to the Spotlight Initiative's strategic approach and investments. It is also critical to sustain efforts to end violence against women and girls and attain Sustainable Development Goals 5.2 and 5.3.

Spotlight Initiative's prevention efforts aim to tackle systems of oppression and gender discrimination, driven by patriarchal social norms and practices, where violence against women is rooted. This includes addressing gender stereotypes, biases and abuses of power, as well as inequalities in resources and rights. Recognizing that social change requires a comprehensive approach, the Spotlight Initiative works on these issues across different levels (societal, community and individual), and supports and promotes movement-building to generate increased public support to end violence and promote gender equality, including by collaborating with civil society, particularly women's rights and feminist organizations. **With support from the Spotlight Initiative, 31 per cent of targeted countries have at least three evidence-based, transformative, comprehensive prevention strategies or programmes that are focused on uprooting the drivers of violence against women.**

While changes in attitudes can be visible in a shorter time frame, impacting norms and behaviours is a long-term effort. These efforts take time to achieve and are often non-linear in their trajectory, as backlashes, though often a sign of progress, can intermittently hinder advances.

The main results achieved include:

- More influential public campaigns and engaged media to eliminate violence against women and girls
- Strengthened evidence and knowledge production around violence against women and girls
- Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviour
- Shifted norms and attitudes of youth

More influential public campaigns and engaged media, including through radio and messaging, advanced efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls

Campaigns and messaging

Grounded by research in what works, Spotlight Initiative programmes include bespoke campaigns that reach a broad public through various platforms, including television, the internet, printed publications, billboards and radio. Over the course of 2020, 80 campaigns were launched across 19 countries, reaching more than 65 million people with locally designed messages and behaviour-change methodologies, in at least 15 different languages. Alongside the work to promote community mobilization, and in the efforts to challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence, these campaigns have contributed to raising awareness, promoting discussion and social-norm change, and increasing knowledge of services and laws. Spotlight Initiative campaigns in **Grenada, Papua New Guinea,**



More than

65 million

people were reached through 80 locally tailored
behaviour change multimedia campaigns in more
than 15 languages

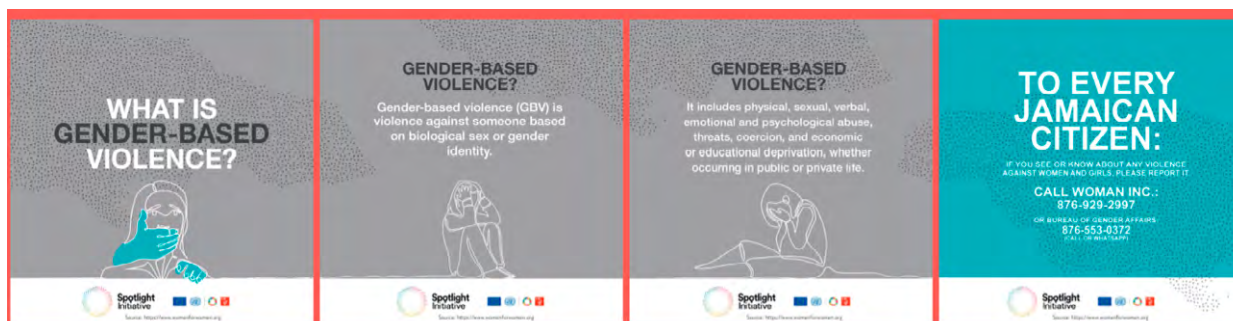
Tajikistan, Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, as well as through the **Latin America Regional Programme** (focusing on the crucial role of women human rights defenders), and the **Safe and Fair** programme, have contributed significantly to heightening awareness of violence against women and girls as a violation of human rights that affects society as a whole and have helped to rally support for and influence change in international and national legislative and policy frameworks. In **Samoa**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative designed a behaviour-change communication 16 Days of Healing campaign anchored in traditions, but amplified by social media and innovative communication. Designed by the programme's Civil Society Reference Group, the campaign used the codes and references of traditional Polynesian dance, storytelling and community conversations, disseminated through social media, TV, and radio. While it is too early to measure the impact of this campaign, the level of engagement, across generations as well as in communities all around the country including in very remote areas, shows very positive prospects.

Aside from social norms and behaviour-change efforts, these campaigns also conveyed specific messages targeting women and girls to inform them of their rights, raise awareness on various forms of violence and inform them about accessing services and holding

perpetrators accountable. In 2020, it is estimated that up to 30 million women and girls (21,165,509 women and 7,195,967 girls) were better informed on their rights and access to services.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, recognizing a major increase in violence, Spotlight Initiative programmes redoubled efforts in advocating for the prevention of violence against women and girls to be integrated into communication plans related to the pandemic. Among others, programmes in **Honduras, Grenada, Mali, and Zimbabwe** created impactful messages informing women and girls of their rights, warning men of the consequences of acts of violence and providing information about services. In **Jamaica**, the Spotlight Initiative was tasked by the National COVID-19 Response Team to design communication messages on gender-based violence and organized a consultation with civil society and survivors' groups to ensure that the materials were survivor-centered and reflected an intersectional approach. The materials below were used throughout the country, and on social media, generating 74,454,000 impressions on traditional and social media platforms.

In **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative responded to challenges with reporting sexual and gender-based violence cases due to lockdown measures by broadcasting mobile and radio messages to raise



awareness among approximately 100,000 people in 13 districts and 104 communities. After a two-week awareness campaign, 245 calls were made reporting rape in the districts covered. **Uganda, Timor-Leste and Niger** all launched high-scale multi-media campaigns, aimed at reaching a large part of each country's population (almost half of the population in Uganda and Niger, and more than a quarter in Timor-Leste). The campaigns are expected to contribute to positioning violence against women and girls as a public (health) issue, elevating this rights violation onto national political agendas.

In **Trinidad and Tobago** and **Haiti**, the Initiative launched radio and social media campaigns and messaging challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, and in **Haiti**, this reached 13,480 people as part of the '*mwen kanpe ave*' (I am With Her) campaign that also established a coalition of 13 civil society organizations. In **Zimbabwe**, Spotlight Initiative developed a new weekly radio programme, 'Let's Talk Gender-Based Violence' that aired on a popular radio station with a reach of 4.2 million people. In **Mozambique**, 9 mini radio dramas were produced on mitigating the secondary impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls and were broadcast twice per week by 115 government and community radio stations. In **Mali**, Spotlight Initiative developed a TV series called "*Dance inlassable*" ("Tireless Dance"), comprising 54 episodes, aimed at addressing deep-rooted stereotypes and gender

norms related to child marriage, girls' education, female genital mutilation, rape, and sexual violence. The TV series, which will be released next year, will contribute to creating a dynamic exchange around these sensitive topics at both the national and the local level. Spotlight Initiative in **Mozambique** also creatively engaged in socially-distanced community mobilization – megaphones and cars were used to disseminate messages for the prevention of violence against women and girls throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as on available services for survivors, which covered approximately 183,168 households.

Engaging the media: Responsible reporting

The media plays a crucial role in either reinforcing or challenging community attitudes and norms that condone violence against women and girls, as they often portray or promote the existing gender inequalities within society. As such, the media – particularly media that has the potential to reach and impact large populations – can be a powerful tool to move beyond awareness raising to influencing substantial transformation in norms and attitudes on violence against women.

This entails, for example, amplifying positive representations of women, reversing narratives around victim blaming, and portraying survivors as agents of change. In **Argentina, Mali, Uganda and Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with media associations and training institutions and organized workshops with journalists to promote more gender-sensitive and survivor-centred approaches to reporting cases of violence against women and girls and to engage journalists, radio hosts, and news anchors as allies and advocates. In **El Salvador**, Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Salvadoran Media Network (RSM) to design the first professional diploma for "research and journalistic reports with a gender approach aimed at communicators". Materials were co-designed with civil society and the course included conversations with survivors and interventions from prominent activists. The first cohort of more than 100 journalists were awarded the diploma in 2020. In the six countries that prioritized these activities, 398 news outlets developed standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting. Additionally, more than 2000 journalists, including 1000 women, were trained on concepts related to gender and to report on violence against women and girls or, more broadly, gender equality with greater sensitivity.





398 news outlets

adopted standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting



2,020 journalists are better equipped to sensitively report on concepts related to gender, gender equality more broadly and violence against women and girls.

CASE STUDY

“Enough”! A Campaign Co-Designed with the Clarin Media Group in Argentina

In **Argentina**, Spotlight Initiative partnered with one of the largest national media and news companies, Clarin Group, to design a media campaign called “Obituarios” (obituaries). The effort gathered the obituaries of more than 300 victims of femicides, including trans women, murdered during the previous year in Argentina. These obituaries were published and covered in all the media of the Clarin Group, including in the Clarín newspaper (the most-widely circulated newspaper in Latin America) on Wednesday 3 June (fifth anniversary of the first mobilization of “Ni una menos”). Related ads were also broadcasted on TV (channel 13 and TN) and covered by news anchors throughout the day. The campaign won two awards for its impact: The Obrar Prize, from the Argentinian Publicity Council, and the Eikon Prize for excellence in institutional communication. The campaign aimed to position gender violence on the national political agenda, giving the data a human face.



Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviours

Behaviours result from individual experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. Attitudes and actions of neighbours, friends, co-workers, religious leaders, police, health care providers, etc. further influence an individual's behaviour choices and create a collective climate in the community. In its interventions under this Pillar, and as a complement to the media campaigns presented above, Spotlight Initiative focused its prevention efforts on community mobilization, promoting the principles set out below:

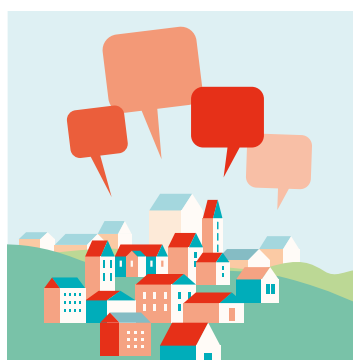
- Ensure a human rights-based approach to programming
- Be comprehensive and gender transformative, focusing on transforming social norms, attitudes and behaviours, by generating dialogue and conversations on, among other things, gender roles
- Be grounded in a well conceptualized theory of change, informed by evidence on the root causes and drivers of violence against women and girls
- Engage all members of the community including separately, with dedicated and tailored approaches for each group
- Organize meetings and gatherings regularly (periodicity depends on the context), with participant engagement – particularly by those facing intersecting forms of discrimination – expected throughout the programme

Grounded by the principle of community engagement, and **with Spotlight Initiative support, 3405 villages, districts and communities across 11 programmes have now set up advocacy platforms to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours.**

Community mobilization efforts by the Spotlight Initiative reached nearly 2,000,000 community members (men, women, boys and girls) through community dialogues and interpersonal as well as collective engagement aimed at transforming collective norms and stereotypes and promoting behaviour change.

In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative programme continues to support the organization Raising Voices in implementing SASA!, one of the most comprehensive and successful models of community mobilization across sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the world. Designed to share new ideas and behaviours to community members through mass media, dramas performed in public spaces and interpersonal communication with change agents, community mobilization activities encourage the whole community — individuals, leaders and institutions — to question and change what is considered normal or acceptable. In 2020, 918 community activists supported by Spotlight Initiative reached more than 140,000 people (95,000 women and girls and 45,000 men and boys) in communities across Uganda, that now better understand the nexus between power, violence and gender equality, joining a multi-stakeholder effort that is drastically changing mentalities and approaches to gender roles in Uganda. Spotlight Initiative is implementing similar methodologies in **El Salvador, Haiti, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, and Samoa.**

In **Vanuatu**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the development of a national strategy for the structure and scale-up of community dialogues on ending violence, supporting a “whole of community” approach to prevention. Informed by a recent Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice Survey on family violence that the Spotlight Initiative completed on five of Vanuatu's islands, these dialogues will be led by trained community facilitators



Community mobilization efforts directly reached nearly

2,000,000

community members through **dialogues and interpersonal conversations**

to advance a social movement of non-violence among community leaders and youth.

Community-based messaging has adapted to the COVID-19 context as well. In Myanmar, **the Safe and Fair programme** partnered with the Women's Organizations Network on community-based initiatives to disseminate information on pandemic-related risks, including the risks of violence against women and girls and trafficking, among returnee women migrants. Information packages were distributed to a total of 92,777 returnee migrants, including both women and men, recognizing the key role that men can play in preventing violence against women within their communities. Information shared with returnee migrants enhanced their agency by equipping them with increased knowledge on their rights, opportunities, and contacts to allow them to pursue support during the migration cycle.

While some of the interventions presented above make extensive use of new technologies and innovations, Spotlight Initiative programmes also use more traditional ways of mobilizing communities and discussing issues. In **Malawi, Mali, Mozambique and Samoa**, among others, Spotlight Initiative teams co-designed community conversation strategies with traditional and religious leaders. As custodians of culture, customs and traditions, village chiefs play a critical role in the sustenance and evolution of

socio-cultural norms in communities. Involving them in these processes allows programmes to shift the paradigm, positioning traditional leaders as catalysts of social change and transformation. Through these activities, 6,169 influential decision makers, ranging from parliamentarians to religious leaders, academics, activists and community leaders, were trained and supported to advocate for the implementation of legislation and policies on ending violence against women and girls and on women and girls' rights, gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, with support from Spotlight Initiative. **As a result, in Malawi, up to 200 chiefs are now engaged as champions of the Spotlight Initiative and in 2020 alone, their involvement directly contributed to withdrawing 209 young girls from child marriages and facilitated access for thousands of survivors of violence to services and to the justice system.**

Finally, Spotlight Initiative programmes complemented their community interventions with specific activities targeting women and girls from marginalized groups. In **Zimbabwe**, for example, the programme developed recruitment and monitoring strategies aimed at people with disabilities, partnering with local disabled people's organizations, training staff in disability inclusion, and raising awareness of disability rights. In 2020, these dedicated prevention interventions reached 70,000 people living with disabilities, and addressed key barriers to their full participation in programming.

CASE STUDY

Local-Level Planning in Two of the Most Violent Cities in the World

In **Honduras**, alarmed by the increase of violence due to COVID-19 restrictions, Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Government and civil society to develop the "Cure violence" programme in the municipalities of San Pedro Sula and Choloma, two communities that are heavily affected by drug-trafficking gangs and are amongst the most violent places in the world (both are in the top ten cities with highest rates of murders globally).

Through consultations with local leaders, survivors' groups, religious institutions and civil society, the programme trained local mediators from these communities, who were supported to organize community conversations in order to engage with young men and women on issues of gender roles and the mobilization of influential individuals in the municipalities. **Their mediation efforts contributed to interrupting 724 violent incidents against women and girls, ranging from sexual violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking, to death threats, group harassment and kidnapping. The Government indicated that the programme prevented the deaths of 501 women and adolescents.**

1 million

young people joined in and out-of-school programmes



Shifted norms and attitudes of young people: in- and out-of-school education

Extensive evidence shows that in order to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, comprehensive sexuality education, both in- and out-of-school, is essential. Comprehensive sexuality education has the potential to promote the prevention of violence against women and girls through social norms change by engaging young people in critical reflection and dialogues that address sexual and reproductive health and violence, as well as gender and power dynamics more broadly.

During the reporting period, and despite school closures and delayed roll-out of new curriculums due to the COVID 19 pandemic, 978,165 young people were reached through in- and out-of-school programmes, supported by Spotlight Initiative.

Throughout 2020, Spotlight Initiative worked with ministries of education across all programmes to strengthen and expand sexuality or “family life” education. While respecting cultural specificities, Spotlight Initiative contributed to supporting the adoption of a rights-based and gender-focused approach to sexuality education, taught over several years, providing age-appropriate information consistent with the evolving capacities of young people. Spotlight Initiative programmes include scientifically accurate information about human development and help young people to nurture positive values regarding their sexual and reproductive health. Significant progress in this regard has been observed across programmes, including in **Argentina, El Salvador, Jamaica, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and Vanuatu**. In **Malawi**, for example, through the country’s Safe School Programme,

more than 200,000 adolescent learners from the six districts covered by Spotlight Initiative are now able to detect sexual and gender-based violence and report it to relevant authorities for action and redress. This led to the identification of 941 cases of child marriage and their immediate referral to the appropriate authorities. As a complement to the roll-out of comprehensive sexuality education, the Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Uganda and Malawi**, supported school clubs that contribute to disseminating messages on gender equality, gender-based violence and harmful practices, while providing an entry point for referrals and service delivery. **Nearly two thirds of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries drafted new or strengthened comprehensive sexuality education curricula in line with international standards.**

Spotlight Initiative also supported the design, roll-out and scale-up of education and sensitization programmes targeting out-of-school children. Spotlight Initiative uses a wide array of methodologies to reach young people not enrolled in schools, including through after-school programmes, youth centres in communities, and the inclusion of gender modules in programmes that advance women’s economic rights and empowerment. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, Spotlight Initiative is using the Collaborative HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Programme (CHAMP) model, targeting approximately 150 out-of-school children. CHAMP increases communication among young people and older generations around sensitive issues and increases knowledge of family violence and sexual and reproductive health-related issues within families.

The most promising intervention targeting out-of-school young people, adopted in **Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan,**

“Educational sessions have changed many things in my life such as: the knowledge of my rights and duties and taught me to express myself in front of an audience without any fear. I learned the importance of discussion in my community and it allowed me to talk to the girls if there was a problem.”

Halima Hassan, 16, Maradi Region, Niger.

Mozambique, Niger and Vanuatu, supports the creation of “safe spaces” for young and adolescent girls through mentoring programmes. Chapter 8 has more details.

In **Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative rolled out the Rise Up! Curriculum, a strategy that fosters the leadership potential of the most marginalized young women in the most disadvantaged communities in urban settlements and rural areas. Rise Up! includes a combination of participatory training, mentoring and practical leadership experiences for young women. Throughout 2020, the programme trained a cohort of young women mentors to deliver training to adolescent girls in their community. In turn, girls accessing these “safe spaces” were supported to become girl leaders and engaged in learning around gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights. As a result, they formed an inter-provincial network of adolescent girl leaders. Overall, in line with the Spotlight Initiative’s principle of leaving no one behind, programmes specifically targeted the most vulnerable adolescent girls through out-of-school interventions. A total of 228,668 girls were reached in 11 countries through these activities that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and the exercise of rights, including reproductive rights.

In line with its ‘whole-of-community’ approach, aimed at reinforcing social-norms change messages through complementary interventions, Spotlight Initiative also implemented specific interventions targeting parents. In **Papua New Guinea**, for example, Spotlight Initiative supported the dissemination of parenting tips in the context of COVID-19 to support parents and children and adolescents dealing with the stress associated with the closure of schools and other restrictions. Dedicated

messages on gender roles and the consequences of violence against women and girls were also included.

In the **Pacific**, the **Regional Programme** continued to push the boundaries on sexual and reproductive health via the regional launch of the International Technical and Programmatic Guidance on Out-of-School Comprehensive Sexuality Education. This launch reached over 700 participants from 11 countries in the Pacific region. These guidelines brought to the fore the importance of young people and sexual and reproductive health and rights as a contribution to health, gender equality, power dynamics and an end to violence. The launch event was presided by the Prime Minister of Samoa, alongside the Cardinal of Tonga, and attended by senior Government Ministers, officials, members of Diplomatic corps and donors, regional and international agencies, and civil society organizations, including heads of religious institutions and youth representatives.

Engaged men and boys to end violence: the use of special strategies to support normative shifts

The normalization of violence against women and girls in society is strongly connected with constructions of negative masculinities, which are formed by gendered social norms, roles, expectations and identities associated with the notion of “masculinity” as a social construct. For prevention efforts to truly succeed, engaging men and boys is critical. Men and boys have an important role to play in preventing violence against women and girls, and helping support the promotion of non-violent and egalitarian interpersonal relationships. Aligned with the evidence that working with men and boys alone is not as effective at challenging gendered

CASE STUDY

Designing a “Mobile” Game to Change Social Norms on Gender-Based Violence in Kyrgyzstan and Beyond

In **Kyrgyzstan**, Spotlight Initiative supported the design and dissemination of a mobile phone game, called “**Spring in Bishkek**,” in collaboration with the Sigrid Rausing Trust and Soros Foundation. The game was developed by local activists, with input from psychologists and lawyers. This game uses Communication for Development strategies to demonstrate alternative behaviour models for girls, boys, and adults. Inspired by real cases and designed as an interactive comic strip, the phone app puts users in the shoes of a university freshman who becomes her friend’s sole lifeline in the face of gender-based violence and after the girl’s family refuses to defend her rights fearing social repercussions. Players are asked to name the heroine, choose a pet, and personalize other features, while visuals of widely known public spaces in Kyrgyzstan are depicted, building a personal connection, self-identification, and empathy with the game characters, whose fates are ultimately decided by the players. These characters gradually change their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards gender equality as the game progresses.

The game is designed to empower users to learn more about the practice of kidnapping for forced marriage and intimate partner violence in general, how to prevent it, and how to help others who may be targeted. Critically, young women have been engaged to inform the process – 120 young women tested the prototype, and within the first two weeks of the game’s launch, it was downloaded over 28,000 times. In 2020, the game received 4,685,609 views, positive feedback from 2,606 users, and has been downloaded 117,000 times. “Spring in Bishkek” attracted some media attention as an extreme case of ‘Ala Kachuu’ (kidnapping for forced marriage) was reported by a player who approached the game’s Instagram account for support. It is now played beyond Kyrgyzstan, including in Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. Looking ahead, Spotlight Initiative is working both to assess the extent to which the game has an impact on the gendered beliefs and attitudes of players with the hope that it has an impact on the practice itself, and to ensure it generates meaningful transformation in the lives of women and girls.





880,000

men and boys were educated on positive masculinity, respectful family relationships, non-violent conflict resolution and parenting

power relationships, Spotlight Initiative promotes an integrated approach to prevention that combines work with *both* men and women.

Spotlight Initiative engages with men and boys as allies in the effort to end violence against women and girls across its programmes. Interventions often fall under two broad categories: health behaviour-change approaches that focus on changing attitudes and negative behaviours, and participatory group education that promotes discussion around constructs of negative masculinities and inequitable gender norms, attitudes and behaviours. Overall, across Spotlight Initiative's target countries, **880,000 men and boys regularly attended gender transformative programmes that analyse gender roles, promote respectful family relationships, non-violent forms of conflict resolution and parenting, and healthy and safe home environments.**

In seven Spotlight Initiative programmes alone, 180 networks of men and boys, including networks of religious and traditional leaders, were established to challenge harmful practices that perpetuate violence

against women and girls and to promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls. Spotlight Initiative programmes, including those in **El Salvador, Mali, Mozambique, and Papua New Guinea**, worked with men as change agents to address gender stereotypes in their own lives and help mobilize and sensitize their peers to address violent behaviour, promote peace and mitigate conflicts. In **El Salvador** and **Mozambique**, for example, Spotlight Initiative worked with young men and adolescent boys on preventing sexual violence and adolescent pregnancy. Using group education and advocacy that promotes respect for women and girls and non-violent behaviour, young men and boys are prompted to reflect on who defines what it means to be “a man” and why these definitions exist. These reflections have been observed to have an immediate impact on participants' behaviours (including more peaceful resolution of conflicts, and reported use of contraception).

Sport, through people's participation, events, marketing and advertising, and the high visibility of professional athletes, has a significant influence on societies, and particularly on men and boys. Spotlight

“As men, we must change our minds and our actions. I tell my friends that they shouldn't get involved with girls under 18 years. They know it is wrong, but what they did not know is that they could go to jail,”

Guidion Gulamo, 25, Mozambique.

Initiative programmes have found that through sport, the values and practices of demonstrating respect for diversity, equality and non-violence can be promoted, as well as positive forms of masculinity. This includes not only the outward facing aspects of the sports world, but also the way in which sports organizations themselves are structured internally to promote gender equality and prevent abuse.

Assessments conducted by the Spotlight Initiative across programmes confirm that sport offers an opportunity to address negative masculinities within a peer culture of hypermasculinity, where sexism, sexual

entitlement, aggression, strength and domination among other attributes (for example, celebrity status and entitlement) create a conducive environment for violence perpetration both within and outside the sport environment.

In **Argentina**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative linked up with the National Sports Department to develop a toolkit of materials to support community dialogue. Engaging athletes, coaches and club managers, the materials prompt dialogue and conversation within sports communities and society more broadly to encourage prevention actions at community level.

CASE STUDY

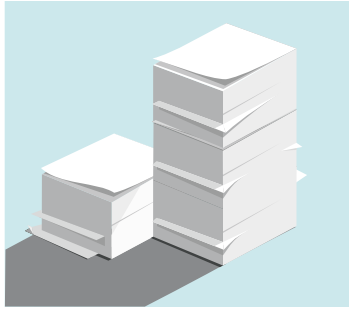
#AmigoDateCuenta: Promoting Healthy Masculinities

In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative co-designed a campaign focused on masculinity, called #AmigoDateCuenta. The campaign targeted young and adolescent men to encourage reflection on promoting healthy masculinities, free from prejudice. Designed in consultation with 11 civil society organizations, as well as members of the civil society reference group, #AmigoDateCuenta includes two videos and five animated tutorials that offer concrete tools to promote behaviour change on issues such as complicity among groups of friends, harassment and consensus in sexual relationships, and the participation of men in tasks in the home, including equal care.

The campaign had the support of the Argentine Football Association, which broadcasted it on its own channels and on those of associated clubs. Disney and FOX also donated space for broadcasting on different channels. A total of 50 male influencers shared the publications on their social networks, generating a following on Instagram of 15 million people. The name of the campaign set a trend on Twitter on launch day. Pieces from the campaign were used in El Salvador.



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Over the course of 2020, we've seen a **83%** increase (compared to 2019) in the number of cases of violence against women and girls reported to various institutions, and a **64%** increase in the number of cases reported to the police

5.2.4 Pillar 4: Services

Women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long-term recovery from violence.

Improving service provision is essential to mitigating the consequences of violence against women and girls. Providing quality and timely access to comprehensive multisectoral services can significantly contribute to breaking cycles of violence. Yet, despite extensive commitments by governments, women's and civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders, many women and girls still lack access to essential services, and, where basic support services do exist, they are typically underfunded, understaffed, not of sufficient quality, uncoordinated, or limited in scope or coverage.

In most Spotlight Initiative countries, national studies on the extent of violence against women and girls indicate that the majority of victims and survivors do not report their experiences to formal services. These findings underscore the importance of better connecting victims and survivors with appropriate care. In keeping with these findings, throughout 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes invested in strengthening the capacity of service providers and ensuring that these services were available, accessible, and of high quality for all women and girls, including those traditionally left behind. Across all programmes, the Spotlight Initiative successfully pivoted programming to ensure service availability and accessibility in the context of COVID-19.

The main results achieved include:

- Greater access to services in order to address violence against women and girls

- Strengthened institutional framework for improved service provision, including by ensuring a rights-based approach
- Strengthened research and knowledge production on improved services to end violence against women and girls
- Strengthened capacity for improved essential services among government, duty bearers and service providers
- Increased number of one-stop centres to improve care, safety and support of survivors of violence against women and girls
- Strengthened referral pathways

Greater access to services to eliminate violence against women and girls

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly intimate partner violence and domestic violence. As early as the beginning of April 2020, the United Nations issued an alert on the increasing incidence of violence against women worldwide. Spotlight Initiative's teams reported an 83 per cent increase in survivors seeking assistance from support services compared to 2019. This represents an additional 77,069 women and 20,209 girl survivors seeking assistance across different sectors in 12 countries. While this mostly reflects the increased incidence of violence in these countries, programme teams also identify this as a sign that the efforts undertaken, with Spotlight Initiative support, to streamline the accompaniment of survivors, to improve quality and access to services ; and to increase the accountability of perpetrators are all showing results. Increased trust by survivors in national and private-sector institutions to deliver quality services, protect them from retaliation and deliver reparations contributed to this high number of cases reported. This is illustrated by the higher number of women and girls accessing services in Spotlight Initiative countries, as well as the increased number of cases brought to court that then



Over **650,000**

women and girls were provided with gender-based violence services despite COVID-19 related constraints and lockdowns

led to convictions in 2020. Furthermore, the Spotlight Initiative worked hard to ensure that women and girls at greater risk of violence would be informed and aware of the existence of service delivery and specific modes of access, even while COVID-19 constraints were in place.

The foundational tool for interventions under this Pillar was the “Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence”, developed by the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, a partnership among UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO, and UNODC. The Spotlight Initiative defines essential services as including both immediate and long-term health care, psychological support, police and justice responses, and safe accommodation.

Implemented a rights-based approach to ensure no one is left behind, strengthening service provision

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported government, civil society and other stakeholders in delivering human rights-based, multisectoral, survivor-centred services. By utilizing this approach, the Initiative encouraged:

- Coordination among services across sectors
- Alignment of services with ethical guidelines
- Privacy and confidentiality

- Non-discrimination (including on the basis of gender, age, race or ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, HIV status or any other characteristic)
- Providing comprehensive information for individuals to make their own decisions

In **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative worked jointly with the Government to ensure that safe spaces for survivors of violence against women and girls were inclusive and accessible to women with disabilities, integrating the rights-based principle of non-discrimination and leaving no one behind. Reaching women who have been traditionally left behind in service provision has required Spotlight Initiative programmes to address the challenges of restricted access to essential services and public life at large. Spotlight Initiative teams supported the design and approval of gender-responsive policies on service delivery that included efforts to reduce social and operational barriers faced disproportionately by women facing multiple and intersecting structural barriers to access. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, in 2020, five countries developed strategies for increasing knowledge of, and access to, services for women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi**, for example, provided motorcycles and bicycles to protection officers, case managers and essential community workers, improving reach. In **Belize**, in close collaboration with national authorities, the Spotlight Initiative supported the development



1,865,476 women and girl survivors of violence have increased knowledge of quality essential services

of multisectoral protocols on sexual violence, with Standard Operating Procedures for the police and justice sectors, the health sector, the social services sector, and for coordination and governance. This is expected to improve the multisectoral response, and standardize the quality of prevention and mitigation services for sexual and gender-based violence, including for those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Adapting to COVID-19 in service provision

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative pivoted its model of service provision to rapidly adapt to the challenges posed by COVID-19 (including the closure, or reduction in hours, of shelters and health centres) while maintaining a rights-based approach aligned with leaving no one behind. These efforts were complemented with an extensive information campaign to ensure that women and girls exposed to violence were informed of their rights and about services available to them, even as COVID-19 related constraints were in place.

To ensure marginalized or hard-to-reach communities had access to services, innovative approaches were used, including by supporting remote service provision. In many programmes, including in **Papua New Guinea, Nigeria, Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Belize,**

Uganda, Tajikistan and Malawi, the Spotlight Initiative substantively invested in remote provision and remote case management, facilitated by enhanced access to information and communications technology of service providers and dedicated capacity building efforts. In **Haiti**, the Initiative designed a case management system and remote provision modalities for implementation in 2021. Direct support to returnee women migrant workers who had to repatriate due to loss of jobs, incomes and travel restrictions was ensured through support to quarantine facilities and shelters. In Myanmar and Indonesia, quarantine centre staff received training by the **Safe and Fair programme** on violence against women. In Indonesia and Viet Nam, shelters for survivors of violence were provided technical guidance to ensure they could remain operational during the pandemic and could safely provide services to women, including women migrant workers.

Hotlines were supported across programmes as well. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative pivoted to invest more heavily in dedicated telephone lines and digital service provision for survivors of violence against women and girls, including by supporting the public 144 hotline to ensure an intersectoral and intersectional perspective in their response.



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In **Haiti**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the technical and operational capacity of two hotlines in partnership with the *Institut de Bien-être Social et de Recherches* and the Child Protection Brigade of the Police, and supported civil society organizations to establish hotlines dedicated to reaching LGBTQI+ communities and survivors of violence against women and girls. In countries of destination, the **Safe and Fair programme** prioritized support to helpline services addressing violence against women, including women migrant workers. In Malaysia and Thailand, major helpline services were supported to provide interpretation services in the major languages used by migrants.

The Spotlight Initiative also continued to provide support through mobile clinics, offering coordinated sexual and reproductive health services, psychosocial counselling, information and referrals, and longer-term recovery services to vulnerable populations living in remote areas, including to persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV and AIDS in **Mozambique, Niger, Haiti and Belize**. In **Belize**, the Initiative, in coordination with civil society organizations, launched the “mobile women’s centres” model. The success of the centres rested on the meaningful engagement of civil society organizations, which promoted local ownership and fostered trust with communities. In 2020 alone, the first six mobile women’s centres provided holistic care and support to almost 400 women and girls in the southern and northern regions of the country. Building on this, in 2021 the programme will develop a sustainability strategy as a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for mobile service delivery.

By enhancing the focus on protective measures – including supporting access to personal protective equipment (PPE) for service providers and survivors of violence against women and girls – Spotlight Initiative teams have helped to ensure that women and girls are able to continue to access non-stigmatizing multisectoral violence against women and girls response services through “Safe Spaces”, including in **Nigeria, Mozambique, Haiti, Niger, El Salvador and Timor-Leste**.

Strengthened institutional frameworks for improved service provision

Assessments conducted by Spotlight Initiative teams and partners indicate that, despite improvements to the legal frameworks and justice systems, the police

and justice sector response remains inadequate, with justice often delayed or denied. In light of this, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported efforts to hold the police and justice sectors accountable as duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of survivors.

As mentioned under Pillar 1, Spotlight Initiative teams have supported the review and reform of legal systems and frameworks to ensure that prosecutorial processes and procedures are streamlined and include provisions guaranteeing survivors’ rights. In **Honduras**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Public Prosecutor’s Office, developed a protocol to implement the recently approved Penal Code, with specific provisions now included to ensure effective access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls.

Access to effective remedies is often hampered by delays in the adjudicatory process, adjournments of proceedings, congestion in courts, and a widespread culture of impunity. Additionally, the capacity of law and security institutions to deliver restorative justice remains limited due to lack of trained law enforcement agents, especially trained female officers. In **Nigeria**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the establishment of a Presidential Special Investigation Panel on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, contributing to enhanced access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls. Together with other efforts of the programme over the past two years, the panel will aid in identifying perpetrators, help ensure adequate access to effective remedies, reparation measures, and restorative justice, and provide support to individuals to navigate the judicial process.

In **Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Zimbabwe, Liberia and Tajikistan**, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the provision of extensive legal aid services to survivors, with a focus on ensuring that women and girls not only knew their rights but also were supported in navigating complex processes and procedures.

CASE STUDY

Fostering the DNA Forensic Systems in Zimbabwe: A Ground-Breaking Step to Ensure Access to Justice for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls

Forensic evidence, such as DNA, is among the most important pieces of evidence in cases of survivors of violence against women and girls, and plays a crucial role in ensuring that survivors of violence against women and girls can substantiate their claim (which, in turn, can help motivate survivors to report).

In **Zimbabwe**, as in other Spotlight Initiative programmes, the Spotlight Initiative enhanced access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls by strengthening the national DNA forensic systems, an unprecedented milestone in efforts to end impunity and ensure access to effective remedies. Following a detailed assessment of existing gaps and bottlenecks in the forensic evidence system in Zimbabwe, the Spotlight Initiative fostered the technical capacity of police, health and justice personnel to collect, analyse and present forensic evidence. This is expected to produce substantial impacts on the adjudication of cases of violence against women and girls, as it will support the standard use of DNA evidence in court cases of violence against women and girls for the first time in Zimbabwe's history.

Strengthened research and knowledge production around violence against women and girls services

In order to effectively implement activities under this Pillar, each Spotlight Initiative team conducted an assessment to establish existing knowledge and capacity, to identify gaps in available services, and to determine the factors that provide for an enabling environment. This assessment allowed Spotlight Initiative teams to establish objectives for meeting unmet needs and filling capacity gaps in service delivery.

In **Argentina, Kyrgyzstan, Honduras, and Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative assessments were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society actors, justice officials and service providers, and they brought to light the capacity, quantity, and quality of existing essential services. Based on the findings of the assessments, the teams designed tailored strategies to enhance response services and ensure access to effective remedies tackling emerging challenges, including in the context of COVID-19. In **Malawi and El Salvador**, specific investments were made to map and assess the need for services based on community demographics, with a focus on those traditionally marginalized,

such as women with disabilities. The study identified the barriers faced by women and girls in accessing services, particularly in the health sector. Building on the results of the study, tailored capacity-building efforts have been undertaken to increase accessibility to quality services for women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

In the countries where the Spotlight Initiative supported the implementation and roll out of the Essential Services Package (ESP), a reference guide for providing services to survivors, the Spotlight Initiative acted as a “unifying agent”, bringing multiple national partners together to meet on a regular basis. In **Mexico**, building on the Essential Service Package, the Spotlight Initiative team, in collaboration with government authorities, developed tailored training modules to respond to specific challenges faced by survivors while accessing coordinated quality services at the community level. These learning tools were aimed at fostering the ability of municipal authorities and front-line service providers to provide support and care to survivors of violence against women and girls. A specialized package, inclusive of a model protocol for investigation of femicide and a technical guidance for service providers working in shelters, was also developed by the programme team. **As of 2020, 75 per cent of target Spotlight Initiative**

countries have developed their national guidelines and protocols for essential services in line with UN guidance and tools.

Strengthened capacity for improved essential services among government, duty bearers and service providers

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the dissemination, adaptation and roll-out of the Essential Services Package as a reference guide for training and coordinating stakeholders involved in service delivery. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 15 countries have developed or strengthened their national guidelines and protocols in line with the guidance and tools for essential services provided by the Spotlight Initiative's agencies. In **Samoa** and **Vanuatu**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Ministry of Women Community & Social Development and Ministry of Health to develop national guidelines and protocols to respond to violence against women and girls, particularly in the health sector, and to strengthen the capacity of front-line responders to deliver quality services. In **El Salvador**, in partnership with the *Sistema Nacional de Atención para mujeres y niñas que enfrentan violencia (The National Care System for Women and Girls Facing Violence)*, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to the redesigning and fostering of the national coordination mechanism through the development of a joint coordination plan

engaging all key service providers, in line with the Essential Service Package principles.

In addition to work on legal reform, the Spotlight Initiative undertook a wide range of capacity-building exercises in the justice and police sectors. These trainings focused on conducting investigations, prosecution and adjudication of violence against women and girls, as well as specific information on service delivery. In **Mozambique, Uganda, Malawi, Argentina, Uganda, Niger, Honduras, and El Salvador**, as well as throughout the countries covered by the **Safe and Fair programme**, the Spotlight Initiative facilitated the training of embassy officials, police officers, custom officers, security and border control personnel, prosecutors, lawyers and judges on gender equality and violence against women and girls.

In adapting the Essential Services Package at country level, several Spotlight Initiative countries also developed standard operating procedures, protocols and training manuals to ensure that all actors have the capacity and tools to work within a coordinated structure of appropriate service response. The knowledge products created and disseminated by the Spotlight Initiative programme – more than 145 knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making in 2020 – clearly identified essential actions and existing gaps in each sector. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, nearly

CASE STUDY

The Essential Service Package: Setting Standards for Survivor-Centred Service Delivery in Malawi

In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative succeeded in the institutionalization of the Essential Service Package at the national level. National authorities recognized the unique value of the Essential Service Package in guiding the delivery of a survivor-centred approach in service delivery. With a focus on health, social services, police and justice sectors, the Essential Service Package was adopted as a roadmap to reform the service delivery model in line with international standards.

This resulted in the inclusion of a dedicated training module on quality service delivery in the official learning curriculum of the police sector, which was endorsed by the High Command of the Police. Similarly, the Ministry of Health revised the One-Stop Centre Guidelines on Management of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in line with the Essential Service Package guidelines and protocols. The programme also explored the implications for the provision of essential services for women and girls who have experienced violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting the standards set by the Essential Service Package to the emerging challenges.

CASE STUDY

Reshaping the System to Identify Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls in Guyana

In Guyana, the Spotlight Initiative built the capacity of owners of community shops and pharmacies to identify signs of abuse in women and timely refer survivors to the appropriate support services, including psychosocial support services. The target group increased its understanding on the 'do no harm' guiding principle and on how to adopt an intersectional approach while referring to vulnerable categories of survivors, such as migrants, teen mothers, and LGBTQI+. With the aim of adopting a holistic approach and fostering the early-identification system, the Spotlight Initiative also built the capacity of five community-based civil society organizations and local shelter personnel. Thanks to this innovative approach, the Spotlight Initiative achieved the following results:

- 192 consultations were conducted with survivors in the target communities
- 9 counselling sessions were completed for survivors of violence against women and girls
- 59 referrals of survivors of violence against women and girls were made to the appropriate service providers
- 50 at-risk teenage girls received psychosocial support
- 26 information sessions were conducted
- 195 teen mothers and at-risk teenage girls benefitted from care packages.



20,655

key government service providers in 24 countries increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality, coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence.

2 million women and girl survivors of violence have increased knowledge of quality essential services. Furthermore, more than 650,000 women and girl survivors of violence gained greater access to services, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, through the opening of new service delivery points, longer opening hours and mobile services.

Spotlight Initiative programmes conducted capacity-building sessions on, among other things, the Essential Services Package and facilitated information-sharing among relevant stakeholders. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 20,655 key government service providers in 21 countries increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence.

In **Tajikistan, Haiti, Guyana, Timor-Leste, and Liberia**, for instance, front-line service providers in the health sector have increased their capacity to provide respectful care to survivors of rape and other forms of violence against women and girls and have increased their understanding on how to safely adapt their practice to the new challenges that emerged with COVID-19. Thanks to these capacity-building activities, health professionals have increased their knowledge on international standards in service delivery as well as national protocols and legislations, increasing their ability to timely identify cases of violence, abuse and exploitation and provide quality medical and psychosocial services and referral to other relevant services. During the reporting period, the **Safe and Fair programme** enhanced the capacities

of 18,892 persons, from front-line service providers to members of women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, to coordinate service provision and address violence against women migrant workers.

In addition to the Essential Services Package, Spotlight Initiative programmes invested significant resources in identifying structural and operational bottlenecks in service provision. In **Timor-Leste**, for example, the programme invested significant resources in building the capacity of health service providers to overcome bottlenecks that emerged as a consequence of COVID-19 and provide quality services and referrals to survivors of violence against women and girls.

Increased number of one-stop centres to improve care, safety and support of survivors of violence against women and girls

One-stop centres are a promising model for providing comprehensive care to survivors of violence against women and girls, including an integrated rule of law response, and are run according to survivor-centred principles, ensuring confidentiality, respect, safety and security.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative set up or supported both static and mobile One-stop centres across programmes, including in **Nigeria, Niger, Mali, Mozambique, Belize and Argentina**. One-stop centres offer medical, police, legal and psychosocial services all within one location, usually a hospital or a stand-alone centre. The teams supported stand-alone one-stop centres, which the Spotlight initiative programmes found to be more private and flexible than the hospital setting, and located them in areas where other health centres or hospitals were not easily accessible. This allowed the Spotlight Initiative to better engage underserved populations, such as women and girls in rural areas. In 2020, one-stop centres had to adapt their operations to the challenges that emerged with COVID-19. In **Nigeria and Zimbabwe**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative supported one-stop centres and shelters to remain open during the health crisis through the provision of personal protective equipment and an enhanced focus on protective measures and

information sharing. In **Mali**, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to promoting the one-stop centre model by providing direct support to the establishment of ten one-stop centres in the target regions, which are expected to be operational and providing quality services to survivors of violence in 2021.³⁵

In several countries, the Spotlight Initiative invested substantively in creating mobile one-stop centres to reach women and girls living in remote and hard-to-reach areas. This model has been proven to be effective within the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought additional mobility challenges due to the protracted national lockdowns and reduced availability of transportation. In **Zimbabwe**, for example, mobile one-stop centres enhanced service uptake among the most vulnerable survivors of violence against women and girls in remote and hard-to-reach communities. Thanks to mobile one-stop centres, the programme reached 5,862 survivors with services for survivors of violence against women and girls through mobile one-stop centres in 12 target districts. The introduction of a mobile one-stop centre model enhanced service uptake among the most vulnerable people, proving its efficiency during a period of protracted and intersecting crisis. In **Mozambique**, the programme provided holistic support through six mobile clinics, which provided basic health services for survivors as well as information and referrals to vulnerable populations living in remote areas, including persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV and AIDS. As a result, 136 mobile community brigades outreach interventions were held, reaching a total of 19,840 people (11,566 women and girls and 8,274 men and boys) and resulting in a total of 354 cases of violence against women and girls registered.

³⁵ While completing the renovation of the ten one-stop centres, the Spotlight Initiative ensured that survivors of violence against women and girls had access to essential services in public hospitals in target regions.

CASE STUDY

A Holistic Approach to Service Provision: The Multi-Service Centres for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls in Niger

In order to ensure comprehensive and holistic support to survivors of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative in **Niger** enhanced the technical and operational capacity of four multi-service centres for survivors of violence against women and girls and harmful practices in the target regions of the programme. During the reporting period, the programme undertook the rehabilitation of existing facilities, fostering their ability to effectively deliver comprehensive support to survivors and meet the specific needs of the most marginalized groups of women. During the reporting period, the multi-service centre of Tillabéri became fully operational while the rehabilitation process is almost concluded in the multi-service centre of Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

To complement the services offered by multi-service centres and effectively reach survivors living in rural or remote areas, the Spotlight Initiative also established multidisciplinary mobile teams, composed of a psychologist, a caseworker, a legal advisor and a midwife. In order to effectively integrate the principle of 'leaving no one behind', the mobile team was trained on the specific needs of marginalized women and girls.

To ensure effective access to the existing multi-service centres, the Spotlight Initiative ensured ownership and meaningful engagement of local populations and key community leaders. For instance, the engagement of traditional and religious leaders has been crucial to ensure an effective referral mechanism toward multi-service centres and mobile services and avoid stigmatization of survivors of violence against women and girls. Their successful engagement is demonstrated by the fact that among the 124 survivors who visited the clinics, a third were referred by the traditional chiefs and religious leaders.

Strengthened referral pathways

During the reporting period, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to establishing and enhancing referral mechanisms for survivors of violence against women and girls. In **Zimbabwe**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative, thanks to a partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, continued to timely identify and report violence against women and girls cases along the existing referral pathways through a Gender-Based Violence Community Surveillance System. In order to ensure continuation of operations during the outbreak of COVID-19, the Gender-Based Violence Community Surveillance's personnel were provided with personal protective equipment, targeted information education and communication materials and internet credit to partially migrate service provision on-line.

In **Jamaica**, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to developing referral pathways for survivors of

violence facing multiple and intersecting forms of discriminations, such as persons with disabilities, the LGBTQI+ community and persons living with HIV and AIDS, among others.

During the reporting period the Spotlight Initiative contributed to expand referral pathways beyond traditional service providers, reaching women and girls who are often left behind. For instance, in **Papua New Guinea**, in partnership with the Business Coalition for Women, the Spotlight Initiative conducted an extensive mapping exercise identifying appropriate referral pathways and supported private-sector companies in making adequate referrals for survivors of violence against women and girls.

Recognizing the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration, multiple Spotlight programmes worked to engage and enhance the ability of traditional community leaders in their role in delivering justice and ending violence against women and girls from a

CASE STUDY

Service Directory for Women Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region

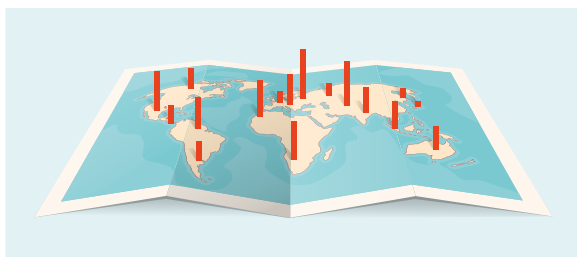
Effective coordination and referrals are crucial to ensuring a timely response to the needs of women migrant workers subject to violence. The **Safe and Fair programme**, covering the ASEAN region, has developed a [Regional Service Directory for Women Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region](#) for this purpose. The service directory enables referrals, including for women migrant workers who are survivors of violence, by sharing information on available essential service providers across the region. The list includes the leading entities providing assistance to survivors of violence against women migrant workers in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, and a post-card version was disseminated to women migrant workers in nine different languages. Services featured in the directory include the health, police, justice, social, and labour sectors as well as hotlines and shelters.

policy perspective. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative, in association with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, worked together with traditional community leaders and formed the National Chief's Forum in 2020 to strengthen and harmonize the role of Chiefs in eliminating gender-based violence, particularly harmful culture practices, including by

ensuring effective referral pathways and mechanisms for survivors of violence. As a result of the Forum, 47 sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices cases were referred to police and social welfare services through the chiefs, underscoring the success of this type of partnership and outreach strategy.



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74% of countries where Spotlight is active now have publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on intimate partner violence

5.2.5 Pillar 5: Data

Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes.

Quality data that is reliable, comparable, and disaggregated by gender, type of violence, and populations is essential. This supports a data-driven understanding of the landscape and trends in violence against women and girls and is key to developing policies and programmes with appropriate budgets. Violence against women and girls increases in the context of crisis, and has done so dramatically in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns and service restrictions, according to national statistical offices across different countries and regions. The UN Secretary General, António Guterres, issued a global appeal for peace in the home – an end to all violence everywhere, from war zones to people’s homes – in March 2020 when early warning indications pointed to an upsurge in violence against women and girls. However, data that offer a comprehensive picture of the scope of the increase, and the diverse types of violence faced, are not readily available across all countries over the COVID-19 pandemic period compared with the previous years.

Capacity problems, limited human resources, and a lack of technological investments, coupled with gender inequitable social norms and a lack of political will, often drive the dearth of reliable data on gender equality and violence against women and girls at the country level. Under Pillar 5, the Spotlight Initiative has focused on strengthening the collection and use of globally comparable data, in alignment with international standards, on different forms of violence against women and girls.

The main results achieved include:

- More countries have data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices and know how to use it strategically
- Strengthened information-management systems on violence against women and girls
- Improved data disaggregation on violence against women and girls
- Strengthened prevalence, attitude and norm research around violence against women and girls at the national level

More countries have data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices and know how to use it strategically

In order to adequately address violence against women and girls, high quality data on prevalence, incidence, and type of violence must be publicly available, reliable, and disaggregated.

Overall, the Spotlight Initiative’s interventions have contributed to increasing the number of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries that have publicly available data on intimate partner violence – reported on a regular basis – from 63 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020. More specifically, with support from the Spotlight initiative, regularly reported public data on female genital mutilation was available in 57 per cent of targeted programmes and data on child marriage in 60 per cent of countries targeted. In 2020, 100 per cent of the Spotlight Initiative programmes measuring the availability of data on family violence reported on a regular basis. Trafficking data was publicly available and regularly reported in 25 per cent of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries.

At programme level, a number of Spotlight Initiative teams made advancements in collecting data, including **Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Zimbabwe**, and

Mozambique. In **Mozambique**, national statistics officers received training on the collection of data on gender-based violence. The National Statistics Offices of **Samoa, Malawi, Mexico and Nigeria**, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, have developed, adapted and contextualized methods and standards to produce national-level prevalence and incidence data on violence against women and girls. In **Niger** and **Zimbabwe**, for example, programmes have been reviving national statistical bodies which had been latent, placing the collection of gender-related data at the centre stage once more. In **Niger**, the country is revitalizing the National Observatory for Gender Promotion and strengthening the ability of staff members to collect national level data on the

perception and prevalence of violence against women and girls for service improvement and advocacy. The National Observatory for Gender Promotion encourages institutions to report on and use gender data for monitoring, and to assess the effectiveness of implementation of national, regional and international gender commitments.

In 2020, many Spotlight Initiative teams supported the capacity development of agencies and civil society groups to help them use the data they collected more effectively. This work fills an important gap in mobilizing support and action for ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 91 per cent of

TABLE 5.3. LEVEL OF DATA DISAGGREGATION BY PROGRAMME

	Argentina		El Salvador		Honduras		LARP		Malawi		Nigeria	
	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020
1) Income	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	○	○	○
2) Sex	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3) Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
4) Ethnicity	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○
5) Disability	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	●
6) Geographic Location	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7) Forms of violence	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Uganda		Zimbabwe		Belize		Pacific Regional Programme		Papua New Guinea	
	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020
1) Income	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●
2) Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3) Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
4) Ethnicity	●	●	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
5) Disability	●	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	○	○
6) Geographic Location	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7) Forms of violence	○	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●

● Milestone for 2020
 ● 2020
 ○ 2020 > Milestone
 ○ 2020 did not achieve Milestone

Indonesia

“I’m happy to be able to help others, especially fellow migrant workers.”

- Dina Nuriyati,
Workers’ rights advocate



©ILO: Carina Uchida

targeted countries have improved systems to collect administrative data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices, disaggregated to better reflect multiple forms of discrimination and in line with international standards, across different sectors.

Across programmes, including in **Malawi, Mali, Uganda, and Honduras**, the Spotlight Initiative supported statistical offices, duty bearers and civil society organizations, among others, to analyse existing data sets, and to develop policy briefs and bulletins as well as profiles on violence against women and girls and harmful practices. In **Malawi**, after the police received training on how to collect and analyse data related to sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, reports of sexual violence cases increased by 22 per cent from quarter 1 to quarter 3. This data helps the government and police direct more resources to addressing these cases and setting up support mechanisms, in addition to providing a more accurate snapshot of the diverse forms of violence that women and girls face. In the **Africa Regional Programme**, a cost and impact modelling exercise was conducted to determine the level of investment required to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2030. Based on the analysis, which used programme data, secondary data, and population-level costing methods, it was **estimated that it would take USD 3.3 billion to reach the high-coverage targets by 2030 and avert 25 million cases of female genital mutilation**. The report will appear in a [peer-reviewed journal](#)

[article](#). Data have already been used to advocate for increased investment in programmes preventing female genital mutilation.

Data dashboards and visualizations have also been developed for one-stop centres, to improve the ability of partners to track trends and adjust their responses in a timely fashion. In **Mali**, Spotlight Initiative has engaged in national research with the National Institute of Statistics to determine the gaps in data related to violence against women and girls and the needs in developing a national statistical database. These insights set pivotal groundwork for a national collection of statistics on violence against women and girls.

Many Spotlight Initiative countries engaged in baseline data collection on violence against women and girls in the country, setting standardized indicators around violence against women and girls that can be used to track progress over time and across agencies. This supports performance monitoring areas for programmatic improvement and learning. In **Mozambique**, in 2020 a baseline study was developed by the Justice Administration Directorate to understand how to best deliver justice-related services to the most vulnerable groups (1,264 households and 1,221 individuals were part of the sample). In **Belize**, capacity building of staff connected to a case management system of the judiciary used new technology to streamline data collection activities around violence against women and girls.

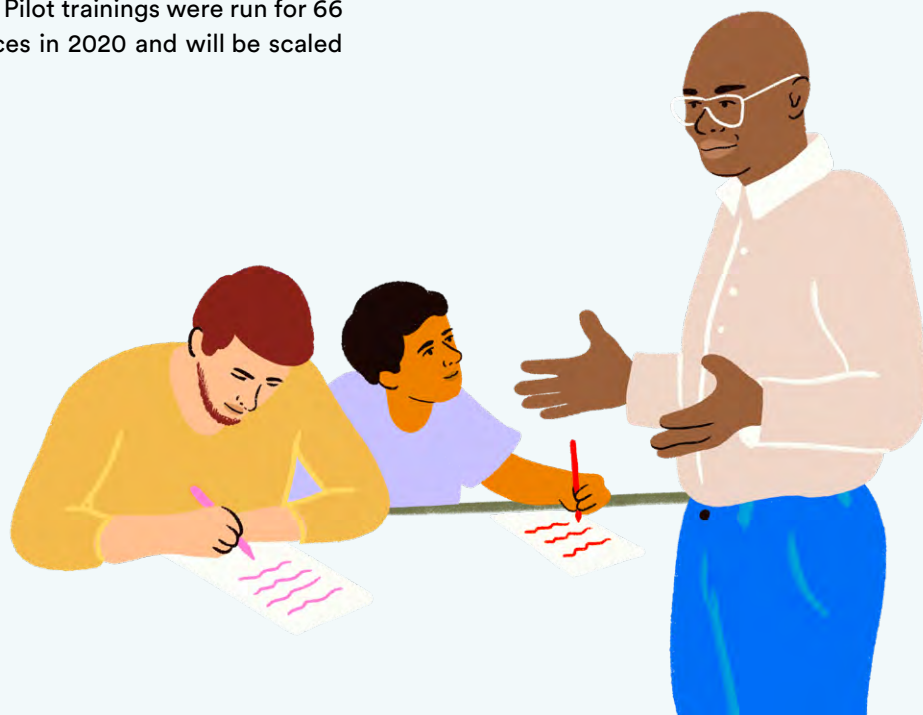
Strengthened information-management systems on violence against women and girls

Data on violence against women and girls is often fragmented, inconsistent, stored in different databases, and unreliably collected. A common data collection framework and system with clear operational definitions, taxonomies, and shared indicators helps ensure a standardized approach to the generation and use of data and strengthens data interoperability. As a result, institutional capacity to monitor violence against women and girls and provide targeted services often improves.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to stronger and more integrated information management systems on violence against women and girls across programmes, including in **Argentina, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Regional programme, Samoa, and Uganda**. Key achievements in 2020 included developing and scaling up use of Spotlight Initiative-supported digital information management systems, such as in **Mozambique and Liberia**. Building on work in 2019, in **Mozambique**, the gender-based violence data management platform (InfoViolencia) was installed and is currently running through the Ministry of the Interior. InfoViolencia helps service providers and the police to more quickly process survivor cases and provide expedient access to the right services and access to justice. Pilot trainings were run for 66 users in three provinces in 2020 and will be scaled

up in other provinces in 2021 through collaboration among the Ministry of Interior, UNDP, and UNFPA. In **Liberia**, tool standardization was enhanced in the information management systems and an information-sharing protocol established between data producers at different ministries, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. Enhanced data coordination among these agencies was a major achievement, as was the capacity building of staff that managed data and supported its use.

In **Samoa**, Spotlight Initiative leveraged global best practices and experiences across diverse UN agencies, scaling up lessons learned from the Pacific Partnership in Ending Violence Against Women, to improve tracking of incidents of violence against women and girls in the Pacific Islands. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative worked in partnership with the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity to strengthen the Integrated System for Cases of Gender-Based Violence in 2020. The system systemizes and consolidates data on cases, queries, and complaints across different agencies at the national, municipal, and provincial levels, as well as with national civil society organizations. The data system is a core component of the National Plan of Action against Violence and strengthens the country's ability to deliver reliable data and statistics for public policy making and to ensure survivors of violence against women and girls get timely access to services and care.



©Sol Cotti



Improved data disaggregation on violence against women and girls

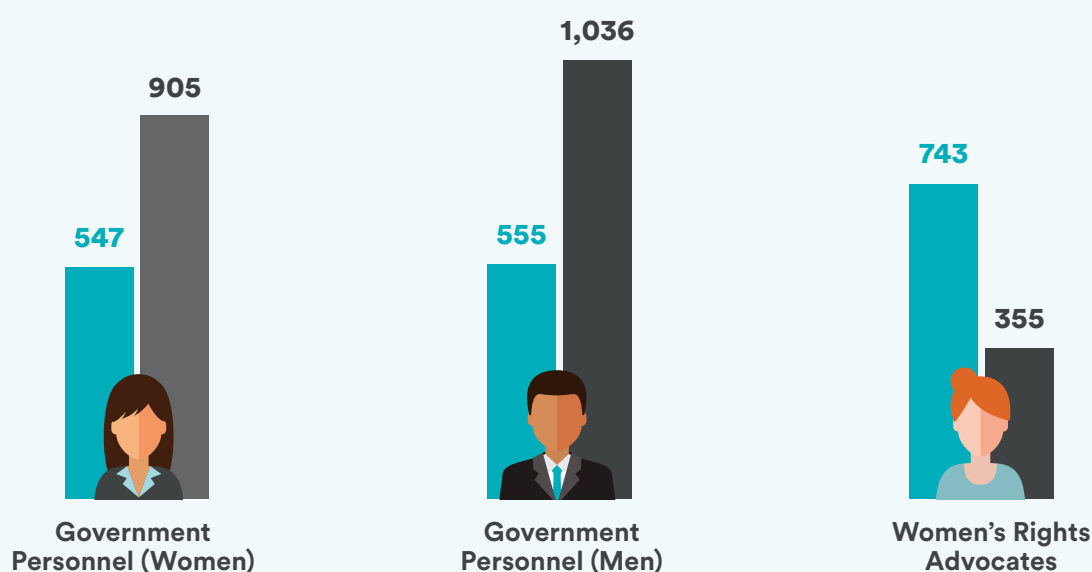
When specific forms of violence or specific populations are not accounted for during data collection, marginalized populations as well as the most prevalent types of violence often get obscured. Upholding the principle of leaving no one behind and non-discrimination, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to improving disaggregation of data related to eliminating violence against women and girls in order to more readily reflect the full diversity of women's and girls' intersecting identities in many contexts including in **Liberia, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Samoa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**.

In **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Gender-based Violence Information Management System (IMS) initiative to provide accurate data on

gender-based violence disaggregated by gender, age, type of violence (rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, physical assault, denial of resources, and others) and region. The data allowed the government and service providers to track the impact of COVID-19 on existing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities in the country over time. In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative supported a baseline assessment and dashboard to track peoples' displacement and cross-border movements, which could be used to inform policies and actions for trafficking in persons at five points on the Uganda border with Kenya. A dashboard was developed to track gender based violence in the four sub-counties of Amudat district on a monthly basis and cross-border movements during the months of September-December 2020; about 4275 cross-border movements were tracked, 32 per cent women and 68 per cent men.

Government Personnel and Women's Rights Advocates with enhanced capacities to...

-  analyse and disseminate prevalence and/or incidence data on violence against women and girls
-  collect prevalence and/or incidence data, including qualitative data, on violence against women and girls in line with international and regional standards



The Spotlight Initiative made progress in 2020 raising awareness on the usefulness of gender data and supporting the development of indicators on gender based violence. It also contributed to strengthened capacity of national actors and structures to produce disaggregated statistics by age, sex, location, socio-economic status, and disability. For example, the Spotlight Initiative **Pacific Regional Programme** is prioritizing making data collection tools easier to use and with useful analysis, especially addressing issues for those left furthest behind. In 2020, **Samoa** and other countries made progress on building capacity-building tools that are inclusive of people with disabilities through the kNowVAWdata initiative.

Having disaggregated data led to better results in ending violence against women and girls, for example by supporting better understanding of the profiles of people who require support. For example, in **Kyrgyzstan**, an inter-agency working group, consisting of Spotlight Initiative staff, the National Statistic Committee and the General Prosecutor's Office developed gender-disaggregated data reporting forms on gender-related crimes and misdemeanors which were to be included in the Unified Registry of Crimes and Misdemeanors. Additionally, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ukuk State Enterprise (SE "Ukuk") – mandated by the General Prosecutor's Office to modernize the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanors (ERPP) – are developing a victim-card that documents sexual and gender-based violence survivor data disaggregated by sex, age, education, marital status, and other social characteristics, which will be required for submitting an entry to the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanors, creating a more consistent and comparable dataset across agencies.

Strengthened prevalence, attitude and norm research around violence against women and girls data at the national level

Spotlight initiative programmes engaged in diverse efforts to build the body of knowledge and evidence on violence against women and girls and to strengthen data and national statistics offices. Having reliable data on the prevalence of different forms of violence against women and girls and on social norms related to the acceptance of violence is critical for policymaking and programming, including monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (in **Uganda**, for example, Spotlight Initiative supported research on

gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health and rights for reporting on SDG 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6).

Through the Spotlight Initiative's support, a total of 251 national statistics officers, 124 women and 127 men, have strengthened capacities to produce data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and incidence where appropriate. A total of 4,141 participants, including government personnel and women's rights advocates, supported by Spotlight Initiative programmes, have enhanced capacities to collect, analyse and disseminate prevalence and incidence data on violence against women and girls.

Collecting data and evidence to better understand perceptions and normative issues that maintain or reproduce violence against women and girls or harmful traditional practices was a focus in 2020. For example, in **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative is supporting the General Directorate of Statistics to strengthen nationally representative and globally comparable data on violence against women and girls through Demographic and Health Surveys program (DHS) modules. This work has further deepened an understanding of what drives violence against women, including community awareness and understanding of what constitutes sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative modified the National Survey of Prevalence and Incidence of Gender-Based Violence, the first survey with a representative sample from different regions of the country, to allow for reliable and valid data even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that the survey captures the specifics of gender-based violence, including its underlying drivers, in the context of the pandemic.

Reliable, nationally representative and comparable data on prevalence rates and social and cultural norms related to violence against women and girls are often carried out through surveys. In many countries, the Spotlight Initiative made advancements in developing or strengthening this data. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative leveraged the U-Report survey to identify areas that need deeper attention in programming and service delivery, from the perspective of rights-holders. For example, three national polls were held in 2020 on sexual and reproductive health rights that showed that 72 per cent of all respondents felt early pregnancy was the most important health issue facing girls. A poll focused on women in Spotlight Initiative

districts found that over half of women (52 per cent) shared that discrimination against women and girls needed to be urgently addressed; however, only a quarter of men considered this topic a serious issue (26 per cent).

The **Latin American Regional Programme** advanced the Latin American Protocol Model for Investigating Violent Deaths of Women for Gender Reasons (Femicides) in 2020. The Spotlight Initiative engaged in tool development to document and investigate violent deaths of women using a gender lens and leveraged diverse government partnerships through the Ibero-America Association of Public Ministries. Spotlight Initiative support led to the following outcomes:

- Documenting the adaption of the protocol to track femicides and identify lessons learned in Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador and Guatemala to support other countries and local governments in the region to adopt this work
- Creating a follow-up mechanism for the application of the Latin American Protocol of Investigation of Femicides and analysing femicide in the context of organized crime
- Recommendations to members of public ministries on how to address femicide and violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19

To ensure that Spotlight Initiative support is aligned with and responsive to local and national contexts, in 2020, consultations were held and groundwork laid across Spotlight Initiative countries with a range of partners, including government ministries, statistical offices, academic institutions, national institutes of statistics, and women's rights organizations. As a result, progress in available knowledge and data of

violence against women and girls occurred in **Belize, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Tajikistan, and Uganda**. In **Honduras**, with diverse inputs from civil society and government, Spotlight Initiative supported the National Women's Institute (INAM) to construct an index on violence against women and girls, which will be launched in 2021 as a permanent tool of the INAM National Gender Observatory. In **Haiti**, the Spotlight Initiative technically supported a CARE International and UN Women initiative to ensure that violence against women and girls was integrated into a Rapid Gender Assessment in the context of COVID-19. The research resulted in a report that assessed women's and their families' priority needs in connection with national response plans for COVID-19. The results showed an increase in requests for support and services for survivors of violence against women and girls, which was critical given the absence of national official data on the situation as well as lack of awareness about service availability and options.

In general, the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge to work on data, as lockdowns and limitations on in-person gatherings resulted in delayed or scaled-back data collection. The **Zimbabwe** team noted that interventions under this Outcome were the most impacted by COVID-19, and in **Grenada**, the programme reallocated approximately 14 per cent of the funds originally allocated to Outcome 5 for the procurement of personal protective equipment. Even so, several Spotlight Initiative programmes were able to pivot programming under this Pillar not only to achieve originally intended Outcomes but also to reach unexpected results. By factoring COVID-19 into Outcome 5 interventions, programmes ultimately enabled more comprehensive data collection that will provide important insights moving forward.





1,254 local and grassroots women's organizations were supported to structure and expand their activities to end violence against women and girls

5.2.6 Pillar 6: Women's Movement and Civil Society

Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination or marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on gender equality and women's empowerment and ending violence against women and girls.

Spotlight Initiative's commitment to civil society organizations, especially feminist and women's rights organizations and movements led to the expansion of the Theory of Change in 2017 and the inclusion of Outcome 6. In addition to weaving civil society support, partnership, and collaboration through all Outcome Areas, Spotlight Initiative prioritized direct support to women's rights and feminist organizations and movements, and in particular grassroots organizations. This addition was paramount as women's rights groups, autonomous social movements, and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination or marginalization, are a driving force of transformational change on gender equality and in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

All Spotlight Initiative programmes commit to investing 10-15 per cent of total activity funding to Outcome 6. Across all five regions, the Spotlight Initiative has exceeded this target, with 14 per cent³⁶ of total activity costs (approximately USD 33 million) currently planned for Outcome 6.

The main results achieved include:

- More women's rights organizations and civil society organizations have influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls
- Strengthened research, knowledge, and mappings regarding women's movements and civil society actions
- Strengthened women's rights, feminist, local and grassroots organizations and movements
- Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women's rights organizations
- Civil society organizations, including women's rights organizations, have greater influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls, especially through increased engagement within official policy and planning processes and accountability mechanisms



189
official dialogues were held
in nineteen countries

³⁶ All Pillar 6 funding is from current programme budgets. United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Safe and Fair are not reflected.



79 jointly agreed recommendations were developed (on gender equality or violence against women and girls) as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues

Historically and presently, diverse feminist, women's rights and social justice movements have been at the forefront of progressive change, challenging intersecting supremacies (including colonialism, racism, sexism, able-ism and neoliberalism, among others) and imagining alternatives. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative supported the coordinated efforts of civil society organizations to end violence against women and girls through participation in official dialogues and processes and via shadow reports and accountability mechanisms.

Overall, in 2020, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 189 official dialogues were held in 19 countries, with the meaningful participation of women's rights groups and relevant civil society organizations among the relevant government authorities, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. As a result, 79 jointly agreed recommendations on policies to end violence against women and girls and increase the accountability of perpetrators were developed, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative programmes, in **Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda**. Altogether 341 women's right groups and relevant civil society organizations, with support from Spotlight Initiative programmes, increased their use of citizen audits, shadow reporting, or other accountability mechanisms to advocate for ending violence against women and girls.

Through Spotlight Initiative-supported training on accountability mechanisms, women's rights groups, among others, were better supported to engage with social accountability mechanisms and influence approaches for prevention and response to violence against women and girls and gender equality more broadly across programmes. In **Liberia**, for example, 100 civil society organizations were trained on social accountability mechanisms and government monitoring tools, including shadow reporting and

community scorecards. This enabled civil society to contribute to the shadow reports on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The Spotlight Initiative supported civil society across programmes in advocating for and advancing gender equitable legislation, policies on women human rights defenders, and the development and monitoring of national action plans. Overall, through the Spotlight Initiative's support, 1,111 women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and relevant civil society organizations reported having greater influence and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls in **the Pacific Regional Programme, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Samoa, Timor-Leste, and Zimbabwe**.

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed for new possibilities to meaningfully engage civil society in some contexts. In several Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as **Honduras, Guyana, El Salvador, and Pacific Regional Programme**, civil society organizations and Civil Society Reference Group members actively and meaningfully contributed to the design of emergency response and recovery plans in the COVID-19 pandemic context. Their advocacy contributed to ensuring that gender-based violence prevention measures and survivor-centric services were fully integrated into these plans and that they were budgeted. For instance, in **Tajikistan**, civil society organizations' recommendations from virtual consultations were fed into the political process, and a joint letter with their recommendations was shared to the Government and relevant ministries. This letter called for "hotlines" and services for all survivors of domestic abuse or violence to be considered as "essential services" and kept open even under the lockdown.

Strengthened mappings of women's movements and civil society actions, supporting deeper connections and improved knowledge sharing across networks

Mappings of relevant organizations and networks – a common good practice for most programmes during the inception phase of new programmes – were conducted jointly with civil society to build upon and strengthen existing initiatives, amplify critical grassroots knowledge, and ensure cross-learning and dialogue. For instance, in **Timor-Leste**, the civil society mapping exercise contributed to identifying new feminist partnerships and prioritizing partnerships with groups from marginalized communities, including a consortium of two LGBTQI+ groups and a consortium of four organizations of persons with disabilities, to implement the principles of leaving no one behind.

In addition, the mapping of capacities of local civil society organizations enabled Spotlight Initiative teams to identify specific gaps to be addressed to ensure adequate strengthening and contribute to the establishment of more robust civil society platforms across countries. For instance, in **Argentina**, the capacity mapping of local civil society organizations led to innovative projects such as a new partnership with a network of universities specialized in gender equality and ending violence against women and girls, which aims to further enhance the technical work of civil society organizations.

During the reporting period, substantial progress was made in connecting diverse networks across constituencies, deepening coordination and knowledge sharing among groups and encouraging cross-movement collaboration. The Spotlight Initiative contributed to the development of knowledge hubs and advocacy platforms across programmes, including in **Liberia**, **Honduras**, and **Niger**. These platforms improved the sharing of reliable information and real-time data, such as in **Niger** through the e-platform on gender-based violence³⁷ of the Women Leaders Of Niger platform, the national branch of the African Women's Leaders Network. Linked holistically to



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other Spotlight Initiative Pillars, the information and knowledge shared in the hubs directly contributed to and strengthened interventions in other Spotlight Initiative Outcome Areas.

Platforms also served as spaces for cross-regional cooperation and learning exchange, including in **Liberia**, among other programmes. In **Liberia**, networking among civil society actors proved to be beneficial for collective bargaining positions, successful advocacy and increased capacities. In fact, a cross-regional virtual learning exchange, in which 40 participants from three countries in the region (**Liberia**, **Nigeria** and **Senegal**), was organized by the national Spotlight Initiative programme. This was an opportunity for civil society members to share good practices, such as the use of multi-stakeholder civil society platforms to implement and advocate for interventions related to multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination in their respective countries.

Network strengthening and coordination of women's movements posed significant challenges given severe restrictions in movement due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, Spotlight Initiative programmes were quick to adapt. For example, in **El Salvador**, the Initiative supported the organization *CEMUJER* with the promotion of a virtual network at the community level. In **Zimbabwe**, the "Innovators Against Gender-Based

³⁷ VBG Niger Platform.

Violence”³⁸ and the Initiative’s Implementing Partners combined the use of information and communication technology and community meetings (in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines) to strengthen movement-building for ending violence against women and girls at the community level, while **Malawi** created and strengthened networks of women sex workers and women living with HIV and AIDS, addressing intersecting forms of discrimination. Through the networks, 278 women received training on safe practices in COVID-19 in addition to training on sexual and gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, developing community-based advocacy campaigns and establishing alliances with other women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Strengthened women’s rights organizations and movements at local levels

Facilitating collaboration and networking, knowledge exchange, and organizational capacity building, the Spotlight Initiative worked across programmes to strengthen movement-building and lay the groundwork for cross-movement collaboration. In 2020, progress was made in multiple programmes including in **Argentina, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, the Pacific Regional Programme, Grenada, Samoa, Tajikistan, and the Africa Regional Programme**. In these programmes, the Spotlight Initiative reinforced the institutional capacity and organizational strength of civil society organizations, engaging with feminist advocates, women human-rights defenders, and civil society organizations at all levels. Overall, 1,025 women’s rights groups, networks and relevant civil society organizations engaged in capacity strengthening support, and in 13 of the Spotlight Initiative programmes,³⁹ a total of 1,254 women’s organizations were supported to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on eliminating violence against women and girls. In the **Africa Regional Programme**, the African Union Commission and African Union Youth Envoy launched the Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassadors (SYVA) programme and

communication campaign for young women activists and female genital mutilation survivors, aged between 18 and 35 to advocate on the elimination of female genital mutilation. The communication campaign offered a platform for SYVA to foster intergenerational co-leadership and dialogue, amplifying the voices of female genital mutilation survivors and ensuring the regional representation and outreach of the Saleema Initiative.

The Spotlight Initiative also provided support to local women’s rights organizations to bolster community-based movement-building. For instance, in **Malawi**, the Initiative created six Women’s Assemblies in each Spotlight Initiative district, which led to the cooperation and networking of 180 activists, each representing a different women’s group. These assemblies are a sustainable mechanism to coordinate, galvanize and support women’s movement-building at the community level. The Spotlight Initiative also supported the collaboration between women’s rights organizations, youth groups and entities that represent women and girls facing intersecting forms of discriminations. A total of 556 civil society organizations, 356 representing youth and 200 representing other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, with support from Spotlight Initiative programmes in six countries – **Argentina, Grenada, Honduras, Liberia, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe** – were able to integrate with coalitions and networks of women’s rights groups and civil society to work on ending violence against women and girls.

Interestingly, the recently conducted Spotlight Initiative mid-term assessment identified (organizational) capacity issues among civil society partners as well, but indicated that **the most significant obstacles to their participation were related to structural and administrative barriers that exist within United Nations procedures. This analysis also identified a “cultural barrier”, highlighting a certain reluctance by UN Country Teams to entrust major interventions to grassroots or national civil society organizations, even when they demonstrate expertise and experience in the sector.** In **Liberia**, for example,

³⁸ The Innovators Against Gender-Based Violence are graduate students who are tasked with bringing new innovations to addressing violence against women and girls in the localities where they are deployed through the Initiative’s implementing partners (under Pillar 6). They provide programme, administrative, monitoring and evaluation knowledge management and communications support, partnership strengthening within consortiums, and advocacy support to the community groups. IAGs refer cases, offer psychosocial support to women and girls and ensure that they receive the comprehensive package of services for violence against women and girls.

³⁹ Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Grenada, Haiti, and Samoa as well as Trinidad and Tobago.

as a response to concerns raised by civil society organizations that the United Nations call for proposal processes were time-consuming, complicated, and cumbersome, the Initiative launched a joint call for proposals and a massive open training day for potential civil society organizations to apply through a joint Expression of Interest using a single partnership platform. As noted in the report, this resulted in the use of one standard process by all civil society organizations through one platform, a more sustainable and practical way to engage and fund smaller local civil society organizations going forward.

Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women's rights organizations

Progressive civil society organizations and diverse women's and feminist movements are collectively leading transformative work to advance gender equality and end violence against women and girls. Yet, resources and funding that fuel feminist social change are largely insufficient. Crucial for sustained activism and movement-building, the Spotlight Initiative aimed to scale up core funding to organizations at the forefront of eliminating violence against women and girls, particularly women's rights organizations, and grassroots community-based organizations. The

Spotlight Initiative programmes portfolio allocated 48 per cent, about USD 146 million, of its Phase I activity funds across all five regions directly to civil society organizations as of December 2020 (more information on Spotlight Initiative's civil society organization funding can be found in [Chapter 4](#) and [Annex C](#)).

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic and its disastrous economic consequences exacerbated the pressure on small grassroots organizations, to the extent of jeopardizing their existence. Programmes were able to swiftly pivot and adapt their efforts to meaningfully engage civil society organizations, reallocating funding to support local, grassroots organizations to continue the essential work they do, and provided support for network strengthening and movement-building. In 2019 and 2020, **82 per cent of civil society funding was invested in women's rights and women-led organizations**. To further support women's organizations and address the increasing funding needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, Spotlight Initiative, through its partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, reallocated USD 9.1 million for institutional funding of 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa. This underscores the Initiative's dedication to resourcing and supporting women's organizations at the local and national levels.



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USD 146 million

allocated to civil society organizations so far
(48% of activity funding)

A small-grants mechanism was established in numerous Spotlight Initiative programmes to ensure civil society organization sustainability and respond to the increased need for flexible funding, including in **Jamaica, Grenada, Trinidad and Tobago, Papua New Guinea, Central Asia, the Pacific Regional Programme** and **Vanuatu**. In **Grenada**, the small-grants application process was simplified to streamline flexible support to grassroots organizations in times of increased pressure due to the pandemic. In the **Pacific Regional Programme**, the Initiative re-programmed USD 100,000 for COVID-19 small grants to 'non-traditional' grassroots and frontline civil society organizations, especially those addressing the social and economic impact of COVID-19 and not yet connected with regional feminist movement spaces. The call was circulated to countries often left out of mainstream funding opportunities and aimed to reduce barriers to accessing funding due to bureaucratic requirements and access to technology for applying online by ensuring languages were accessible, and through other means.

The Spotlight Initiative has also channelled funding and provided direct grants to grassroots civil society organizations and local women's rights groups to continue operating effectively and respond rapidly and safely while delivering frontline services to women and girls across programmes, including in **Liberia**,

Mexico, Belize, and Uganda. In **Liberia**, the Initiative provided seed grants to 25 grassroots civil society organizations and local women's rights organizations to respond to increased cases of violence against women and girls and meet the needs of communities in the context of COVID-19. With these grants, grassroots civil society organizations reached 385 communities through massive community engagement, reaching a total of 56,021 people with information on violence against women and girls prevention in the COVID-19 context. In **Mexico**, the Spotlight Initiative transferred urgent resources to organizations on the front line of response to violence against women and girls, including for women in shelters, and supported the provision of essential services and prevention programming during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the Spotlight Initiative team consulted with members of the Civil Society Reference Group on an activity to allocate grants to strengthen peer networks amongst community-based organizations and civil society organizations in order to better advocate for improvements to, and to better monitor, service delivery for survivors of family violence with key government stakeholders and the public. Civil society organizations receiving these funds will develop a strong civil society organization peer network within the women's movement at all levels, to deliver quality and coordinated services, advocacy and prevention and to hold state actors accountable.



82% of civil society funding invested in women's organizations

5.3 The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

The Initiative has committed to channelling 10 per cent of the overall regional envelope of each of the five regions for Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes. Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF EVAW) and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) helps to mobilize resources to reach smaller and grassroots feminist organizations and to support women's movements in Africa and Latin America, and specifically in **Haiti, Afghanistan and Papua New Guinea**.⁴⁰ Overall these have allocated USD 36.7 million to civil society grants to address violence against women and girls. The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes for Latin America and Africa have jointly delivered about USD 28 million out of USD 31.2 million allocated to civil society organizations as of December 2020, of which 78 per cent went to support national and grassroots organizations and 94 per cent to the support of women's organizations. For more details on investment allocations, see Chapter 4 or [Annex C](#).

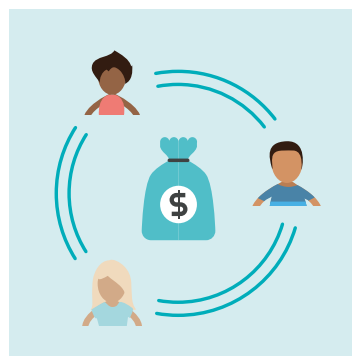
5.3.1 United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

As of December 2020, the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women had awarded about USD 24 million in direct grants to 55 civil society organizations in 25 countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa (more information on funding through this mechanism under Chapter 4 and [Annex](#)

C). The COVID-19 pandemic created significant challenges for grantees during 2020 and severely limited transportation, access to communities and direct service provision. Despite the challenges, the grantees see COVID-19 as giving the women's movements a momentum to advocate for women's rights. For instance, in **Honduras**, Centro de Estudios de Mujeres, in partnership with a network of 22 women's organizations, reoriented its work to raise awareness about increases in violence associated with lockdown measures. As a result of their consistent advocacy for an emergency law on violence against women and girls, the Honduras Parliament approved a new piece of legislation on emergency measures.

Grantees reached 56,915 rights holders with food, hygiene supplies, sanitation and with other emergency need parcels, as well as economic support to ensure the stability of the project and to mitigate the financial impacts that contributed to escalated violence against women and girls. In **Liberia**, United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers supported 1,230 women and girls including women and girls with disabilities, women survivors and their families to access food and non-food items to cope and respond to challenges emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. In **South Sudan**, 21 women and girls were enabled to recover financially through the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa. The grantee provided training on producing face masks and reusable sanitary pads, thereby meeting local demand for both products and generating income.

The COVID-19 pandemic also posed challenges in terms of organizational sustainability and burnout among staff, which grantees utilized the influx of



Dedicated Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

USD 36.7 million

allocated through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and Girls and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

⁴⁰ The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and the Pacific are integrated as a Pillar 6 in their respective Regional Programmes.

Spotlight Initiative's COVID-19 funding⁴¹ in 2020 to address. At least 19 grantees and co-implementing partners reported being able to exceed or fully maintain service delivery and 515 staff and partners worked from home effectively through home-working policies and modalities supported through this funding. In **Nigeria**, a project implemented by the Society for Life Changers and Good Parental Care (SOLIFE), enrolled all project staff in health insurance plans to ensure their access to medical treatment during the implementation of project activities. Due to the provision of such services and tools, 100 per cent of project interventions that were previously on hold because of COVID-19 were able to resume by the end of 2020.

Many grantees were agile in turning to virtual programming. For instance, 28 grantees developed and published COVID-19 and violence against women and girls integrated response messages, including media stories and radio shows. Grantees continued and intensified efforts to form alliances with civil society and community-based organizations as a strategy to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on service and programmatic delivery. For instance, a project implemented by the Rural Women Centre for Education and Development in **Cameroon** is working to foster partnerships with local civil society organizations to advocate against violence against women and girls and for women's leadership in decision-making. The project has so far achieved the inclusion of four women on a traditionally all-male 16-member council and reached women and girls in all their diversity through their training and learning exchange activities on human rights, including reaching 225 survivors of violence. It also reached 339 traditional and religious leaders, as well as law enforcement and community-level actors to communicate with them about the root causes of violence against women and girls. After delivering training, the Rural Women Centre for Education and Development received 753 reports of violence through its hotline.

5.3.2 Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

Through its partnership with the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)**, the Initiative has awarded about USD 4.4 million to 48 grantees in Africa

(more information on funding through this mechanism under Chapter 4 and [Annex C](#)), addressing the "humanitarian-development-peace nexus" attempting to appropriately tackle women and girls' exposure to violence before, during and after crises. Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund partners have set up and strengthened reporting structures for violence against women and girls and generated community support for reporting, which led to increased qualitative reporting of cases on violence against women and girls and caretaking of survivors. In **the Democratic Republic of the Congo**, 60 psychosocial workers and paralegals were trained to document cases of sexual and gender-based violence. As a result, they have supported the identification of 395 sexual and gender-based violence, and effectively contributed to the protection and promotion of women's rights, peace and social cohesion through awareness sessions organized in their villages, within women's groups and through radio broadcasts.

Partners have also developed innovative tools and mechanisms to address violence against women and girls. In **Uganda**, Slum Aid Project wrote a song called "Wise Up", with South African-based artist Mthetho Tshemese. Together they are mobilizing fellow Ugandan artists to use music to change individual social behaviours that fuel violence against women and girls. The song "Wise Up" challenges men to participate in domestic responsibilities and community welfare activities, and to stop perpetrating violence on their female family members. The song will be used as a social mobilization tool to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. In **Liberia**, the Foundation for Community Initiatives developed the SAVApp for the collection of data and reporting on sexual and gender-based violence. The app particularly targets girls attending school who face multiple forms of abuse at home, in the communities and at school. Not only is the app's use beneficial at community level, but it will also be linked to the national data collection system. A similar app is also being developed by the partner for those who are blind and visually impaired.

⁴¹ As COVID-19 revealed the need to support the institutional capacity of organizations to survive the challenges posed by the pandemic, USD 9.1 million was repurposed to institutional funding of existing Spotlight Initiative and United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

5.4 Spotlight Initiative Programmes in Africa: Promoting and Funding Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

While all Spotlight Initiative programmes have advanced sexual and reproductive health and rights, a specific allocation of USD 100 million from the European Union was dedicated specifically for Spotlight Initiative investments in Africa. The goal for this targeted funding is to address the slow progress on enhancing sexual and reproductive health and rights, and ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices in sub-Saharan Africa. Transforming attitudes and norms around sexual health, women's sexuality and reproduction is central to advancing efforts to end sexual and gender based violence and harmful practices and improve women's health and rights.

The Spotlight Initiative committed to allocate USD 100 million to sexual and reproductive health and rights activities across its Africa programmes. During the first phase of programming alone, Africa's Spotlight Initiative programmes have so far planned a total allocation of about USD 83 million toward sexual and reproductive health and rights activities. This signals the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to integrating and centring sexual and reproductive health and rights into broader programming to eliminate violence against women and girls. It is expected that with the

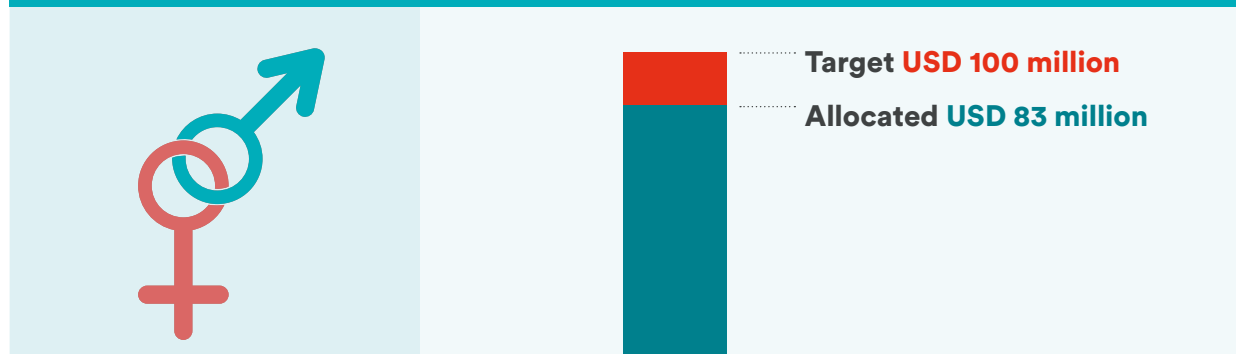
second phase of programming commencing in 2021, the USD 100 million target will be met.

Of the USD 83 million allocated to sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa so far, Spotlight Initiative programmes in their second year of implementation delivered 28 per cent,⁴² or approximately USD 34 million as of December 2020. The Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Uganda, Niger** and **Malawi** reported the highest rates of progress in terms of delivering planned funding to sexual and reproductive health and rights activities, with **Uganda** leading at 53 per cent delivery.

Spotlight Initiative engages in multiple entry points and across Pillar areas to make more holistic change, and women's knowledge and power over their sexual health and sexuality is critical. As feminists, women's rights activists and progressive movements have consistently underscored and, as [empirical studies](#) have shown, gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls cannot be achieved without the full realization of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is why the Spotlight Initiative has focused on comprehensive advancements in sexual and reproductive health and rights to help prevent violence against women and girls and ensure a more effective response.

Many diverse achievements have been attained through the dedicated sexual and reproductive health and rights funding. During 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes in Africa worked to ensure sexual and reproductive

On target: Funding for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa



⁴² Data on sexual and reproductive health and rights expenditures does not include data from ILO and UNESCO.

health and rights were embedded into national plans and policies, institutionalizing sexual and reproductive health and rights within broader development policy. In **Zimbabwe**, the programme partnered with the Federation of Disabled Persons Organizations to support 57 women and girls with disabilities to actively engage in provincial consultations on the National Disability Policy and the Persons with Disabilities Bill. Collectively they demanded improved access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for those living with disabilities, including the right to start families, thereby strengthening the Bill's responsiveness. In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative initiated high-level policy dialogue with the Ministry of Health on the integration of the Essential Services Package incorporating sexual and reproductive health, HIV and services for the elimination of violence against women and girls within the country's universal health coverage under the National Development Plan III. This is a significant intervention, which will ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights are fully integrated in the Joint Work Plan and Programme Implementation Action Plans, supporting their sustainability within national structures.

The initiative has also increased awareness on sexual and reproductive health and rights, empowering adolescents and youth and supporting uptake of services. In **Uganda**, community awareness initiatives were expanded to include sexual and reproductive health and rights with services reaching the most vulnerable and expanding their access to information. In **Malawi**, the programme used community advocacy platforms and adolescent empowerment interventions to raise meaningful awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights and the relevant services, leading to an increased uptake of sexual and reproductive health and rights services amongst young women and men. In **Nigeria**, post-literacy classes for around 4000 individuals on Second Chance Education curriculums have been designed to incorporate sexual and reproductive health and rights aspects including teenage pregnancy and contraception among others.

The Spotlight Initiative also contributed to integrated access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services and commodities and supplies, using the entry point of healthcare to ensure a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including addressing violence against women and girls. In **Liberia**, the Initiative contributed to safe and timely delivery of sexual and reproductive health and rights

services by supporting access to medical equipment for assisted deliveries and expanding service delivery points. This has played a key role in reducing maternal mortality and improving access to family planning services in Liberia, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Malawi**, the programme contributed to improving access to quality essential services in the fields of sexual and reproductive health and rights and sexual and gender-based violence by enhancing capacities of service providers to deliver integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights services and establishing an integrated referral pathway, including for women and girls with disabilities. In **Mozambique**, the programme supplied sexual and reproductive health and rights commodities, including contraceptives and condoms – both through this initiative and by leveraging other major initiatives nationally, thereby strengthening service delivery through comprehensive access to commodities, including for people living with disabilities and people living with HIV. The barriers for victims during sexual offence trials were contributing to absenteeism at court proceedings by survivors of sexual violence against women and girls in **Uganda**. Among other factors, one of the barriers include a lack of access to personal effects and sanitary supplies for the long stay during investigations and trial periods. This was addressed by the Spotlight Initiative's provision of these supplies, which contributed to lowered absenteeism. The lowered absenteeism in turn contributed to an increase in convictions for sexual and gender based violence offences from 60.1 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020.

As part of a holistic Spotlight Initiative strategy for prevention and behaviour change, programmes in Africa also contributed to sexual and reproductive health and rights services through campaigns and improved access to education and information (including in- and out-of-school settings, and through safe spaces for young people and adolescents). In **Niger**, for example, a curriculum was designed by the Spotlight Initiative to incorporate different sexual and reproductive health and rights aspects into post-literacy education. The curriculum featured modules on teenage pregnancy, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, violence against girls and women and harmful traditional practices, as well as on the legal instruments available to advance the rights of girls and women. Implemented in several states, the information reached 4,051 learners, expanding access to sexual and reproductive health and rights information and

services to young people, including those living with disabilities, among others. Education was also provided through hotlines. To adapt to lockdown measures during COVID-19, Youth Advocate Zimbabwe, together with Spotlight Initiative, launched a helpline to share comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights information to key populations in **Zimbabwe**. Facing high levels of stigma and discrimination, including within health care settings, when requesting information on sexual and reproductive health and rights, the helpline offered critical information through a trusted platform to key populations, including on high impact sexual reproductive health and HIV services across the country.

Campaigns were also launched across programmes in Africa to raise awareness, disseminate information, and support prevention efforts. The **Africa Regional Programme** contributed to “Generation Equality: Realizing women’s rights for an equal future”, a multigenerational campaign that provides a platform to educate about, and advocate and innovate for, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality more broadly. The demands of the campaign include: equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, appropriate and responsive health-care services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and equal participation in political life and decision-making in all areas of life. A global conversation was organized in July 2020 on “bodily autonomy and

sexual and reproductive health and rights”, with critical dialogue on adolescent girls’ bodily autonomy and decision making, contributing to the implementation of the Cairo and Beijing agendas.⁴³

Finally various programmes contributed to ensuring that sexual and reproductive health and rights data were more readily available. Through the development of tailored data collection tools and advances in harmonizing data collection across sectors, sexual and reproductive health and rights data are more readily available to inform policy and advocacy. In **Malawi**, for example, following a comprehensive assessment of the sexual and gender-based violence information management, a data collection tool was designed to ensure coherence across the data collection of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights in three sectors: health, social welfare, and justice. Developed in close consultation with key stakeholders – who validated the need for such an instrument, ensuring its relevance – recent testing demonstrated the ease with which sexual and gender-based violence incidence data will be collected and shared with the Sexual Gender-Based Violence District Data Observatory Hubs, thereby strengthening multisectoral service delivery and coordination. The programme also strengthened Information Management Systems pertaining to the police and judiciary specifically, leading to enhanced data capacity and availability for evidence-based programming and policy development.

⁴³ The Cairo agenda refers to the [1994 International Conference on Population and Development](#), while the Beijing agenda refers to the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), produced at the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.

AMPLIFYING THE WORK: COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY RESULTS

This chapter presents communication and visibility results for 2020. Focus is placed on making explicit how communication and visibility work helps the Spotlight Initiative achieve its overall goals and outcomes related to ending violence against women and girls. The chapter opens with an overview of Spotlight Initiative's communication activities and shifts made due to COVID-19. This is followed by a brief description of the Initiative's results across its owned communications channels and global media. Deeper insights and case studies of regional, country and global communication activities through the lens of events, launches, and campaign work round out the chapter.

6.1 Overview

At global, national and regional levels, Spotlight Initiative's communication and visibility activities are centred around four mutually reinforcing objectives: (1) to raise global awareness of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, (2) to illustrate and promote the impact and results of Spotlight Initiative-supported interventions, (3) to provide communications for development support to strengthen the role of communications in prevention of violence against women and girls, and (4) to ensure visibility for the Spotlight Initiative, its donors and partners.

With most of its programmes already launched, 2020 was foreseen as a year to build the Spotlight Initiative's communications capacity and consolidate systems, strategies, and campaigns for effective and efficient outreach and messaging. However, the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges for the Initiative's planned communications and visibility activities. For example, national launch events were delayed or significantly scaled down. Physical events and activities were called off. A jointly organized UN-EU training event for communications officers had to be postponed a few weeks before its scheduled start.

I AM
#WithHer
ARE YOU?

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations





86% Spotlight Initiative brand positive rating

To meet these challenges, the Spotlight Initiative shifted the bulk of its communications activities and events online. Work plans were revised and resourced to engage social media influencers and media networks to promote the Initiative's messages on prevention, reaching women trapped at home due to lockdowns.

Additionally, the Spotlight Initiative launched its flagship digital engagement campaign on ending violence against women and girls (#WithHer) and opened new Facebook and Instagram accounts. UN Secretary-General António Guterres officially appointed two new UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative in 2020, Cecilia Suárez and Siya Kolisi. More information on their influencing and visibility appears in Section 6.3.3.

As a new brand, Spotlight Initiative aims to increase its relevance and presence among its intended audiences, namely: young people, cultural and political influencers, and the general public. Based on an online opinion survey of 705 respondents⁴⁴ from more than 50 countries, 50 per cent indicated they had been aware of the Spotlight Initiative. Of the respondents, 72 per cent had basic knowledge of violence against women and girls, 67 per cent had accurate knowledge of the Initiative's geographic coverage and 36 per cent correctly identified the Spotlight Initiative's programming areas. **The Spotlight Initiative had an 86 per cent brand positivity rating**, with social media being the main channel to receive information about the Spotlight Initiative.

6.2 Global Reach: Spotlight Initiative Analytics

6.2.1 Global Website

The year 2020 marked a period of significant growth for the [Spotlight Initiative global website](#), with hits, by country and by language [available here](#). A page for the global [#WithHer campaign](#) was added ahead of the campaign launch in March; a [new page](#) was added to recognize the contributions of the [Civil Society Reference Groups](#); the functionality of the [Who We Are](#) page was adapted so that leadership, staff, and UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative could be featured on the site; and multiple national and regional pages were created as new programmes launched throughout the year. To accommodate the growing number of regional and country programmes, the site now publishes content in Russian, Portuguese, English, French and Spanish. This improved capability was coupled with training for communication officers on how to write a human-interest story following the "issue, action, impact" model of storytelling and how to upload their press releases, stories, and events directly to their country homepage.

Additionally, 120 news stories, press releases or publications were published on the global site in 2020, while traffic organically increased by 330 per cent compared to the previous year – from 26,000 sessions to 112,221. Pageviews also increased from 66,000 to 263,830, and average session duration rose from 1:36 minutes in 2019 to 2:10 minutes in 2020. A high percentage of the website's audience is located in the United States (22 per cent), followed by Nigeria (9 per cent), Mexico (8 per cent), the Netherlands (4 per cent), and Finland (3 per cent). Taken together, these

⁴⁴ Respondents were from diverse sectors, including: 26 per cent from non-governmental organizations, 14 per cent from the private sector, 12 per cent from academia, 7 per cent from UN agencies, and 41 per cent from other sectors. For a full report, see [here](#).

digital efforts have contributed to increased visibility for the United Nations and the European Union, and have driven traffic and improved engagement on the issue of violence against women and girls.

6.2.2 Social Media

National lockdowns and movement restrictions have affected every aspect of life, including internet and social media use. In 2020, social media use increased dramatically around the world as people began spending more time online. The rise of online events, Instagram Live sessions, and video-sharing platforms have shown that social media is now one of the primary ways to stay connected and maintain human relationships.

The Secretariat capitalized on this new way of communicating by launching social media accounts on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to reach a larger global audience. Adding to its existing Twitter accounts (Global and Latin America), the Spotlight Initiative shared human-interest stories, video interviews, articles, and publications daily across all the platforms.

From March to December 2020, the Spotlight Initiative published almost 1,000 posts (text, photos, and videos created in-house) across all its platforms (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram). The Initiative gained 28,000 new followers, and it gathered more than 225,000 engagements across all channels. On Twitter, the number of followers has increased by 137 per cent compared to the previous year, to reach a total of 16,110 individual followers. The [annual activity on Twitter](#) also recorded more than two million impressions (3 per cent growth from the previous year) and more than 47,000 engagements, up 4 per cent from the previous year.

The Spotlight Initiative's Instagram and Facebook profiles were also activated for the first time in 2020. The two platforms recorded a growing audience of followers, with more than 15,000 fans and almost six million impressions on [Facebook](#), and more than 2,000 followers and almost 2 million impressions on [Instagram](#).

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative video catalogue has expanded this past year. The Secretariat has opened

a [YouTube channel](#) to make all global and locally produced videos available to the public. The Spotlight Initiative YouTube channels can now count more than 50 videos and 727 subscribers. In a year, the channels recorded 290,000 views.

6.2.3 Media Coverage

The Spotlight Initiative engaged in extensive media coverage this year, raising the visibility of violence against women and girls. This was particularly important given the significant increases in violence exposed by COVID-19 and its ensuing lockdowns. In total, more than 2,800 Spotlight Initiative-specific articles and stories were published by 1,180 media outlets across 101 countries, with an estimated reach of more than 3.7 billion readers.⁴⁵ Stories were published in top-tier media outlets including: The Washington Post, The Independent, Daily Mail, Reuters, The Hill, El Pais, El Mundo, Infobae, Clarin, Milenio, ABC News, Al Jazeera, Vice, Medium, Thomson Reuters Foundation News, MSN, IPS, The Punch (Nigeria), Foreign Policy, The World Economic Forum, The South African, The Guardian (Nigeria), Haaretz, Xinhua News, Channels TV, AllAfrica.com and ReliefWeb to name a few. A media report with highlights from media coverage is available in [Annex D](#) of this report.

In partnership with Al Jazeera, the Spotlight Initiative produced a [special episode of 'Inside Story,'](#) which featured a live interview with UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen and South Africa Rugby Captain Siya Kolisi.

Moderated by anchor Folly Bah Thibault, the 30-minute discussion introduced the Spotlight Initiative to a global audience, explored the multiple forms of violence women and girls face, and illustrated the activities implemented by Spotlight Initiative to stop this violence everywhere.

⁴⁵ Meltwater media keyword search (1 Jan - 31 Dec 2020). Raw data of all media hits available [here](#).

Media Coverage Highlights – See [Annex D](#)



Cecilia Suárez narrates why it is urgent to eradicate gender violence: VIDEO



INDEPENDENT

Women need to be centre of the recovery plan if we want coronavirus faster

The deep economic downturn accompanying the pandemic has put women's rights around the world in times of the coronavirus pandemic; joint Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioners Jutta Urpilainen and Janez Lenarčič

REUTERS

Argentine newspaper publishes massive obituary of femicide victims



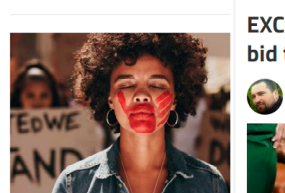
Women's rights around the world in times of the coronavirus pandemic: Joint Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell and Commissioners Jutta Urpilainen and Janez Lenarčič



We need new allies to fight against women

BY MICHELLE MILFORD MORSE, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR — 11/20/20 11:00 AM EST
THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE U.S. EMBASSY

35 SHARES



For girls and women, COVID-19 has been dangerous in many ways. Gender-based violence has surged worldwide in 2020, the sense of urgency that fueled the early response pushing this crisis further into the shadows.

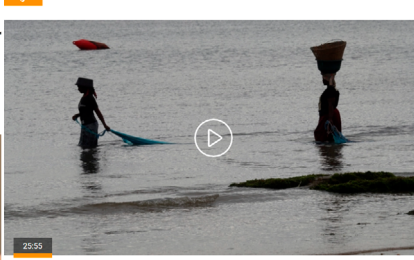
News / Sport / Rugby

EXCLUSIVE: Springbok Siya Kolisi's emotional bid to end violence against women

By Tim Elbra | Jul 22nd, 2020



News Coronavirus Features Economy Opinion Video



How can violence against women be tackled?

Spotlight initiative being launched in Africa in partnership with the African Union to confront the crisis.

PRESS MATERIAL

Questions and answers: Crisis Management basket – a background for the Strategic Compass
06/05/2021

6.3 Raising Awareness and Challenging Gender Stereotypes through Spotlight Initiative Communications

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of programming and communications, including efforts to change the attitudes and mindsets that perpetuate violence against women and girls. As noted above, with many in-person activities, training sessions, and events suspended to prevent the spread of the virus, online, virtual communications became a critical tool to ensure that norm-changing work continued. One positive outcome of this shift has been the ability to reach a much larger audience online. Another has been the increased role and relevance of influencers to reach audiences online.

When compared to traditional advertising or marketing activities, audiences are more likely to engage on the issues social media influencers curate or discuss on their platforms. For many reasons, ending violence against women and girls has been a difficult issue to market or advertise in a traditional sense. Working directly with influencers has allowed Spotlight Initiative to engage the online public, at a much deeper level and in a language they expect, than previously possible.

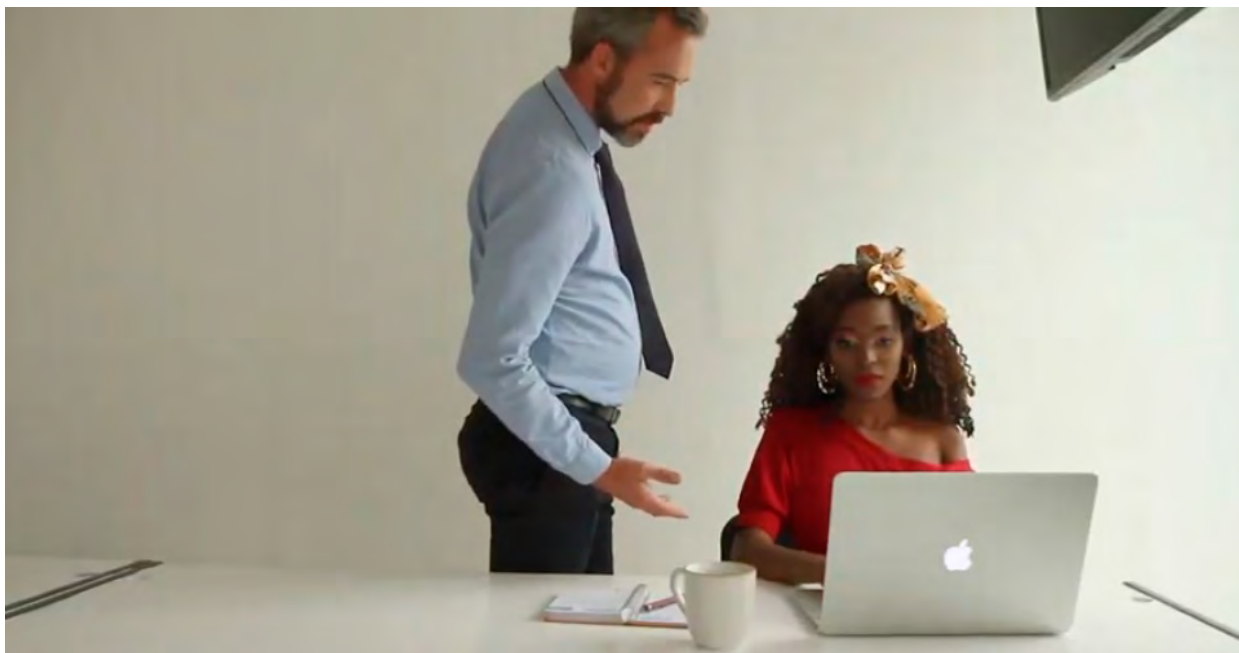
6.3.1 Raising Awareness and Challenging Gender Stereotypes: Country-Level Examples

Diverse country-level examples of communication activities showcase how the Spotlight Initiative made critical shifts to online awareness activities and the differences that these shifts made.

In **Mali**, the heads of the country's two main monotheistic religions – President of the High Islamic Council of Mali, Cherif Madani Ousmane Haidara and Representative of the Episcopal Conference of Mali, Father Ferdinand Coulibaly – appeared in a series of Spotlight Initiative-supported [television and radio messages](#) denouncing violence against women. The messaging ran for two months, during which time the television message was viewed more than 40 million times and the radio message was heard more than 4 million times. A total of 340,000 people were reached by the associated social media campaign that aimed to break down the normalisation of violence against women and girls and harmful practices. In the following weeks, the number of people visiting Bamako's one-stop centre to address health and domestic violence issues reportedly increased by more than 65 per cent. This underscores the importance of media as an outreach and public awareness tool to support women's health and safety.



Screenshot from Al Jazeera



Michael Morrill and Loren Dolmo star in the Spotlight Initiative-supported short film 'Negrita.'

In **Honduras**, the team used artistic projects to spark a conversation around community violence with the aim of shifting attitudes. They partnered with the Honduran Filmmakers Collective to finance short films by women filmmakers that deal with violence against women and girls, particularly affecting those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as indigenous and Afro-Honduran women. For example, filmmaker Marissa Gabriela Solano's [short film 'Negrita'](#) spoke to the sexual harassment faced by Afro-Honduran women.

As mentioned in Chapters 5, in **Kyrgyzstan**, an interactive online game, 'Spring in Bishkek', was developed to help prevent *Ala Kachuu* or kidnapping for forced marriage. The game, which has been downloaded more than 100,000 times, helps players learn about the rights of women and girls, the real-life impacts of kidnapping for forced marriage and the support services that are available to help.

In **Zimbabwe**, the Spotlight Initiative developed a new weekly radio programme, "Let's Talk Gender-Based Violence" that aired on a popular radio station with a reach of 4.2 million people. In **Mozambique**, nine mini radio dramas were produced on mitigating the secondary impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls and broadcasted on government and community radio stations. For more information on these and other results, see Chapter 5.

6.3.2 Events and Launches

This year, high-level national and regional launches took place in **Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, the Pacific, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Vanuatu** and for the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**. In each case, efforts were made to include not only UN and EU representation, but the voices and inputs of civil society activists and women and girl survivors, in keeping with event planning guidelines.

Given travel bans and other restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19, many of these launches took place virtually or were televised. For example, in **Nigeria** a [televised town hall](#) on gender-based violence brought together survivors of violence, civil society representatives, the Government, police, and representatives from the United Nations and European Union to discuss what needs to be done to end violence against women and girls in the country.

In addition to television, more than a million viewers tuned in to watch the discussion via Twitter Live. The audience response was generally positive, with many Nigerians impressed that these conversations were happening in the country.



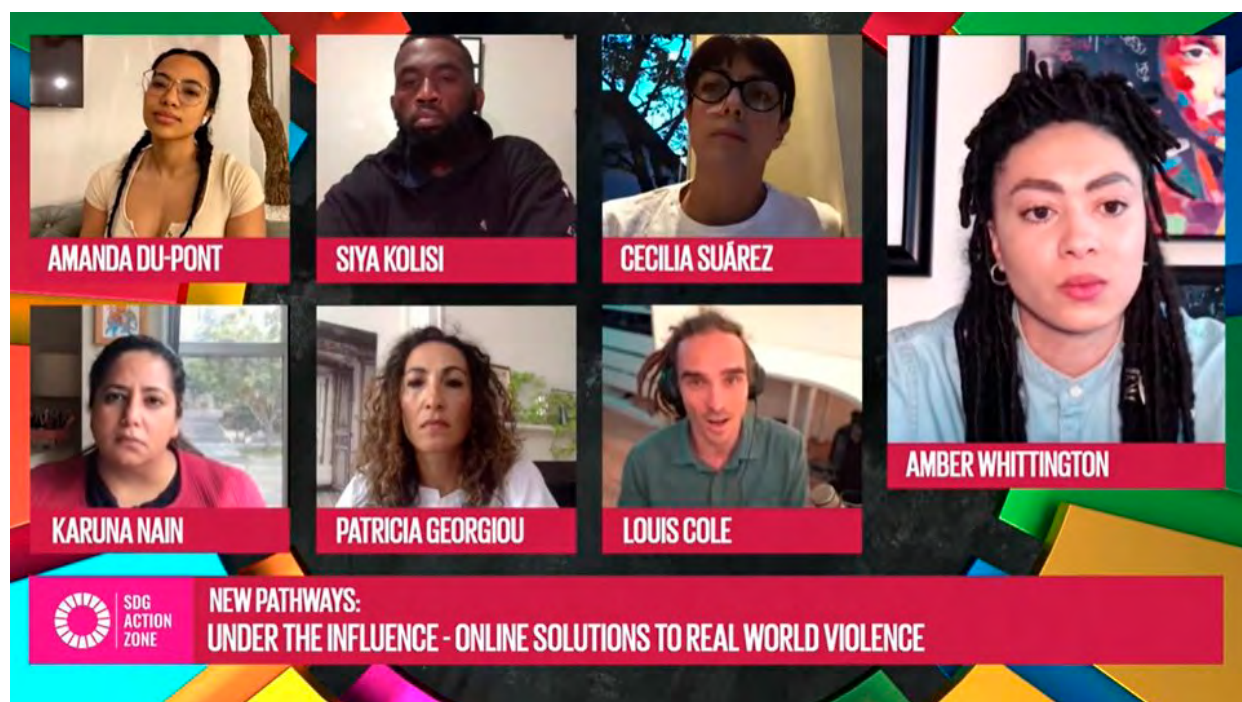
President of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari at the Spotlight Initiative televised town hall discussion on ending gender-based violence.

Likewise, as noted above, an episode of [Al Jazeera's Inside Story](#) was dedicated to the recent signing of the Spotlight Initiative's **Africa Regional Programme** in partnership with the African Union. European Union Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, and UN Global Advocate for Spotlight Initiative Siya Kolisi appeared on the panel discussion, while African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs, Amira Elfadil, shared a message on how the Spotlight Initiative's regional programme would strengthen the African Union's existing efforts to prevent violence and

harmful practices, underscoring, as well, the spike in violence that had taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ahead of International Women's Day, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with the EU Delegation in New York, the Government of Canada and artist Carey Jernigan to launch the "[One In Three](#)" art installation and exhibition at the United Nations Visitor Centre in New York. The exhibition brought together cube sculptures, audience-submitted videos, and a photo portrait gallery to draw attention to the prevalence of violence against women and girls, but also to the strength of communities coming together to fight for change. The exhibition ran through the month of March.

On the sidelines of the 75th United Nations General Assembly in September, Spotlight Initiative, in partnership with the [Social Good Club](#), brought together influencers, content creators, and technology platforms for an interactive dialogue on the role of social media in violence against women and girls. Moderated by YouTuber Amer Whittington, UN Global Advocates Cecilia Suárez and Siya Kolisi, actress Amanda du-Pont, filmmaker Louis Cole, Head of Partnerships and Business Development at Google Jigsaw Patricia Georgiou, and Director for Global



"It's important to involve men and boys in the conversation and to give them new role models in terms of masculinity and what it means to be a man." – Actress and UN Global Advocate Cecilia Suárez at SDG Action Zone. Photo: Screenshot from the SDG Action Zone discussion

Safety Policy at Facebook Karuna Nain all joined the Sustainable Development Goal Action Zone to discuss the challenges and opportunities for social media to contribute to shifting an online culture that permits and enables violence against women and girls around the world.

In December, the Spotlight Initiative organized the virtual launch of the [Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls](#), which was attended by 78 Member States and Observers, together with UN agencies. The aim of the group is to coordinate action and share information on the elimination of violence against women and girls and to follow up on the UN Secretary-General's call for "peace in the home" and action on violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19.

The Group drafted and adopted a common statement for the 65th Commission on the Status of Women, which reaffirmed Member States' commitment to respect and comply with all international obligations and commitments on gender equality, reasserted the centrality of women's full, equal, and meaningful

participation and decision-making across all spheres and levels to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, urged scaling up the implementation of evidence-informed strategies and programmes across multiple sectors to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, and committed to improving the availability of comparable and reliable gender-related data and resources.

6.3.3 Campaigns

A diverse number of campaigns were launched globally and at the country level to raise awareness on violence against women and girls and harmful practices. Campaigns are key promotional techniques that align actions across the UN-EU partnerships, governments, civil society and the public. At Spotlight Initiative, campaigns serve two main purposes: to engage communities and audiences to prevent violence against women and girls, and to bring visibility to the Spotlight Initiative and its partners. In 2020, the Initiative moved its campaign activities online as social media consumption increased due to the pandemic. Global campaigns leveraging influencers, global



From left to right: UN Women Africa Goodwill Ambassador Jaha Dukureh, UNFPA Executive Director Natalia Kanem, European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, Activists Anais Leleux, Maite Lonne and Pierrette Pape, Member of the European Parliament Chrysoula Zacharopoulou and Sky News Presenter Gillian Joseph at the launch event for the #WithHer campaign in Brussels. ©Spotlight Initiative

advocates on social media and national campaigns are profiled.

Global campaigns: *#WithHer* campaign

In March 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat launched the *#WithHer* campaign in Brussels, Belgium. The *#WithHer* campaign raises awareness on violence against women and girls and global efforts to address the issue by engaging new audiences to show their support on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram using the hashtag *#WithHer*. Since its launch in March 2020, the campaign's hashtag has been shared by more than 5,500 social media accounts reaching more than 220 million users on Twitter and Facebook.

The *first phase* of the campaign (March-July 2020), a video series, shined a light on the myriad forms of violence facing women and girls, including femicide, domestic and family violence, harmful practices, and sexual and economic exploitation, and highlighted the stories of women from around the world who are working to create change in their communities.

The second phase of the campaign evolved to include more interactive and social media-based content through the *#WithHer* Talks series, which featured celebrities and influencers. The *first episode* was a discussion between activists and survivors of domestic violence, while the *second episode* focused on the ways that Bollywood shapes public understanding of gender roles. More episodes will be broadcast in 2021.

The second phase also marked the Spotlight Initiative's further engagement with the UN Global Advocates for Spotlight Initiative, as well as international sports stars. As noted previously, UN Secretary-General António Guterres officially appointed two new UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative, Cecilia Suárez and Siya Kolisi. Actively engaged in the Spotlight Initiative as a Spotlight Initiative Champion since 2018, Cecilia Suárez, an Ariel Award winner and Emmy International nominated Mexican actress, consistently raises awareness about violence against women and girls and other forms of human rights violations when communicating with her 1.3 million followers on her social media platforms. Siya Kolisi is the World Cup-winning captain of the South African Rugby National Team, making history as the first black test player to captain the team in its 129-year history. He speaks to his millions of followers about male responsibility in



NBA legend Tony Parker joined the *#WithHer* campaign

ending violence against women, youth engagement and the role of sports in changing inequalities for people in vulnerable and disadvantaged communities.

Engaging sports stars, UN Global Advocate *Siya Kolisi* and NBA Star *Tony Parker*, shared social media messages to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. The campaign is planning to actively engage more male sports stars in 2021.

To adjust to COVID-19, the Spotlight Initiative adapted digital communications to the new global reality in their campaign work. The Secretariat initiated a partnership with *The Social Good Club*, a community of content creators (influencers) who work towards shifting culture and igniting social change. The objective of this partnership was to educate and engage a wide range of content creators on ending violence against women and girls. The Secretariat and The Social Good Club organized a series of educational workshops that gathered hundreds of influencers.

A guide on how to create content that promotes gender equality, "*The Culture Change Commitment*", was drafted and shared with the participants to deepen their knowledge of gender-based violence and how to better support women and girls. **The activation engaged 185 influencers, content creators and entertainment executives with a combined 404**



A selection of influencers who have taken the Culture Change Commitment.

million followers on social media.⁴⁶ For example, an episode of Jubilee Media’s “Spectrum” series brought together seven hip-hop artists for a conversation about violence against women and girls and the role culture plays in it. From October – December 2020, **the episode** had been viewed more than 500,000 times and spurred 6,000 comments on YouTube.

Many Spotlight Initiative countries duplicated this influencer-led model at national level, and localized the #WithHer campaign. In **Jamaica**, for example, **Rarrus Riley**, a Jamaican-American reggae singer, joined the Initiative’s launch event and used his Instagram account

to call on young people to change their attitudes towards women and girls. In **Mexico**, the UN Global Advocate Cecilia Suárez joined the **25N+16 campaign** to raise awareness of violence against women and girls during the 16 Days of Activism Campaign. In **Niger**, NASA Engineer and ForbesUnder30 leader **Dr. Fadji Maina** used her platforms to engage adolescent girls in conversations about women’s rights and violence against women and girls.

To reach a national audience, Spotlight Initiative countries localized the #WithHer campaign, as detailed here in **Nigeria, Argentina and Mexico**.

⁴⁶ Report of **Phase One of Culture Change: Female Equity**.



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1. Nigeria # WithHer campaign

Nigeria adapted the hashtag (#IDeyWithHer) to better amplify the campaign throughout the country.

The #IDeyWithHer campaign is a digital engagement and awareness-raising campaign that was launched in November 2020. #IDeyWithHer is designed to raise awareness of, and challenge, harmful gender norms and stereotypes that perpetuate violence against women. Tailored after the global Spotlight Initiative #WithHer campaign, the hashtag change was necessary to further localize it to fit the Nigerian context. The campaign builds on advocacy material developed by the United Nations in **Nigeria** on violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 crisis and the brief developed by the UN Gender Theme Group to address the upsurge in violence against women and girls. It was further contextualized against a backdrop of the state of emergency that was declared by state governments and stakeholders in response to the crisis of violence against women and girls. In the first quarter of 2021, the hashtag got 4,228 mentions on twitter. Link to #IDeyWithHer [key messages](#).

2. Argentina, Social media around pandemic

La Otra Pandemia – The other pandemic

The Spotlight Initiative team in **Argentina** wanted to bring light to the unacceptable rise in violence against women and girls during the pandemic. They increased their communication on the 144 hotline and promoted calls for commitment and social responsibility. The campaign targeted the mass public and was launched in April 2020 with a high impact that put the issue on the national agenda. The Argentine media began to refer to “*La otra Pandemia*” (The other pandemic), also referred to as the shadow pandemic, not as something isolated or specific to the context, but as a structural problem. A wide range of [social media assets](#), including three public service announcement video spots, were developed and shared during the summer 2020. Different labour unions joined the campaign, which also allowed for wide dissemination amongst its members.



©Spotlight Initiative



©Spotlight Initiative

In addition to the three public service announcements, the team developed specific actions for each of the three focus provinces, Provincia de Buenos Aires, Salta and Jujuy:

- In the Provincia de Buenos Aires, the team supported the Ministry of Women, Gender Policies and Sexual Diversity in the development of public announcement spots with the same focus.
- In Salta and Jujuy the team supported specific materials to spread information about essential services during the pandemic.

On YouTube, the public service spots got almost 10,000 views:

- Puertas adentro: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FuXUSIGFJw0>
- No te laves las manos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UGOCgndrylc>
- Tapabocas: https://youtu.be/DU_X6IDUd5E

3. Mexico, #NoEstaSola

In May 2020, the Spotlight Initiative team in **Mexico** developed [video and online messaging](#) to reach women trapped at home with abusers amid a global spike in lockdown-related domestic violence. The #NoEstaSolas (You are not alone) campaign communicated that violence is not normal, and encouraged survivors to seek support by publicizing the numbers of services and resources. Later in the year, this was complemented by [digital and social media assets](#) that shared the personal stories of Mexican women on the frontlines of the fight against COVID-19, exploring the economic and social contributions of women as well as the discrimination and challenges they face.

6.3.4 Communication for Development Activities

Over the course of the year, several programmatic interventions were positively influenced by contributions from the Spotlight Initiative's communications officers.

Communications officers leveraged their expertise in design, creative content, language, messaging, media, photography and video to shape activities, ensuring communications interventions had the appropriate look and feel, and reached their intended audiences. For example, Spotlight Initiative communications officers in **Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Samoa, Uganda, Zimbabwe** and in the ASEAN Safe and Fair programme were actively involved in the production and dissemination of radio-based shows and programmes based on changing social norms and preventing violence. In **Malawi**, a radio soap opera featuring several well-known local actors was developed and will begin airing in 2021. In **Ecuador**, the team will develop a communication strategy to produce pieces that reach different audiences, particularly in the programme's target municipalities, in order to leave no one behind.

In **Nigeria**, Spotlight Initiative designed and deployed [social-distancing footprint decals](#) with gender-based violence helpline and support information in several locations (for example, airport, malls, stores, pharmacies) across the capital city of Abuja.



©Spotlight Initiative

The decals were a discrete way to provide information to women and girls waiting in lines. After its first week of activation, 3 per cent of calls received at the Spotlight Initiative's one-stop centre were reported to have come from the information on the decals. Other calls came from social media, Spotlight Initiative radio programmes, and referrals from the police.

Communications officers are also involved in identifying and securing appropriate partnerships with media, technology and marketing companies in support of the Spotlight Initiative's goals. In **Mozambique**, the team partnered with PCI Media Impact — a leading social and behavioural change communication firm — to produce 'Ouro Negro' a radio soap opera programme that promotes community dialogue to resolve conflicts. In **Mali** and **Timor-Leste**, partnerships with production companies led to the creation of a new television drama series that focuses on gender equality and the prevention of violence against women and girls.



©Migrant Monitoring Group (MMG)

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

This chapter provides an overview of the key contextual, programmatic, and technical challenges at both the global and programme levels. As Spotlight Initiative teams work to continuously track, mitigate, and learn from challenges, lessons learned are also detailed in this chapter.

7.1 Challenges and Mitigating Measures

7.1.1 Contextual Challenges

Delivering in the Context of COVID-19

As detailed in Chapter 5, globally, women's rights have experienced significant regression over the past year, with COVID-19 further exacerbating existing inequalities and escalating already high levels of violence against women and girls. The past year has also seen a continuation of a trend in many countries of increased threats and violence against women



©Spotlight Initiative

human rights defenders, activists, politicians, and journalists including, with the shift to remote work, greater attacks online. This context demonstrates the way in which violence is used to police gender norms and stereotypes and entrench inequality. It has created an increasingly hostile environment for initiatives working to eliminate violence against women and girls while simultaneously producing an even greater need for this work.

Although the Spotlight Initiative and partners face an uphill battle in achieving the transformative social norms and behaviour change that is necessary to meaningfully address violence against women and girls, it has also leveraged new possibilities that emerged from this context. Specifically, the Initiative has worked to position the elimination of violence against women and girls as central to countries' COVID-19 response and recovery, a critical step forward in securing national ownership and sustainability in efforts to end violence.

At the programme-level, Spotlight Initiative teams have adopted COVID-19 mitigation measures that required a significant reimagining in their way of working. With most teams unable to work safely from the office, Spotlight Initiative programmes had to address uneven technological access and capacity across staff and partners as they transitioned to remote operations. Moreover, border closures have resulted in international and national programme staff either moving or being unable to enter programme countries, making internal communication more difficult, disrupting supply chain of commodities for service delivery and contributing to challenges in staffing programmes sustainably and safely.

In terms of implementation, many challenges emerged:

- Restriction on non-essential travel and physical gatherings have required programmes to delay or cancel activities across Pillars. Though many teams successfully adjusted activities to virtual modalities, finding viable alternatives to in-person interventions was not always possible, due to limited access to internet and technology as well as lower IT literacy levels among some rights-holders and communities, partners, and team members.
- With school closures, programmes have had to identify new entry points for engagement and interventions outside of formal educational facilities by, for example, augmenting pre-existing efforts focused on reaching out-of-school youth.
- Many programmes faced challenges with maintaining timely engagement with partners and finalizing work plans with implementing partners. Governments often pivoted to focusing solely on the public health response to COVID-19, while civil society partners struggled to ensure their organizational survival while responding to front-line needs, leaving these partners with limited time and capacity to support the Spotlight Initiative or meet with teams.



MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES

Pivoting Nimbly in the Face of COVID-19

In the face of these unprecedented challenges, the Spotlight Initiative refocused its efforts to adapt to COVID-19 and meet the increased need for support by women and girls. As the pandemic spread, all Spotlight Initiative teams reassessed their work plans and budgets in order to produce a comprehensive COVID-19 response plan, in close coordination with national governments, EU Delegations, civil society, and other local stakeholders. Across response plans, Spotlight Initiative programmes prioritized work to strengthen prevention measures, improve access to high-quality services, and respond to the specific needs of women and girls.

More than **USD 21 million⁴⁷ in Spotlight Initiative funds, across all 5 regions**, were redirected to address violence against women and girls within the COVID-19 response. Importantly, in order to prevent disruption to rapid and safe front-line services to women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative also channelled critical funding to civil society and government partners. In **Mexico**, the programme made emergency funding transfers to organizations on the front line of responding to violence against women and girls, as well as to women leaving shelters in order to support and ease their transition given the pandemic-induced economic crisis.

Though mitigation measures were context-specific, common actions included:

- Supporting existing hotlines, shelters, one stop centres, and mobile clinics and creating new (or supporting existing) remote service delivery options to scale up the provision of essential services and case management.
- Leveraging existing partnerships and coordination mechanisms with relevant actors, such as governments, service providers, civil society organizations, community workers, the private sector, the European Union and the United Nations, to collectively and reliably provide and strengthen comprehensive referral mechanisms, case management and swift service delivery during the pandemic.
- Adapting evidence-based service delivery modalities to ensure service provision for those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in the COVID-19 context in the spirit of leaving no one behind.
- Using accessible and localized multimedia as well as non-traditional channels to raise awareness on the exacerbated risks of violence, and available services for timely access.
- Supporting safe and ethical data collection and adjusting activities under the Spotlight Initiative's Outcome 5 on data so that studies and interventions would include an understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on the incidence of violence against women and girls.

Critically, in responding to the significant challenges of COVID-19, Spotlight Initiative programmes seized new possibilities to elevate the elimination of violence against women and girls on national political agendas. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of Spotlight Initiative's work and made the focus on ending violence against women and girls even more urgent. Progress made by programmes in the last year also strengthened the Spotlight Initiative's capacity, streamlined activities and partnerships, and strengthened its ability to deliver impact sustainably. In Tajikistan, for example, the pandemic resulted in a greater societal openness to acknowledge and stand up against rape, incest, and sexual harassment, topics that have traditionally been considered taboo. The Spotlight Initiative has taken advantage of this positive development to advance its work across Pillars. In Timor-Leste, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to UN Situational Reports and used this opportunity to advocate for government action to address violence against women and girls as an essential part of COVID-19 prevention and response plans.

⁴⁷ Estimated figure based on self-reporting by Spotlight Initiative programmes as of August 2020. This figure includes the USD 9.1 million that the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women allocated for immediate support to its existing 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.



©Spotlight Initiative

“The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increased instances of violence against women and girls, but the [Spotlight Initiative] programme has been responsive to address these issues by changing its way of working and seizing new opportunities. A detailed response by Pillar was developed, increasing efficiency and avoiding duplications and aligning the response to other initiatives led by government counterparts and Recipient UN Organizations.”

– National Expert, Malawi

Natural Disasters and National Emergencies Coinciding with COVID-19

In many programmes, natural disasters and national emergencies coincided with COVID-19, exacerbating the effects of the pandemic on implementation. From a tropical cyclone in **Vanuatu**, to flooding, landslides, and Ebola outbreaks in **Uganda** and hurricanes in **Honduras**, natural disasters affected the Spotlight Initiative's implementation, as teams faced limited and restricted physical access to communities as well as competing priorities among civil society and government partners

already stretched thin with the COVID-19 response. In **Samoa**, a deadly measles outbreak made it even more difficult to engage partners, given partners' primary focus on responding to the humanitarian needs of people affected by two major public health crises. In the **Caribbean**, the regional programme faced the eruption of La Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This further increased the risk of violence against women and girls, as at least 20,000 citizens were displaced and over 12,000 evacuees registered in shelters.

MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES

Addressing Natural Disasters and Emergencies

Spotlight Initiative programmes leveraged their partnerships with governments to bolster national and local response to emergencies and ensure that response efforts addressed the specific needs of women and girls. Programmes also depended on implementing partners to adapt work plans and activities to the new context, informed by their experiences and networks in various communities. In **Uganda**, for example, the programme worked closely with district-level government representatives to monitor the situation and adjust activities that involved direct contact with rights-holders in order to ensure continued delivery.

Furthermore, in certain contexts, the Spotlight Initiative has turned emergency response into an opportunity to build on and improve upon national efforts to end violence against women and girls. In **Vanuatu**, a tropical cyclone exposed gaps in national standard operating procedures on addressing violence against women and girls in emergencies, as evacuation centre staff were unsure how to include clear messaging on the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls. In response, the Spotlight Initiative programme worked with government partners to strengthen the health services system based on lessons learned from the tropical cyclone, to ensure that risk mitigation for violence against women and girls was integrated in the daily management of evacuation centres. This work is part of an ongoing collaboration with the National Disaster Management Office, with which the programme uses a comprehensive protection lens and works to strengthen institutional capacity, and interlinks with work with the Ministry of Health, through which the programme focuses on strengthening health service systems. Moreover, in the **Caribbean**, the regional programme advocated for additional funding to combat violence against women and girls while responding to the volcano eruption. The programme coordinated the launch of a USD 29 million appeal to support relief efforts, with a social protection Pillar geared towards the prevention of and response to family violence and violence against women and girls.

“The dramatic flash flooding has caused extensive damage throughout the country and claimed the lives of many. Consequences have a far-reaching impact on everyone, on their health, their socio-economic wellbeing, and on their rights. Through the Spotlight Initiative, our partners are shifting programming to scale up support to civil society organizations on the front line of response, ensuring that services not only stay open but are made more accessible to groups often left behind. The European Union stands by the people of Timor-Leste at this time of suffering and remains committed to protecting and supporting women in Timor-Leste.”

– European Union Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste
Andrew Jacobs

7.1.2 Programmatic Challenges

Delivering as a Demonstration Fund and Implementing United Nations Reform

Adopting a new, inter-agency approach to programming, as the Spotlight Initiative is working to do, is inevitably complex but worth the subsequent gains. Transitioning to inter-agency processes takes time, as UN agencies work to understand and coordinate each other's implementation rules and procedures and identify areas for harmonization. As a result, many programmes needed additional time for programme recruitment and procurement actions. As Spotlight Initiative teams work closely with a range of partners, these partnerships require tailored support and adaptive responses to challenges. As a result, teams must adopt longer timelines for activities in order to facilitate meaningful, multi-partner consultation and deepen multi-stakeholder ownership of programme gains. These efforts are showing progress on the ground. It was confirmed by the mid-term assessments of early 2021, through a survey of more than 700 stakeholders (government, civil society, the European Union and United Nations): overwhelmingly, stakeholders identified the Spotlight Initiative as contributing to more integrated, more

efficient and better coordinated UN Country Teams (more than 90 per cent). Overall, an analysis of the mid-term assessment results shows that countries that were the most effective in delivery and scored the highest, were those which aligned best with the principle of UN Reform, particularly working in an integrated manner, strengthening coordination between UN entities and making efforts to harmonize policies and methodologies.

Advancing coherent joint work can be further complicated by the different sequencing of agency-specific procedural steps. In **Malawi**, for example, some UN agencies finished recruiting implementing partners well before others, which impacted the status of programming as a whole, given the interconnectedness and interdependence of activities.

Even so, UN agencies, the European Union, and programme partners reported that the Spotlight Initiative's joint inter-agency work – under the leadership and oversight of the UN Resident Coordinator – supported deepened partnerships, including with grassroots and local organizations, and improved the reach of marginalized communities (further detailed in Chapter 4, and below in Lessons Learned).

MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES

Advancing Inter-Agency Processes for Sustainable Results

Undertaking inter-agency processes, especially at the onset of Spotlight Initiative programmes, was time-intensive but ultimately offered valuable learning opportunities, as well as more sustainable results, with better reach to local communities. Through the coordinated support of the Resident Coordinator's Office, UN agencies under the Initiative in **Papua New Guinea** engaged with civil society through joint Expressions of Interest and Calls for Proposals. Accompanied by training, this approach fostered resource efficiency, changed the way agencies reach civil society, and, critically, improved grassroots organizations' access to funding.

Several programmes (including those in **El Salvador, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Malawi, and Nigeria**) created standard operating procedures to guide more coherent functioning and programming and to clarify roles for both the Spotlight Initiative teams and external partners. Other programmes developed common templates for monitoring and reporting, used joint tools to streamline programme management and inter-agency work, and instituted regular inter-agency committees and meetings.

In **Uganda**, measures taken by the Spotlight Initiative team to improve inter-agency coordination become opportunities to strengthen coordination among programme partners. In 2020, the team undertook joint monitoring visits with district-level governments and civil society partners and held "District Inception Meetings," which enabled the programme to integrate internal coordination into its work at the local level while also facilitating greater collaboration across district-level partners and stakeholders.

Ultimately, these mitigating measures allowed programmes to more quickly and effectively deliver as one UN team, which will have a lasting impact on UN programme management.

Equipping Spotlight Initiative Teams and Partners for Success

Across all levels of the Spotlight Initiative, challenges with the recruitment and capacity of both UN teams and implementing partners have impacted implementation, primarily by delaying the start of activities.

- The integrated nature of Spotlight Initiative programmes has required that UN agencies invest more time in coordinating functions and terms of reference, resulting in longer preparation processes to initiate recruitments.
- Many programmes faced limited pools of qualified candidates for staff positions, consultancies, and implementing partners. As a result, some programmes had to modify processes to more effectively recruit talent, which resulted in delays in the formation of a full team and thus to implementation in the early months of the programme.
- Programme communications teams experienced challenges retaining staff, as the majority of staff hired have been at a junior level. These junior staff gained the necessary experience to move on to their next position more dynamically. Given the critical aspect of communications for the Spotlight Initiative's visibility, greater attention is needed to recruit higher ranked staff who are likely to stay in their positions for longer. There should also be a greater focus on opportunities for advancement in order to retain talent at the junior level.
- Working with local organizations is critical to adhering to the principles of participation, local ownership, and leaving no one behind but may require more time for UN-led programmes to adapt their outreach methods to build capacity and meaningfully support partners while also reaching their targets and delivering on schedule.

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Building Capacity for Stronger Programmes and Partnerships

Spotlight Initiative programmes implemented a range of mitigating measures to capacity-related challenges, looking both internally at the agency systems and methods and externally at supporting implementing partners. This included peer review of terms of reference to foster joint procurement, training of implementing partner candidates on UN funding systems, development of acceleration plans specifically for recruitment, and appointment of interim coordinators to ensure programmes advance while permanent positions are recruited. Overall though, the key to a successful new generation of inter-agency programmes under the umbrella of the new UN Cooperation Framework is the role played by the UN Resident Coordinator. Where the UN Resident Coordinator is hands-on, guided by the Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System, and accountable for the development results achieved by the UN team in a given country, Spotlight Initiative programmes are stronger.

In the early stages of programmes, certain coordination challenges arise, as newly recruited team members who were not involved in the programme development phase may have limited UN experience and background with the Spotlight Initiative. In **Kyrgyzstan**, in order to address these challenges, the Programme Coordination Unit launched a “Pathways of Change” series of online discussions to secure a shared understanding of the programme’s theory of change and map out collective pathways to transformative change under each Pillar. This improved internal communication and cohesion and enhanced the efficiency of interventions. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, in response to needs for human resource support to accelerate implementation, the Programme Coordination Unit revisited its role to provide additional administrative and implementation support and to help manage stakeholder relationships for UN agencies, to ensure the entire team was equipped to carry out its functions.

Government Engagement

Across the UN system, Country Offices partner with national governments, fostering impartial relationships to ensure continuity of programming. Moreover, under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) that guides each Country Office, governments are key partners. In the Spotlight Initiative, programmes operate in this way, engaging governments as strategic partners. Ensuring government buy-in at all levels, including at the highest level of government by Heads of States, is essential to the effectiveness of the programme and to ensure the sustainability of results. However, despite generally positive relationships with government, distinct challenges arose in 2020:

- Some Spotlight Initiative teams have encountered political instability, conflict or transitions, which have complicated government partnerships. In 2020, several programmes had to pause work

with governments until a new government was established, while others had to dedicate additional time to build partnerships with new government actors, which delayed the implementation of certain activities, primarily under Pillars 1 (laws and policies) and 2 (strengthening institutions). Moreover, the turnover in government, such as in **Guyana** (where contested elections delayed government confirmation and thus the programme by months) and in **Kyrgyzstan**. Further, turnover in civil servant positions, such as in **Mexico**, has made it more difficult for teams to monitor the status of work with government actors and to assess the more strategic, long-term progress of engagement. In countries with a high level of decentralization, programmes have faced challenges in implementing the Spotlight Initiative coherently at both national and local levels. In some countries, there was a lack of clarity across government entities about roles and relationships with the Spotlight Initiative, and in some cases

internal competition, which made it difficult to develop common strategies.

- Some programmes faced limited engagement between government and civil society. In order to achieve the sustainability of its existing efforts,

and to ensure that the principle of “leaving no one behind” is fully integrated, the Initiative will need to increase constructive exchanges between government and civil society partners.

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Fostering Government Engagement

To mitigate the above challenges, Spotlight Initiative programmes adapted government engagement strategies to address political transitions or divisions, or fragmentation in decentralized contexts, in order to facilitate a sustained and sustainable partnership.

In **Papua New Guinea**, despite high-level national buy-in, the Spotlight Initiative faced challenges in securing political commitment at levels where, given decentralized modes of governance, this was also critical. In response, the team committed to working more closely with provincial representatives in order to develop common strategies and ensure buy-in to the Spotlight Initiative at all levels of government. To support these efforts, the team partnered with the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat – a key mechanism established by the Government to operationalize national strategies to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls – to develop a network of consultants to act as the focal point at the provincial level in order to ensure the implementation of a national framework against gender violence. The Spotlight Initiative team also agreed to provide technical assistance to the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat to monitor and evaluate this progress. This network will contribute to a more cohesive and responsive government engagement. Similarly, in **Haiti**, the team began the process of standardizing procedures to use a single procedural path with a key government ministry in order to bolster the partner’s capacity and advance the implementation of joint activities. The team is also developing strategic partnerships within public institutions to promote continuity of work amidst changes in government.

At the regional level, the **Caribbean Regional Programme** has begun to address the constrained resources and limited staff availability of its key regional partner, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), by supporting the organization in recruiting a programme coordinator to support the CARICOM Secretariat in managing activities with the Spotlight Initiative and delivering on its mandate in the context of the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Finally, in **El Salvador**, the team worked with government partners to implement an institutional policy to ensure that ongoing work with the Spotlight Initiative would be incorporated into the staffing transition plans of each new government employee who would liaise with the programme (nine from executive branches and three from the justice sector). In doing so, the team has successfully influenced government representatives to have a proactive attitude towards sustaining engagement with the Spotlight Initiative and supporting the continuity of efforts at all levels. Additionally, the El Salvador team redoubled its advocacy efforts with the Legislative Assembly to ensure that all political parties address femicide in their platforms amidst the increase in polarization in the country.

Engagement of Civil Society

The Global, Regional and National Civil Society Reference Groups have been a primary mechanism for civil society engagement, including monitoring of the Spotlight Initiative. In September 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat conducted a survey to measure and track Reference Group engagement. In total, 53 Reference Group members from 13 National, Regional and Global Reference Groups in Latin America and Africa participated in the survey. A total of 38 per cent⁴⁸ of the respondents reported insufficient coordination and communication in decision-making processes, noting further that many groups continue to face resource constraints, and utilizing their expertise, efforts and time in Reference Groups without requisite compensation (particularly with the increased pressures of the pandemic), and securing their meaningful engagement, has proven difficult. Reflecting on this, the following challenges arose in 2020 from a civil society engagement perspective.

- National and local civil society organizations continue to face challenges accessing UN funding due to burdensome UN procedures, including complex proposal templates and short deadlines. The Civil Society National Reference Group in **Trinidad & Tobago** has voiced concern over the onerous procurement processes which, in turn, vary across UN agencies, and serve as a barrier to effective grassroots engagement. The team in **Jamaica** recognized that the process for many organizations to apply for and establish partnership agreements is cumbersome and may exclude grassroots organizations from applying for and receiving funding. In some cases, civil society organizations, particularly small ones, were not familiar with UN processes, which resulted in either few or low-quality applications. In other cases, civil society organizations had the expertise and connection to local communities but lacked the absorption capacity required by the United Nations to deliver on larger grants.



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⁴⁸ This was improved to 23 per cent in February 2021.

- Deeper engagement and increased transparency are needed for civil society advisory mechanisms to be effective and influential, including strengthened communication with Spotlight Initiative teams and steering committees.
- Limited physical access to communities and rights-holders has created complexities for implementation in some countries. Access to target communities was constrained due to geographical and environmental factors, such as rainy seasons, migration during dry seasons, or long distances travelled on poorly constructed roads. The COVID-19 pandemic reality also made physical meetings and movement challenging. Programme partners revised their activities and much of the work has therefore shifted to online spaces over the past year. Moving to virtual spaces has posed a challenge to participation in some activities for groups with limited internet access, while also allowing a broader reach of other activities through radio and TV broadcasting. To mitigate the risk of excluding groups, some programmes provided data credits and equipment to facilitate online participation.
- Finally, an additional challenge is the possible conflict of interest in the monitoring role of the Civil Society Reference Group members, when their organizations serve as an implementing partner. To mitigate this risk, specific guidance was issued for all Spotlight Initiative programmes to put in place concrete measures. In **Haiti**, a clause was included in the Code of Conduct for members who are implementing partners to recuse themselves when the Civil Society Reference Group evaluates or issues recommendations on an intervention in which they are involved.

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Fostering Further Civil Society Engagement

The feedback received from country teams and Civil Society National Reference Group members through regional calls and consultations reflected the urgent need to further explore innovative practices to address these challenges, such as allowing organizations to apply in consortium and launching small grants to support the institutional strengthening and resilience of national and local organizations.

Further, feedback informed the decision to develop a Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement of Reference Groups, in close collaboration with civil society and the European Union, finalized in 2020. To enable responsive communication, the Civil Society Reference Group members in **Timor-Leste** and **Latin America Regional Programme** are connected via a WhatsApp group and email and have access to a shared Google folder for accessing relevant Spotlight Initiative documents. This has increased transparency and the flow of information between the Civil Society Reference Groups and the programme teams and increased engagement of the Civil Society Reference Group members.

In **Grenada**, steps have been taken to address the challenge of accessing UN funding. These steps include: the involvement of civil society in the design phase of the calls; simplified application processes for grants, and a UN agencies-led workshop with potential applicants to introduce the available opportunities and explain how to apply for funding. In **Jamaica**, in response to an unsuccessful first call for small grants, the team revised the entire process for the second joint call, reducing the number of required documents, simplifying the requirements, disseminating an FAQ document throughout existing networks, and hosting an information session for potential applicants, all to generate interest and encourage applications. Consultations are currently in progress with Regional UN Organizations headquarters on amending the funding processes to ensure it is inclusive and simplified.

7.1.3 Technical Challenges

While 2020 saw advancements towards the elimination of violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative countries also faced technical challenges. Though challenges varied across contexts, common patterns emerged across regions. Spotlight Initiative programmes addressed these challenges by engaging with traditional and religious leaders in addressing misinformation and harmful perceptions, adapting innovative online platforms for effective monitoring of activities and results, supporting capacity development, adapting services to crises contexts, and strengthening high-level political engagement and resource allocation in order to sustain the efforts of the Spotlight Initiative, as illustrated below:

- Cultural norms and harmful traditions continue to threaten progress in addressing violence against women and girls. This long-standing challenge has been further exacerbated by the global regression in progress on advancing gender equality due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, conservative pushback against laws penalizing violence against women and girls and raising the age of marriage in **Mali** has threatened progress in legislative protection. In **Liberia** and **Uganda**, cultural and religious sensitivities around ending female genital mutilation and resistance on sexuality education (respectively) and related key bills persist. In **Argentina**, the debate on an abortion bill triggered hate speech and campaigns against violence against women programmes.
- Increased violence and threats against women's human-rights defenders and at-risk populations that question the status quo challenged Spotlight Initiative partners. In certain countries, such as **Mozambique**, actors sought to undermine activists by spreading misinformation that they were channels of COVID-19 transmission and by making direct threats of sexual violence.
- COVID-19 exacerbated violence against women and girls in Spotlight Initiative countries, where government restrictions on movement and lockdowns gave rise to a more conducive environment for men to abuse women, including increased victim blaming. For instance, in **Malawi** there was a surge in sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, particularly cases of teenage pregnancies and child marriages. In **Uganda**, school closures increased cases of defilement as children were locked in homes

with their perpetrators, while emerging data showed intensified domestic violence in **Nigeria**. COVID-19 also had an impact on service providers, particularly the health and justice sector, adversely affecting their ability to provide timely and essential services. For example, in **Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**, courts were not functional, which led to delayed justice and further trauma for victims. In the **Latin America region**, lockdowns and social isolation regulations have generated additional barriers to access support networks and essential services necessary for the prevention, care, response, and repair of cases of violence against women and girls. In response to this situation, the countries activated and/or strengthened remote care services such as telephone lines or WhatsApp counselling. However, not all services were able to adapt to a remote modality and many women were unable to access sexual and reproductive health and justice services. Faced with the interruption of sexual and reproductive health services, it has been estimated that approximately 17 million women will discontinue the use of modern contraceptive methods. Globally, in response to the spike in violence against women and girls, the [Deputy Secretary General made a strong call](#) urging men to stop perpetuating violence against women and girls, and stating that there shouldn't be any justification despite efforts made by some to justify these actions and blame victims. However, the public discourse in response to this strong call even further showcased victim-blaming attitudes. There is a critical need for men and boys and indeed everyone to start calling out victim-blaming and shaming, and to stand for zero tolerance to violence.

- Efforts to secure sustainability of the Spotlight Initiative's efforts were undermined by limited national resources to address the multifaceted needs of survivors of violence, cultures of impunity and limitations on the capacity of service providers. In **Nigeria**, **Mozambique** and **Liberia**, the limited resources available to law enforcement have had an impact on effective investigation of cases of violence against women and girls, legal support to survivors and ensuring access to justice. The situation is further exacerbated in **Mozambique** by a culture of impunity persisting for cases committed by family members. Furthermore, the limited resources for livelihood opportunities amid high levels of poverty in some countries, and the economic set back in most countries due to

the COVID-19 pandemic, pose major challenges for sustaining the progress made in responding to violence against women and girls.

- Limited knowledge on how to address violence against women and girls, and a shared understanding of key Spotlight Initiative principles such as “do no harm”, and survivor-centred approaches remain challenging issues. For example, in **Malawi**, some media reports on violence against women and girls and harmful practices were observed to be insensitive. In **Kyrgyzstan** and **Grenada**, early implementation showed limited knowledge on gender issues, ending violence against women and girls and other key principles among partners. In **Belize**, ensuring safe and confidential delivery of information, services and interactions with women and girls was a challenge.
- The Spotlight Initiative recognizes the importance of engaging men and boys as key agents of change. However, there is misconception about

the principles and the actions undertaken for engaging men and boys in some programmes, including on the overall objective of the Spotlight Initiative. For instance, in **Trinidad and Tobago**, the programme faced pushback for focusing on women and girls, which has led to some men and boys being dissatisfied with the programme.

- Limited availability of high-quality, disaggregated data and capacity gaps on monitoring violence against women and girls efforts pose challenges to the ability of programmes to identify gaps in services and legislation, ensure actions are evidence-based, and address the needs of women and girls who face intersecting forms of discrimination. The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated this challenge in certain countries, particularly those that were delayed in commencing data collection for the baseline study due to restrictions imposed on travel and mobility of consultants.



UNDP Training for police officers, Kazakhstan. ©Nikita Shabayev

MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES

Applying Lessons Learned to Support High-Quality Implementation

Programmes implemented a myriad of effective mitigating measures to address the technical challenges detailed above, several of which are highlighted here. In **Argentina**, in response to the rise of a conservative backlash against efforts to end violence against women and girls, the team developed evidence-based materials with a target audience of families, teachers, clubs and associations, journalists and community leaders, which allowed the team to dismantle some of the false news that has circulated about programmes such as the Spotlight Initiative. With this material, the team will be able to establish a strong presence on social media and enhance the work of civil society organizations and governments.

In **Mali**, the team intensified advocacy efforts with religious communities and held information sessions with religious leaders to discuss the danger of violence against women and girls on women's and girls' health, while in **Liberia**, the programme has prioritized consultative dialogues with traditional and religious leaders, cultural elders and community members to ensure their voices are heard and to maintain their buy-in, which is important in mitigating any future resistance, particularly on culturally sensitive issues such as ending female genital mutilation. To address challenges of the justice sector, the programme is decentralizing delivery of justice through specialized courts established to adjudicate sexual violence against women and girls cases only.

In **Belize**, the team revised their data collection plan to integrate the use of mobile phones and online platforms and removed sensitive questions related to exposure to violence, in keeping with the “do no harm” principle. The **Guyana** programme similarly made use of available technology to collect data for the baseline assessment online where in-person collection was not possible. In **Nigeria** and **Malawi**, the team is supporting gender-responsive budgeting interventions to secure sustainable funding for cases of violence against women and girls, including capacity development of law enforcement, and high-level advocacy to ensure the leadership of relevant institutions. In **Zimbabwe**, the team continues to lobby the Ministry of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs to ensure cases of violence against women and girls are considered “urgent”, and that the Ministry is setting up virtual courts for the most marginalized women and girls. In **Uganda**, the programme engaged in joint advocacy to ensure the social welfare workforce were classified as essential workers during lockdowns. This included critical para-social workers who bridged the link between community and institutional structures and who kept government gender-based violence helplines running.

7.2 Lessons Learned

Lessons learned during the course of 2020 have informed the implementation of programmes across all Spotlight Initiative regions. This section covers the lessons learned across the six Pillars as well as those related to implementation management and programmatic aspects. Capturing lessons learned is key to improving future programming and implementation work, and, while many lessons emerged across programmes, this section includes only a few examples under each Pillar.

However, all programmes have seen that supporting women's rights and feminist movements, grassroots organizations, and solidarity groups – and planning and implementing eliminating violence against women and girls interventions through (existing) community-based structures, local organizations, and other members of the community (including male champions for gender equality) – facilitates more targeted and tailored programming, generates more effective interventions, and ultimately contributes to more sustainable social change. Supporting community level, women-led networks is critical to allow women and girl activists to remain connected and support one another, including through crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2.1 Overarching Lessons Learned



Political will and buy in: Mobilizing political will and buy-in and adopting a whole-of-society, including whole-of-government, approach in all stages of Spotlight Initiative programmes ensures effective delivery, as well as national ownership and sustainability of Spotlight Initiative results. In particular, engagement with local authorities and clients at all levels of the programme supports local ownership and adds value, while also enhancing the use of a human rights-based and survivor-focused approach while leaving no one behind.



Monitoring and evaluation: Strengthening monitoring and evaluation efforts of Spotlight Initiative programmes is critical to track and accelerate programme implementation. Strong participatory monitoring and evaluation through rapid identification and resolution of bottlenecks, for collection and analysis of data across all Pillars, and to promote inter-Pillar synergies, helps to facilitate accurate measurement of achievements and areas for improvement.



Strengthened coordination: Strengthening coordination across the Spotlight Initiative and all regional and national programmes and stakeholders creates opportunities for sharing innovative, promising and good practices, fostering knowledge exchange and establishing learning communities to strengthen multi-tiered approaches to eliminating violence against women and girls in a comprehensive manner and for sustainable action beyond the Initiative.



Common definition of violence against women and girls: Adopting a common operational definition and key principles for understanding violence against women and girls for all stakeholders including UN agencies, government and civil society through a flexible, participatory process is helpful for smooth implementation of programmes.



COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic created an urgent need for new modalities of programme implementation and delivery. This highlighted the need for programmes to be adaptable to changing contexts but also provided the possibility to innovate by accelerating efforts to boost prevention measures through virtual platforms and technologies, strengthening coordination and advocacy for ending violence against women and girls in national emergency response, and bringing remote and mobile services closer to implicated communities.



“Do no harm”: The do no harm principle needs to be firmly embedded in implementing partner agreements and all capacity building initiatives. Ensuring visibility of the Spotlight Initiative should not come at a cost to survivors and their right to confidentiality. Capacity building on ethics and the do no harm principle is needed for all Spotlight Initiative actors and has been prioritized for the coming year.

7.2.2 Pillar-Specific Lessons Learned

Pillar 1: Policies and legislation

- There is often limited knowledge of legal frameworks on violence against women and girls, and integrating efforts to raise awareness on the laws, policies and tools, as part of communications and visibility plans, can increase public awareness. Community, religious and traditional leaders also play an important role in raising awareness of legislation on violence against women and girls and harmful practices.
- The slow pace and non-linear movement of law and policy-making makes it difficult to obtain immediate results. Investing in technical support to strengthen draft laws is essential to establish a legal base for transformative change. These interventions must be targeted at the highest levels, not only at the ministerial level.

Pillar 2: Institutions

- Engaging government stakeholders at the highest levels, from the President's office for example, during the planning phase and sustaining those partnerships throughout implementation is critical to ensure ending violence against women and girls is accompanied by political will and stands as a priority in the country's leadership agenda.
- Engaging whole-of-government, rather than taking a single entity or sector-based approach, improves the integration of key issues across sectors and has proven to lead to more sustainable results. To this effect Spotlight Initiative programmes have engaged a broader range of ministries and official departments than those dedicated to women's affairs.
- Establishing dedicated and well-resourced plans specific to ending violence against women and girls and embedding them in national frameworks helps to ensure that efforts to end violence against women and girls will remain a priority.
- Conducting a robust gender equality analysis and ensuring a women's human-rights and survivor-centred approach in policy and legislative processes, particularly throughout emergencies (such as COVID-19), is key to informing appropriate responses and budgeting.

- It is helpful to assess the knowledge and skills of government counterparts on ending violence against women and girls during the programme design phase, and integrate a series of concrete capacity development initiatives that can be actioned alongside implementation, including gender-transformative experiential learning programmes for ministry staff, with an orientation toward practical, on-the-job implementation of lessons learned. This is also critical at provincial levels, as this has significant impacts on community social change.

Pillar 3: Prevention

- The use of innovative approaches such as theatre, music and debates and other non-conventional means have shown to be promising communication approaches for challenging gender norms. These tools help initiate social dialogues on sensitive issues, empower community members, and facilitate ownership of and accountability for the issue.
- Mobilizing young people and allowing peer-to-peer exchange to build movements and networks to change beliefs, attitudes and practices around violence is key. Where there is limited access to internet and new technologies, the combination of online and offline tools to mobilize youth to speak up on issues of violence, gender equality, and discrimination is crucial to rapidly increasing the participation of young people in this dialogue.
- Through the **Africa Regional Programme**, the Spotlight Initiative has brought the two largest joint programmes on child marriage and female genital mutilation in unison to address a common underlying driver, namely discriminatory gender norms. This programme has created a unique opportunity to leverage and expand the scope of Spotlight Initiative interventions.
- Strengthening engagement with religious leaders as agents of change to promote gender equitable norms can strengthen the Spotlight Initiative's work to change harmful social norms at the community and individual level, including changes in discriminatory laws and policies.
- The adaptations of Spotlight Initiative programmes to COVID-19, and the innovative use of information and communication technologies for education, building capacities, communicating messages on violence against women and girls and gender

norms is instrumental for reaching more members of the community. In addition, leveraging existing national and community-based structures and platforms established for emergency response in undertaking efforts to end violence against women and girls during emergencies is key for maximum reach, and reach of timely and relevant information.

- Ensuring the effective engagement of boys and men as agents of change within their communities, and at multiple levels, is critical to address harmful gender and social norms that enable violence against women and girls, providing an opportunity for sustainability of programme results.

Pillar 4: Services

- Holistic care and service provision that takes into account the needs of survivors, as well as family members, is crucial for survivors' recovery. Services should also take the needs of marginalized groups into account, in particular survivors with disabilities, to ensure no one is left behind.
- Quick adaptations and scaling up of essential services to adapt to a crisis such as COVID-19 (for example, hotlines, virtual courts, tele-counselling,

mobile clinics and one stop centres, provision of personal protective equipment (PPE)) and working with community-based structures is critical to ensure timely and lifesaving essential services that meet the specific needs of survivors of violence, and in particular marginalized groups.

Pillar 5: Data

- The joint baseline exercise afforded the UN agencies, governments and implementing civil society organizations to understand the underlying factors that drive violence against women and girls and to analyse gaps in data and capacities of institutions, and afforded stakeholders the opportunity to adopt a tailor-made solution and not a one-size-fits-all approach, given the different prevailing socio-cultural contexts.
- The complexity of studies associated with femicide in differentiated socio-economic and vulnerable contexts requires a thorough and step-by-step engagement process to ensure technically coherent reviews, as well as to ensure ownership by the relevant stakeholders. Recommendations must be generated under a single conceptual and methodological framework that is aligned with programme objectives.

Samoa

“Promoting our services sent a clear message: help is not shut down.”

- Siliniu Lina Chang,
President of Samoa Victim
Support Group



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©UN Women Indonesia

Pillar 6: Women's movement and civil society

- Directly working with and supporting local and grassroots organizations has a transformative impact for communities, with COVID-19 further demonstrating the effectiveness of channelling direct, core and flexible funding to local, grassroots organizations in order to ensure the sustainability of progressive work to ending violence against women and girls. The COVID -19 pandemic has also highlighted the importance of working closely with implementing partners to explore locally driven solutions, as civil society organizations were most adaptable at quickly adjusting their programmes and working together to ensure information and services continued to reach communities.
- Engaging women and girls with multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination from ideation to evaluation of programmes is essential: valuing their expertise and knowledge ensures they are meaningfully understood, supported and served by the *leave no one behind agenda*.

- The pool of experts available to staff Spotlight Initiative programmes is often limited due to the level of expertise and understanding of local contexts required. A critical long-term solution is to invest in educational institutions that foster eliminating violence against women and girls activists and experts to widen the pool of available experts in the future and ensure the sustainability of efforts.

7.2.3 Coordination and Management Lessons Learned

United Nations Reform and one United Nations interface

- Investing in meaningful joint planning and partnership-building before implementation begins strengthens joint delivery of results, which then leverages investments made in eliminating violence against women and girls, as the close collaboration among UN agencies mitigated duplications in agencies' investments of both time and resources in building relationships with government and civil society.



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- Leveraging a one UN interface – with the UN Resident Coordinator leading programme coordination with the European Union, government, and other key national stakeholders – streamlines communication and enables the Spotlight Initiative teams to pool their collective resources and efforts across agencies to more meaningfully support civil society partners and other stakeholders, as well as to enhance national capacities and ownership.
- Formal mechanisms to foster inter-agency collaboration are critical to avoid siloed approaches and adapt to UN Reform. Such mechanisms include regular meetings among recipient UN organizations, joint strategies and missions, joint visibility, and regular information sharing.
- Adapting administrative mechanisms to allow for inter-agency delivery, especially in an extraordinary situation that requires a fast response, remains a challenge for programmes. To accelerate implementation, many programmes are working to develop joint procurement practices, under the UN-wide Business Operations Strategy framework that include long-term agreements with suppliers from other recipient UN organizations.

- Clearly defined roles for the three functions of Spotlight Initiative programme management (coordination, technical coherence and recipient UN organization implementation) is essential for coordinated programming, so that there is no duplication of work by team members and each function is effectively covered. Developing shared standard operating procedures can help in this regard, so every agency and team member understands their role in ensuring coordination and implementing as a joined-up programme.

Coordination, communication, and harmonization

- UN Resident Coordinators play a critical role in creating a culture of collaboration among all recipient UN organizations and in implementing coordination mechanisms that further address information and communication gaps, ultimately resulting in higher-quality programming.
- Investing in open channels of communication among all the Spotlight Initiative's staff, the UN Resident Coordinator and the Heads of Spotlight Initiative's recipient UN organizations makes it easier to agree upon joint positions, messages and

strategies and to interact as one United Nations with stakeholders. A group chat on WhatsApp, a shared online drive or other platforms are simple but effective ways to quickly share information and maintain coordination across agencies.

- Developing harmonized processes, templates, and platforms across recipient UN organizations, including joint standard operating procedures, not only enables programmes to establish strong internal practices in line with the UN Reform but also fosters greater inter-agency collaboration, knowledge sharing across Spotlight Initiative programmes, and more evidence-based programming for ending violence against women and girls.

Partnering with the European Union Delegation

- EU Delegations play a crucial role as advocates for the elimination of violence against women and girls, which enables the Spotlight Initiative to leverage the combined lessons learned and good practices of both the European Union and the United Nations, while building momentum around the collective effort.
- Engaging the EU Delegation in defining programme guidelines, protocols, and messages, as well as leveraging EU thematic expertise, helps ensure a coordinated approach in the countries of operation.

- Issuing joint UN-EU communications, such as joint letters to UN Country Offices and EU Delegations in Spotlight Initiative countries, sets the tone for a close and well-coordinated UN-EU partnership at all levels and contributes to the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative as a joint multilateral undertaking.

Engaging civil society

- Establishing a shared, single platform for calls for proposals from civil society organizations facilitated increased engagement and participation from a broader range of civil society. Some programmes found that the One UN platform for calls for proposals allows civil society organizations to use a single application and template structure, rather than requiring potential civil society organization partners to learn different UN agency-specific application procedures.
- Civil society organization engagement can be further strengthened by building capacity on administrative and financial procedures, simplifying partner selection requirements and processes, increasing transparency, as well as ensuring that Recipient UN Organizations and grantees have a shared understanding of responsibilities and concepts.

INNOVATIVE, PROMISING, AND GOOD PRACTICES

This chapter describes global and programme level efforts toward fostering innovative, promising or good practices. Examples shared reflect adaptations of essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic, changing mindsets, attitudes and behaviours, engaging men and boys, elevating women's and girls' leadership, implementing coordination practices and joint operations, ensuring better informed programmes, and advancing the UN-EU partnership. Country and regional programme examples are then highlighted to deepen understanding of what is working and provide inspiration for other agencies and programmes working on similar issues.

8.1 Country and Regional Innovative, Promising and Good Practices: Technical

Two years into implementation, the Spotlight Initiative has cultivated a wealth of innovative and promising practices to advance efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. Spotlight Initiative regional and country programmes across Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Asia – including Central Asia and Afghanistan, and the Safe and Fair

programme in ASEAN countries – have demonstrated that a comprehensive approach, aligned with the principles of *leave no one behind* and *do no harm*, to ending violence against women and girls works.

The following promising practices emerged in 2020, which are described in more detail in the subsections below:

- Advancing remote, digital, or mobile provision of essential services for women and girls experiencing violence to bring services closer to clients, including marginalized groups.
- Scaling up attitude and behaviour change programmes across different countries and driving the evidence-base to catalyse transformative prevention efforts.
- Engaging men and boys, and influencers in communities including religious and traditional leaders to strategically transform social norms and to end violence against women and girls.
- Lifting up and supporting efforts at mobilizing youth voices and agendas for action to end violence against women and girls.

8.1.1 Innovative and Promising Adaptations of Essential Services During COVID-19

The Spotlight Initiative's contributions became even more essential given the rise of violence against women during COVID-19. Spotlight Initiative programmes adapted to ensure that operations and rapid response services continued despite lockdowns. In this context, programmes advanced remote and mobile essential services for women and girl survivors of violence, including marginalized groups. Most programmes for survivors of violence against women and girls provided static one-stop centres providing legal aid, psychosocial and other relevant services to survivors under one roof. These one-stop centres are often available in hospitals or in police stations, and survivors need to travel to these centres to access

these services. However due to the lockdown and movement restrictions in place in response to COVID 19, Spotlight Initiative programmes had to innovate.

Many programmes converted large vehicles into one-stop clinics, bringing services closer to survivors. This also provided an opportunity to reach survivors in

hard-to-reach areas who are often left behind. As a result, in **Zimbabwe** for example, over 5,862 survivors accessed services through mobile one-stop centres including shuttle services that provided alternate transportation for 3145 survivors of violence, women with disabilities and caretakers, enabling many to reach services during the early stages of the lockdown

Jamaica

“It doesn’t matter the time of day or night; I will answer their calls.”

- Tian McDonald,
Mentor Mom



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CASE STUDY

Innovative and IT-Enabled Approaches Enhancing Access to Referral Systems in Uganda

The Spotlight Initiative expanded the use of innovative mobile applications and supported new ways of raising awareness to enable survivors’ access to services at a time where public transport restrictions were pervasive. The Uganda Law Society developed the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and PULIDAWO applications that were used by women and girls to access free legal counsel and referrals. **PULIDAWO** matches individuals with a potential legal claim to a lawyer in their vicinity while the Interactive Voice Response provides recorded information in multiple languages on violence against women and girls, referral and access to lawyers. More than **16,000 clients** accessed the PULIDAWO and Interactive Voice Response line services that provided referral to legal aid clinics and police for legal support across the country including access to information on violence against women and girls and other services. The Makerere University is also piloting and testing **the Centres4Her App** and **the Safe Bangle**, which links girls and women experiencing violence to services. The App increases access to reliable and confidential provision of post-violence services. Safe Bangle is a standalone customizable wearable offline safety device, developed and designed to alert guardians, loved ones, friends and close relatives of the user’s experience of violence, attack or threat.

when mobility restrictions were in place. In **Belize**, the mobile women centres, which adopted a mobile brigade approach led by civil society organizations, provided individual services to women as well as information, contraceptive commodities and sexual and reproductive health family planning services.

Furthermore, some countries relied on digital technologies to make services remotely available and accessible. In **El Salvador**, remote services were provided through WhatsApp, phone calls, text messages, and online chats. More than 7000 calls were made, 103 WhatsApp groups were formed, and remote counselling services were provided. **Tajikistan** has developed an online tutorial for Red Crescent community volunteers that is accessible on mobile phones and provides critical information on outreach essentials and referrals to local service providers, reaching more than 596,000 people. Finally, in **Nigeria**, the Gender-Based Violence Virtual Referral and Response Service platform was rolled out for the first time, providing uninterrupted access to gender-based violence services during movement restrictions through established help lines, phone-based counselling, and direct referrals to relevant service providers when physical contact with a provider is required. This platform also supports survivor transfers to service delivery points and safe evacuation depending on need.

In Indonesia, the **Safe & Fair** programme launched a Protocol for Handling Cases of Gender-Based

Violence and Trafficking of Women Migrant Workers during COVID-19 – the first of its kind among ASEAN nations. This protocol equipped service providers to better coordinate support to women, including women migrant workers, who have experienced violence and trafficking during the pandemic. The programme overcame both limited awareness on the urgency of maintaining access to quality services and gender insensitive attitudes by national stakeholders. Civil society organizations have already utilized the protocol to provide services and use standardized referral pathways without fear of virus transmission, and the protocol is currently being adapted to **Viet Nam**. Similarly, in the **Latin American Regional Programme**, the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Inter-American Shelter Network (in Spanish Red Interamericana de Refugios), published a comprehensive study on shelters for survivors in the context of the pandemic as well as a practical manual that lays out the procedures to be implemented in shelters in times of COVID-19. This publication aims at strengthening the protocols, capacities, and resilience of the shelter sector in the region in the face of COVID-19.

Overall, the above examples illustrate how mobile and remote service provision, as new solutions designed by Spotlight Initiative teams in response to the challenges faced during COVID-19, can accelerate impact, with a potential to be adopted even beyond the COVID-19 context.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has made everything much more difficult for survivors of violence. They cannot easily make a call or even send a text message to hotlines because they are at home with their abuser all the time. We get many calls late at night or early in the morning while the abuser is sleeping. For this reason, we had to open the hotline number 24/7 so we don’t miss an urgent call for help. Support from the Safe and Fair programme was extremely timely as it meant we could hire more hotline operators like me for the night shift.”

– A hotline operator for a shelter that supports women and girls experiencing violence in Viet Nam

“[The centre is] a great help to women like me. We can get services by visiting the nurse or advice on legal matters which we often don’t get because it comes with a cost. I know the counselling helps so many women here. They feel good being able to talk to someone and get the advice they need. It gives me hope to push forward despite my problems — it gave me strength.”

– Domitilla Noh, who lives in a small village in Belize and accessed healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic through a Spotlight Initiative-supported mobile women’s centre

8.1.2 Innovative and Promising Prevention Initiatives to Change Mindsets, Attitudes and Behaviours and Contribute to the Evidence-Base

Strong efforts in pioneering innovative prevention initiatives and scaling up initiatives that have been successful across diverse country contexts were made in 2020. For example, the Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Uganda** and **Haiti** have adopted the “Start, Awareness, Support, Action” (SASA!) methodology, a ground-breaking community mobilization approach that has been proven to reduce violence against women by exploring the balance of power in intimate partner relationships and in broader community dynamics. In the past, many prevention efforts, despite good intentions, focused on awareness raising without supporting community members through the stages of behaviour change. However, the SASA! methodology supports stakeholders from all levels of the community to participate in its four phases, and seeks to prevent violence by changing the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate power imbalances in the relationships between men and women. In **Uganda**, the programme has successfully completed the SASA! Together Start Phase, which aims to foster personal reflection about power. Violence against women is now a public agenda item and people are talking about alternatives to violence in resolving marital conflicts. The community activists, leaders and service providers in the districts where

SASA! is implemented report an increase in the number of reported cases because people are now recognizing violence, condemning it and holding perpetrators accountable. Similarly, women and girls’ leaders in **Haiti** are also being sensitized on the SASA! approach to lead longer-term education and mobilization processes in their communities on women’s and girls’ rights, non-violent education and positive masculinities.

In **Liberia**, research has shown that female genital mutilation has been practiced for generations not only due to culture but also for its economic gains. In its effort to eliminate harmful practices, the Spotlight Initiative programme consulted with the National Traditional Council of Chiefs and Elders and traditional leaders in the community to identify key economic interventions, such as climate-smart agriculture and business development skills that can provide alternate source of income for female genital mutilation practitioners. Coupled with continuous awareness-raising on the negative impacts of female genital mutilation, over 300 female genital mutilation traditional practitioners are benefitting from these initiatives. During the pandemic, the Initiative also provided motorbikes to the National Council of Chiefs and Elders of Liberia to facilitate monitoring of both the bush schools that are used for practising female genital mutilation and alternative economic interventions. This has increased their ownership of the fight against female genital mutilation. Based on the monitoring of this practice, a gradual abandonment of the female



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genital mutilation practice in communities has been observed. Further monitoring of the success of this innovative approach and validation by stakeholders will be critical.

The year 2020 was critical for Spotlight Initiative programmes in piloting evidence generation in prevention efforts as well. For instance, **the Latin America Regional Programme** made headway in rolling out an innovation evidence generation initiative on prevention in the region. The Spotlight Initiative, the first for the region, is mapping and systematically analysing violence against women and girls prevention programmes implemented in the last ten years, highlighting what works and what does not. It responds to the lack of documentation and analysis on prevention efforts, as well as limitations in monitoring and evaluation. This work is expected to contribute to strong public policies for the prevention of violence against women and girls and to advance the measurement of the transformation and changes in social norms through rigorous monitoring and evaluation frameworks across the region.

8.1.3 Innovative and Good Practices for Engaging Men and Boys as Champions: Transforming Masculinities and Partnering with Traditional and Religious Leaders to End Violence Against Women and Girls

The Spotlight Initiative recognizes that men and boys are essential to ending violence against women and girls. By openly recognizing men's violence against women and girls as a reality, and clearly stating this, men and boys can become agents of change. The Initiative is piloting innovative ways of engaging men and boys for the prevention of violence against women and girls and is building on practices that have demonstrated promising results already to continue contributing to the evidence-base and to adapt what has already been done so that it can be effective in diverse contexts. For example, **Papua New Guinea** is one of three countries in the world without any women Members of Parliament or Ministers. As such, as a promising practice, the Spotlight Initiative

mobilized Members of Parliament to discuss men's violence against women and girls in a diverse multi-stakeholder summit with 750 people. The issue was deliberated on the Parliament floor on the same day, and led to the establishment of the first ever Coalition of Parliamentarians Against Gender-Based Violence. Multi-stakeholder summits have been held across many Spotlight Initiative programmes to bring a variety of stakeholders together in support of a common aim in the spirit of ensuring a whole-of-society approach to end violence against women and girls. Often, violence against women and girls is not explicitly stated as men's violence against women and girls, and this promising practice from **Papua New Guinea** demonstrates the power of transparency when emphasizing that men are part of the solution. In Niamey, **Niger**, taxis are the main mode of public transport and are often used by women to escape abusive situations, though they can become harmful situations themselves when taxi drivers perpetrate violence. As part of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women Campaign, the Spotlight Initiative supported 50 taxi drivers in an innovative effort to become ambassadors for the elimination of violence against women and girls. By wearing the campaign's orange scarves

and T-shirts and by placing posters in their vehicles, they made a public commitment to preventing and responding to violence against women and girls and have learned how to connect women and girls who have experienced violence with the support that they need. Their commitment has been crucial in reaching women and girls and transforming taxis into safe spaces. This innovative practice is a new solution that directly engages with critical stakeholders as changemakers to end violence against women and girls in Niamey's public spaces. The **Latin America Regional Programme** is using context-specific and recent behavioural science findings to inform and develop cutting-edge communication campaigns and messaging to innovatively engage men and boys in prevention efforts.

Furthermore, as custodians and gatekeepers of faith-based communities, engaging religious and traditional leaders in efforts to end violence against women and girls has been proven as a good practice as it has the power to reach men and boys in meaningful ways, and influence entire communities and networks to stand in solidarity with women and girls' right to live with integrity, freedom, and safety. The Initiative in **Uganda**

CASE STUDY

Harnessing the Power of Artificial Intelligence to Transform Masculinities – A Promising Practice in El Salvador

In **El Salvador**, the Initiative has leveraged the promise of artificial intelligence to transform masculinities through engaging men and boys on Facebook with the online tool *Entre Nos Chatbot* ("between us", a Salvadoran phrase widely used in relationships of trust and friendship). The past few years have seen a rise in the use of technologies, including chatbots, to support prevention and response efforts for the elimination of violence against women and girls. Building on this existing work, as well as the success of previous interventions on existing social media platforms, *Entre Nos Chatbot* creates space for men, adolescents and youth to speak about their experiences with masculinity, relationships and inequality, as well as to open up about their emotions. The Chatbot supports youth in recognizing what violence looks like, and works to prevent violent behaviour from the user in both private and public spaces. Promoted by the Initiative and approved by the *Tejedores de Equidad* ("Table of Masculinities", a table of about 20 experts), *Entre Nos Chatbot* supports men and youth to understand healthier, more positive notions of masculinity – rather than putting the burden of prevention on women and girls. Within a month the tool had engaged in 10,933 interactions, and within five months, the network expanded to engage 235,178 male and 254,776 female Chatbot users. *Entre Nos Chatbot* aims to help youth, particularly young men, understand the need to eradicate violence against women and girls to improve the quality of life of everyone.

“Dialogue is the key to solve all problems. Violence cannot be a solution. We absolutely need to stop using violence within our homes and in public spaces. My engagement will not stop at the end of the 16 Days of Activism. I will continue being an active ambassador against violence against women and girls, within my own community and through the Spotlight Initiative Movement of Taxi Drivers of Niamey.”

– Mr. Abarchi, 33, is a taxi driver in Niamey who joined the Spotlight Initiative campaign for the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence after attending awareness-raising sessions to increase taxi drivers’ understanding of the causes and consequences of violence.

has implemented a good practice through opening the national chapter of the Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa (COTLA), a pan-African movement of progressive traditional leaders that engages in advocacy, policy dialogue, and scale-up of efforts to transform cultural practices and social norms for the elimination of child marriage and female genital mutilation in Africa. COTLA has already demonstrated results elsewhere and the opening of this new chapter will spur impact in Uganda and can inspire wider adoption of this practice across the continent. Historically, cultural institutions have been seen as a problem in Uganda; the Spotlight Initiative instead recognizes and respects the rights of indigenous cultures and institutions as part of the solution. As such, cultural leaders from 14 cultural institutions committed to incorporating ending violence against women and girls into their institutional agendas.

In the Pacific, churches have a critical role as they are key influencers and agents of transformation for communities, and there has been a recent paradigm shift where church leaders and theologians have made conscious efforts to decolonize harmful theology. Thus, the **Pacific Regional Programme** is partnering with the Pacific Conference of Churches to use a spiritual framework for the prevention of violence against women and girls, an innovative practice that enables churches to become safe spaces and communities for vulnerable populations. Using the influence of faith networks and innovative collaborative approaches to

address the issue, the high rates of violence against women and girls and abuse in Christian homes and communities is being recognized, and for the first time, Pacific Conference of Churches’s Strategic Plan includes clear outcomes for religious leaders and faith communities to urgently address the high rates of violence against women and girls in the region. This practice has provided a new solution to accelerate the prevention of violence against women and girls in the **Pacific region** through creating innovative partnerships with new stakeholders to carry this work forward.

8.1.4 Promising and Good Practices for the Power of Young Women and Girls: Elevating the Leadership of Those Who Will Shape our Future

The Spotlight Initiative is at an inflection point – after two years of implementation, the Initiative is looking ahead to the future of ending violence against women and girls. Recognizing the critical role that young women and girls have as agents of change to shape a future free from violence, the Initiative has driven a range of innovative, promising and good practices to engage and foster the leadership of young women and girls.

These efforts are demonstrated by the Spotlight Initiative’s **Africa Regional Programme**, which is creating space for young women and youth to mobilize

for an end to harmful practices, particularly female genital mutilation and child marriage.

This promising practice, the Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassadors Programme (SYVA), brings together young women and girl activists and female genital mutilation survivors and places them at the heart of legal and political processes for the elimination of female genital mutilation in order to take ownership, create a new narrative, and generate scalable solutions. SYVA is a partnership between the African Union Commission and United Nations that predates the Spotlight Initiative, and is now being implemented under the framework of the **Africa Regional Programme**. Given the visibility it has already achieved at a grassroots level, it has the potential to contribute to fostering a women's movement. Two engaging high-level events have been convened, and SYVA has paved the way for the creation of podcasts and interviews linking Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals, and everyday life.

Additionally, a Youth Reference Group on Child Marriage has been created as another promising practice supported by the **Africa Regional Programme**. The Youth Reference Group aims to engage youth at continental, regional and national levels to support local and grassroots actors to connect with policy and other decision-makers. The Youth Reference Group is expected to have a significant role in raising awareness, mobilizing support, and promoting social accountability for the prevention and elimination of child marriage. Though support to women's movements and youth engagement is not new, these promising practices are building on the evidence base that their centrality in decision-making processes is critical to effectively move violence against women and girls' efforts forward. These particular initiatives will be continuously refined to support wider adoption and upscaling in future.

In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative is creating a cadre of young women equipped with the knowledge and skills to stand up for their sexual and reproductive health and rights, prevent sexual and gender-based violence, and challenge harmful attitudes and practices in their community. The Safe Space Mentorship Programme is a good practice that engages out-of-school adolescent girls and young women in weekly mentorship sessions, offering a supportive system within communities to challenge, report and make quality essential services accessible for survivors. Established in 2019, the

programme has been proven to work well and produce results: the six-month mentorship curriculum has benefitted thousands of women and girls, and has led to the establishment of a protective network to actively combat violence against women and girls. This includes a platform where mentors and mentees engage with traditional leaders, service providers and other community-based decision makers for joint advocacy and to demand accountability from duty bearers. As a result, additional cases of child marriage were identified, and access to essential services for young women and adolescent girls expanded. Cases were linked to community psychosocial counsellors, and referred to safe spaces and other health service providers. There are plans to sustainably scale up these efforts as they feed into existing community youth peer groups and structures, are embraced by traditional leaders, and are seen as part of the referral pathways for survivors. The lessons from this scale-up can be used for wider adoption of the practice, while tailoring it to the specific needs of various contexts.

The **Safe and Fair programme** has been implementing promising practices to support the agency of youth and women migrant workers. Safe and Fair engaged with a civil society organization in Malaysia, *Project Liber8*, to implement a public campaign aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness, especially among youth, on women's labour migration and to elevate the contributions of women migrant workers to Malaysia. The public campaign, known as '[Advoc8 on the Road \(University Edition\)](#)', leverages the momentum of existing youth movements in Malaysia to engage youth at universities and colleges to advocate for the rights of women migrant workers. Recognizing that many of these youth may themselves employ women migrant workers in the future, the campaign aims to raise the collective consciousness of youth on the issue of violence against women migrant workers in the country. Empowering youth to be the protagonists of change, the campaign serves both to build youth's capacity and agency in advocating for change and to improve public attitudes towards women migrant workers. Building on the success of previous campaigns, this promising practice was uniquely adapted to address the issue in the Malaysian context and has proven successful in its single setting. With further research and replication, it can be adapted for future use in Malaysia and other countries in the region.

8.2 Country and Regional Innovative and Promising Practices: Implementation and Management

Since their inception, Spotlight Initiative programmes have fostered innovation and monitored promising and good practices related to operations and programme management in implementation. This work is particularly important to the Spotlight Initiative's role as a demonstration fund for UN Reform. In 2020, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, UN Resident Coordinators led country and regional programmes in implementing innovative and promising practices to improve coordination, streamline delivery and, ultimately, achieve more transformative results in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

8.2.1 Implementing Under UN Reform

The UN Resident Coordinator role

The Spotlight Initiative is a flagship programme for the UN Development System reforms. The role of the UN Resident Coordinator in coordination, leadership and accountability is a key performance indicator of the ability of the Fund to deliver as a true inter-agency initiative, beyond standard joint programming. In line with the Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System, the impartial UN Resident Coordinator role is a cornerstone of adopting a new, more integrated way of working that allows for more impactful results in support of national governments' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Across programmes, UN Resident Coordinators exercise oversight and accountability for the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (the UNSDCF, formerly the UNDAF).

At the programme-level, UN Resident Coordinators lead inter-agency teams to build and maintain innovative partnerships through a "one UN interface", whereby the UN Country Team engages with potential and existing partners as a joined-up team instead of as individual agencies. This integrated approach to partnerships ultimately leads to the type of high

level of engagement with national stakeholders that is necessary to achieve long-term buy-in, as well as to more streamlined implementation with partners. In **Papua New Guinea**, for example, the UN Resident Coordinator represented the Spotlight Initiative at a high-level political meeting on gender-based violence, delivering key messages aimed at political leaders. In a historic move, 20 Members of Parliament signed a resolution to form a coalition against gender-based violence as a direct follow-up to the meeting. In **Uganda**, the UN Resident Coordinator exercised her coordination role and in liaison with the Ministry of Gender Labour and Community Development, facilitated UN agencies to re-allocate USD 860,828 as part of the COVID-19 response towards sustaining shelters for women and girls who experience gender-based violence that were facing closure when they were needed most during the pandemic. The UN Resident Coordinator also stepped in to help mitigate challenges with implementing partners to reduce duplication in response and data management systems, ensuring the strengthening of existing ones, and encouraging their regular participation in district-level coordination meetings. This was achieved by strengthening the role of UN Area Coordinators to exercise oversight and monitoring of implementing partners in Spotlight Initiative districts, facilitating work at the subnational level and resulting in better coordinated programming. In the **Caribbean Regional Programme**, the UN Resident Coordinator of Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States exercised leadership to establish the Regional Technical Advisory Group, whose purpose will be to bring together regional stakeholders to monitor progress against outcomes and to discuss programme strategy, particularly in terms of learning from country programmes in the region.

UN Resident Coordinators also guide UN agencies in adopting joint delivery and operating methods, exercising oversight over the shift to working in the spirit of UN Reform. In **Africa** and **Latin America**, the UN Resident Coordinators were critical in guiding Spotlight Initiative programmes to rapidly accelerate implementation in order to reach the goals set out in Phase I. After a mid-2020 assessment of implementation rates in these two regions, the Secretariat held meetings with each UN Resident Coordinator to identify acceleration measures and secure their commitment to leading programmes forward. Current reporting data indicates that the active involvement of UN Resident Coordinators in monitoring implementation status and supporting

teams to address bottlenecks resulted in higher implementation rates overall – an important indicator of progress in dedicating funding towards eliminating violence against women and girls.

Innovative coordination practices in service of UN Reform

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes illustrated the UN Secretary General’s vision of a new generation of UN Country Teams – teams that are equipped to achieve integrated and impactful results by implementing innovative practices to coordinate joint delivery on an ambitious theory of change. Spotlight Initiative teams took leadership over existing coordination mechanisms and created new ones in order to develop a more comprehensive matrix of inter-agency collaboration. For example, several teams convened inter-agency sub-committees that targeted coordination on specific elements of programming, such as technical coherence, individual Pillars or themes, or communications, in order to facilitate more integrated coordination at the working level across the programme. Another common coordination practice was to plan joint trips to local- or district-level communities, which enabled teams to directly coordinate activities on the ground and to strengthen the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative among communities, particularly those which are traditionally hard to reach with national-level activities.

In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative developed an innovative tool called the “Delivering as One (DaO) Accountability Framework” to exercise monitoring and oversight over progress in delivering as One UN, in line with UN Reform and the Delivering as One initiative (which predates UN Reform). The purpose of the framework is to harmonize the application of inter-agency approaches in order to ensure a comprehensive response to violence against women and girls, cohesive and therefore more impactful advocacy, increased efficiencies through cost savings and avoidance, and streamlined partnerships. The framework includes clearly defined milestones, targets and key performance indicators, which will allow the team to quickly identify bottlenecks, use a common reference point for tracking joint progress, and keep each other accountable across UN agencies.

In the **Latin America Regional Programme**, in the spirit of the UN Reform, a Technical Advisory Committee (CTA) has been put in place, which comprises the three Recipient UN Organizations of the Regional Programme and three associated agencies (ECLAC, IOM, and UNODC) as well as 13 regional experts, including former government officials, academics, representatives of civil society and the women’s and feminist movement from ten countries. The Technical Advisory Committee provides robust technical support to all the studies carried out under Pillar 1



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(Legal and Policy Frameworks) and Pillar 5 (Data). This innovative collaboration provided solid and peer-reviewed evidence on a range of issues related to femicides in the region, thus contributing to filling a knowledge gap and providing resources for local and regional women's right organizations, decision-makers, policymakers, and academics to strengthen existing programmes, legal instruments and policies, and contribute to political advocacy.

Throughout 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat worked to support teams in developing innovative coordination practices. In 2020, the Secretariat shared guidance documents and held learning sessions to share examples of integrated programming, ideas for consolidating back-office support, and mechanisms to implement joint operations and inter-agency coordination. Overall, programmes' coordination practices have resulted in more cohesive, coherent, and collaborative programming that leverages the collective capacities of the UN system to eliminate violence against women and girls.

In 2020, the Secretariat also convened regular inter-agency meetings to offer a collective forum for

agencies to advise on the development of the Spotlight Initiative, to share information and good practices, to problem-solve together, and to agree on unified messaging. Additionally, the Secretariat held meetings between the Deputy Secretary-General and Heads of Agencies to facilitate high-level joint decision-making. These meetings not only engaged the principal parties in course-correcting where necessary and in guiding the Initiative towards progress, but also fostered inter-agency dialogue across the UN system, which had a knock-on effect of strengthening coordination across agencies even beyond the Spotlight Initiative. At the last Heads of Agencies meeting in September 2020, the Principals agreed to send a strong signal to their respective Country Offices about the importance of working together and to take up coordination issues at their level in order to identify areas where the agencies can work faster and more efficiently.

In addition to Heads of Agencies meetings, the Secretariat organizes monthly meetings with agency focal points, which are another unique forum for inter-agency coordination that includes all Recipient UN organizations, not just the core agencies. These meetings allow for a less formal and more inclusive approach to

CASE STUDY

Creating Standard Operating Procedures in Trinidad & Tobago: A Case Study in Impactful Coordination

In 2020, the **Trinidad and Tobago** programme collectively produced standard operating procedures with the goal of facilitating joint technical coherence and coordination in the spirit of UN Reform. The team benefitted from lessons learned by Spotlight Initiative staff members from other programmes who had previously developed standard operating procedures, including those in **Jamaica**.

An unexpected result from this practice was that the process of discussing standard operating procedures itself engendered closer coordination within the team. In assessing opportunities for greater cooperation, the team experienced a deeper sense of cohesion and took advantage of the dedicated time to focus on coordination. The team also decided to pursue inter-agency missions to target communities and to implement a cohesive review of documentation by the technical coherence lead. Since then, the team has developed a Technical Coherence Matrix to guide UN agencies in performing a "pre-evaluation" of deliverables to ensure alignment across the programme with Spotlight Initiative objectives, principles, and guidelines, as well as UN standards and global conventions.

Beyond enhancing technical coherence and streamlining delivery, this matrix has offered an opportunity to promote the buy-in and meaningful engagement of implementing partners. Implementing joint processes will create a ripple effect in fostering deeper and more comprehensive coordination across all areas of the programme, both among the Spotlight Initiative team and with partners.

joint work, building inter-agency cohesion and trust at headquarters-level while equipping agency focal points with the necessary information to support Spotlight Initiative agency staff at country level.

Joint operations for accelerated impact

The Spotlight Initiative applies a “function over agency” principle to its programming, pooling the capacity and expertise of UN agencies, and harmonizing internal procedures to facilitate inter-agency work. In 2020, programmes implemented joint processes, such as joint recruitment and procurement, which required a significant time investment, but ultimately reduced the burden of each agency’s individual administrative costs by allowing for greater economies of scale. In **Mexico**, four agencies successfully undertook a joint acquisition of health protection equipment for shelters that care for women and girls who are victims of violence, a process that allowed the programme as a whole to respond to the needs of women and girls in a more agile and timely way. Several programmes – including those in **Honduras** and **Malawi** – chose to co-locate in a shared space, which facilitated internal cohesion, streamlined internal communication, and elevated the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative as an inter-agency effort.

Many other programmes worked towards joint processes by developing inter-agency tools and resources, such as standard operating procedures, technical notes, and terms of reference. By cooperating closely, agencies found greater managerial and operational efficiency, improved internal cohesion, and increased capacity to deliver with the Spotlight Initiative.

8.2.2 Leading Better Informed Programming by Facilitating Exchange

Across programmes and regions, the Spotlight Initiative has established a new model of coordination and knowledge exchange through innovative communities of practice, which serve to equip teams with the necessary knowledge to carry out high-quality, impactful activities. By centring cross-regional exchange, streamlining internal communication across UN offices by encouraging spontaneous and unstructured exchange, and depending on informal networks, these communities of practice represent

a break from previous practice. In the context of COVID-19, these communities of practice have been fuelled by technology, as virtual modalities of interaction became necessary. Furthermore, by facilitating open access to collective resources and lessons learned, these communities of practice offer the potential for better informed programming, which leads to more impactful results.

In the **Caribbean**, Spotlight Initiative programmes have developed an innovative community of practice through voluntary participation from teams who exchange experiences and tools, problem-solve collectively, and offer mutual support as part of one community. This forum has contributed significantly to programme learning, especially on Spotlight Initiative processes and procedures in the context of UN Reform. The community of practice is, by design, non-formalized and without management costs, to ensure that the mechanism responds to true needs and does not add to burdensome processes. Similarly, the **Latin America Regional Programme** developed an innovative regional Community of Practice of Essential Services, aimed at fostering knowledge exchange and dialogue across countries. Through this platform, the Spotlight Initiative has also contributed to generating new evidence on violence against women and girls programming and provided technical guidance and capacity building support to a range of stakeholders, including service providers from the health, social, police and judicial sectors, to strengthen the violence against women and girls response services in the region.

Additionally, Spotlight Initiative programmes have worked to ensure well-informed programming by instituting innovative methods to quickly and efficiently share information across UN agencies and with programme partners. In 2020, reliable information-sharing tools became even more important in the context of COVID-19, and programmes were well placed to shift to remote work and virtual operations thanks to the information-sharing mechanisms already in place. By streamlining communicating and facilitating informal exchange, programmes were able to more quickly address challenges, resolve bottlenecks, and benefit from collective expertise, even while working remotely.

The Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme established a Regional Open Coordination on Small Grants for Civil Society Organizations, a

platform that convenes Recipient UN Organizations and Resident Coordinator Office staff members from around the region for informal consultations on grants and civil society partnerships. The objectives of this mechanism are to increase transparency and secure wide participation across the UN system. As the group does not have oversight or monitoring functions and does not make the final decisions on Spotlight Initiative grants or activities, the forum offers space for informal, independent, and constructive inputs on the grant selection process. Moreover, the group's diverse composition allows for a wealth of knowledge to inform decisions on applications, as participants are free to share their experiences with civil society organizations in the areas of sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence, and gender equality. Consequently, this platform has enabled the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme to make better informed selections of civil society partners. Through this group, the programme has also created a critical communication channel with the Gender Theme Groups in the region, resulting in improved coordination on small grants across the UN system even beyond the Spotlight Initiative.

8.2.3 Ensuring Common UN-EU Positions by Harnessing the Global Partnership

Through the Spotlight Initiative, the United Nations and European Union have strengthened the partnership and integrated coordination, with teams collaborating both at the working level and at the political level. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat maintains regular communication with the EU Directorate-General for

International Partnerships, with colleagues holding targeted meetings to coordinate on communications, the mid-term assessments, and other thematic areas of work, while the Executive Office of the Secretary-General engages with the European Union Directors, Director-Generals and Commissioner to ensure a common vision. This headquarters-level coordination serves to foster a deeply engrained sense of partnership and commitment to joint positions at programme level as well, while also advancing the agenda on eliminating violence against women and girls globally, regionally, and nationally.

The United Nations and European Union have harnessed this global partnership to streamline coordination and advocacy efforts in non-traditional ways. For example, the United Nations and European Union develop and issue joint letters and guidance to UN Resident Coordinators, EU Heads of Delegations, and other members of the two organizations. In 2020, such joint letters included the joint note on the start of programme implementation in the Caribbean, Central Asia, and the Pacific, which set the tone for coordinated programmes in these regions, and the joint note on the principles of the UN-EU partnership, which reiterated the guiding principles of the Spotlight Initiative to ensure continued commitment to the core elements of the Fund. These joint UN-EU communications illustrate a shift from the past way of working and contribute to the elevation of the Spotlight Initiative as a new kind of multilateral partnership. These joint letters also serve to ensure a common position between the United Nations and the European Union, which allows for stronger advocacy for the elimination of



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violence against women and girls at both the global and programme levels.

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative teams built on this global partnership to advance the UN-EU partnership at programme level and to jointly advocate for the elimination of violence against women and girls. In **Jamaica**, the Spotlight Initiative took an innovative approach to coordinating on communications and visibility by establishing a joint task force that brings together all programme stakeholders, including UN agencies, the European Union, the Civil Society National Reference Group, and government partners. The task force has been able to achieve deep multi-

partner coordination and has utilized virtual tools and knowledge-sharing platforms, which allowed for joint access and input on communications products. The task force has also engendered a sense of camaraderie across partners, which has been critical to maintaining a high quality of work and level of output even during the pandemic. A notable outcome of this innovative task force was the joint production of a Spotlight Initiative feature for a newsletter celebrating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. The newsletter elevated the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative's impacts not only with the Government and broader UN system, but also with the extended donor community and even reached the Jamaican public.

WAY FORWARD

As a model fund for UN Reform and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative shares responsibility for demonstrating proof of concept. This year, while challenging, has shown the power of working in unity and joined up coordination across stakeholders – within the United Nations, and with European Union, governments, and civil society in particular. The Initiative has also demonstrated the impact of meaningfully partnering with grassroots organizations, feminist and women's rights groups to end violence against women and girls.

This work is needed now more than ever, as the global pandemic reverses decades of progress on women's rights and ending violence against women and girls. The year 2020 was an unprecedented time of global crises. It was also one that required flexibility and adaptation to a new way of delivering programming. In this context, the Spotlight Initiative exemplified agility in shifting rapidly to support national government efforts to respond to COVID-19, particularly with regard to its impact on violence against women and girls. Moving forward, the Spotlight Initiative will build on its achievements in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and advance its key priorities, aligned with its Theory of Change, to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative will focus its attention on the following priority areas:

Supporting the latest generation of Spotlight Initiative programmes

In November 2020, the Operational Steering Committee approved two new Spotlight Initiative programmes in Ecuador and Afghanistan. The **Ecuador** programme launched efficiently, with accelerated recruitments and joint operational processes embraced from the onset, in the spirit of UN Reform, a lesson learned from previous programmes. The **Afghanistan** programme will require close monitoring throughout 2021 given the recent deterioration of the security situation to ensure a viable path for implementation. These new programmes, together with a few others that initiated implementation from July 2020, will benefit from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat's experienced support to ensure they are able to pick up pace and fully embark on an accelerated implementation phase throughout 2021.

Mid-term and thematic assessments and Phase II

In 2021, programmes in **Africa** and **Latin America** will move to Phase II of the Spotlight Initiative, which involves additional funding to further consolidate progress made during Phase I and contribute efforts toward ensuring sustainability. Phase II will be informed by the results of a mid-term assessment, which was launched in 2020 and carried out in the first part of 2021. The initial findings from the mid-term assessment are very positive. Findings confirmed the validity of the Initiative's overall approach; the mid-term assessment also identified catalytic achievements and provided practical recommendations to further reinforce programmes' relevance, efficiency, effectiveness

and sustainability. Programmes in the Caribbean, the Pacific and Asia will start preparing for a transition to Phase II at the end of 2021, and will be included in the mid-term assessment research later in 2021.

After two years of programming, the Secretariat possesses the knowledge, experience, and resources to effectively support implementation – responding efficiently to common challenges across programmes, as well as programme-specific ones resulting from contextual shifts, in line with established innovative, promising, and good practices. The final results of the mid-term assessment, and the assessment’s targeted recommendations, will further inform the Secretariat’s efforts to guide programme teams towards more sustainable programming with greater impact.

To assess the impact of Spotlight Initiative’s contributions to ending violence against women and girls, the Initiative plans to launch several thematic assessments or studies in the coming months. The thematic assessments will cover specific topics illustrative of the Initiative’s unique approach.

The first assessment will examine the Initiative’s contribution to three inter-related dimensions of a rights-based approach to eliminating violence against women and girls: support to feminist (and cross)

movement building, the sustained integration of the principle of “leaving no one behind”, and the meaningful engagement of civil society, including women’s rights and grassroots organizations. A second study will explore the “value add” of the Initiative’s comprehensive approach more broadly, developing a form of “impact modeling” (outside of more traditional quantitative metrics). Finally, the Initiative has launched a meta-analysis of the mid-term assessment’s findings, identifying trends and commonalities across programmes, and surfacing issues related to the global management of the Initiative. The studies are already ongoing or expected to be launched during the second half of 2021, with preliminary work underway. Taken together, these assessments aim to strengthen accountability and point to useful lessons and insights to accelerate implementation, strengthen programming and contribute to the existing evidence base on ending violence against women and girls.

Sustaining and expanding the investment

The full allocation of the European Union’s initial investment was completed in 2020. With a proven effective model for ending violence against women and girls, what is needed is diversification of partnerships and scaling-up of investments. The Spotlight Initiative



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will seek to further ensure the sustainability of the European Union's initial investment by advocating for the broadening and extension of current programmes; the addition of new programmes; and the expansion of stakeholders and partners. The Secretariat will work closely with the European Union and the permanent missions of Spotlight Initiative implementing countries to identify opportunities for resource mobilization and expansion into new geographic areas. The Secretariat will also leverage the recently established Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls to expand its advocacy efforts and build new, sustainable partnerships.

Knowledge generation and the Spotlight Initiative Global Platform

Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in over 25 countries across five regions with a multiplicity of partners – from grassroots communities to governments at the highest levels – is generating a wealth of knowledge, lessons and good practices. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat will work with the European Union and programme teams to deepen strategic knowledge management and capacity development efforts to support quality and evidence-based programming to eliminate violence against women and girls. Two years into implementation, the Spotlight Initiative is also uniquely placed to be modelled widely, to drive global advocacy and to build a coalition of stakeholders for maximized impact on the elimination of violence against women and girls. The United Nations and European Union will launch the Spotlight Initiative Global Platform in 2021, a virtual exchange and convening platform that would offer the combined power of a knowledge hub, a community of practice and an advocacy platform. The Global Platform will be grounded in the practical experience of the Spotlight Initiative's 34 programmes and, through a coalition of key actors, engage the wider global community in efforts to end violence against women and girls.

Contributing to the UN Reform

Tapping into the unique experiences of the Spotlight Initiative, the Secretariat will increasingly collate (or contribute to the collation of) good practices and lessons learned on UN Reform for other funds and Sustainable Development Goal programmes to draw upon. Through this, the Secretariat will also contribute

to the wider business operations and efficiency agenda at the United Nations. Through stronger linkages with the UN Development Coordination Office, the Initiative will feed into ongoing work on new policies, tools and standards for a renewed collective approach.

Civil society engagement

Engagement with civil society will continue to deepen at both the strategic and implementation levels. The Spotlight Initiative's support to women's movements and civil society coalitions is unique, and teams will work to ensure that civil society, and particularly local and grassroots groups, as well as feminist and women's rights organizations, remain a prioritized and equal partner. In particular, the Secretariat is fully committed to finding innovative ways to increase core and flexible support to grassroots civil society organizations, to strengthen accountability to rights-holders and communities through participatory programmatic monitoring and via civil society-led independent shadow reports, and to constantly strive to overcome any barriers impeding the meaningful engagement and participation of civil society in Spotlight Initiative programming. Further efforts to leave no one behind and to genuinely engage grassroots and marginalized groups, centring their expertise and leadership, will also be a priority. This may include revisiting and streamlining or simplifying burdensome UN processes and requirements that often present barriers or exclude certain groups from partnering with the Initiative.

Public engagement

With national and regional launches mostly completed and with the anticipated barriers to organizing major in-person events due to pandemic restrictions, the Spotlight Initiative will continue its focus on reaching young people and new audiences via online platforms and social media influencers. The Spotlight Initiative will expand its network of cultural influencers and private-sector partners through the Culture Change Commitment. The Secretariat will also seek opportunities to better promote the Initiative's brand through the #WithHer campaign. Spotlight Initiative content will continue to be anchored on human-interest stories where women and girls frame the issues, the Initiative's actions and its impact in their communities in their own voice.

Uganda

“I felt loved, I felt cared for. They gave me the courage and resilience to face my challenges.”

**- Nyantoro,
Refugee**



©UN Women/Eva Noma Sibanda

Ending violence against women and girls under COVID-19: the new normal

In the next few years, the Spotlight Initiative will need to contend with the continuation of the COVID-19 crisis as well as its regressive impact on women's rights and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. After nearly a year of adapting to, and programming in, this new context, the Spotlight Initiative will redouble its efforts to deliver on its mandate to eliminate violence against women and girls. Spotlight Initiative programmes will continue to leverage new possibilities with heightened public awareness of levels of violence against women and girls in order to engage in effective, sustainable

and long-term prevention and social-norms change and to lobby governments to identify the elimination of violence against women and girls as a key national priority for both COVID-19 recovery and the collective achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Spotlight Initiative will build on its initial achievements in responding to COVID-19 and utilize the lessons learned and innovative practices that have emerged in order to better prepare for future emergencies (and contribute to the existing knowledge base on how to adapt). Importantly, by supporting movement-building, the Spotlight Initiative will work tirelessly to ensure that the elimination of violence against women and girls is a central component of global efforts to “build back better.”

CHAPTER 10:

2020 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

**Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the Administrative
Agent for the Spotlight Initiative Fund for the period 1 January to
31 December 2020**

Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, Bureau for Management Services, United Nations Development Programme
GATEWAY: <http://mptf.undp.org>

RECIPIENT UN ORGANIZATIONS

	International Labour Organization The International Labor Organization (ILO)		The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
	International Organization for Migration (IOM)		The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
	The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)		The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
	Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)		The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
	The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)		The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)		

CONTRIBUTORS

	ALBANIA		EUROPEAN UNION
	PORTUGAL		

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 donor 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 Recipient Organization against the 'net funded amount'.

Indirect Support Costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Recipient Organizations. UNDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs.

Net Funded Amount

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

Recipient Organization

A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is an implementing 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 Recipient Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Recipient 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 Recipient Organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project Start Date

Date of transfer of first instalment from the MPTF Office to the Recipient Organization.

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 and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

Introduction

This Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the Spotlight Initiative is prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) in fulfillment of its obligations as Administrative Agent, as per the terms of Reference (TOR), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the United Nations and the UNDP MPTFO, the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) signed with contributors and the Delegation Agreement with the European Union.

The MPTFO, as Administrative Agent, is responsible for concluding an MOU with the United Nations Recipient Organizations and Standard Contribution Agreements with contributors. It receives, administers and manages contributions, and disburses these funds to the Recipient Organizations. The Administrative Agent prepares and submits annual consolidated financial reports, as well as regular financial statements, for transmission to the Operational Steering Committee and the contributors.

This consolidated financial report covers the period **1 January to 31 December 2020** and provides financial data on progress made in the implementation of projects of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund**. It is posted on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

2020 Financial Performance

This chapter presents financial data and analysis of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund** using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December **2020**. Financial information for this Fund is also available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

1. Sources and Uses Of Funds

As of 31 December **2020**, **3** contributors deposited USD **355,860,426** in contributions and USD **1,819,265** was earned in interest.

The cumulative source of funds was USD **357,679,691** (see respectively, Tables 2 and 3).

Of this amount, USD **305,602,657** has been net funded to **11** Recipient Organizations, of which USD **120,611,421** has been reported as expenditure. The Administrative Agent fee has been charged on the Albania and Portugal contributions at the approved rate of 1% on deposits and amounts to USD **330**. Table 1 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses, and balance of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund** as of 31 December 2020.

TABLE 1. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

	Annual 2019	Annual 2020	Cumulative
Sources of Funds			
Contributions from donors	60,458,517	148,798,779	355,860,426
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	980,845	410,506	1,819,265
Interest Income received from Recipient Organizations	-	-	-
Refunds by Administrative Agent to Contributors	-	-	-
Fund balance transferred to another MDTF	-	-	-
Other Income	-	-	-
Total: Sources of Funds	61,439,362	149,209,285	357,679,691
Use of Funds			
Transfers to Recipient Organizations	120,846,537	168,665,649	295,062,537
Refunds received from Recipient Organizations	-	-	-
Net Funded Amount	120,846,537	168,665,649	295,062,537
Administrative Agent Fees	50	280	330
Direct Costs: (Steering Committee, Secretariat...etc.)	7,073,244	427,913	10,540,119
Bank Charges	813	878	2,407
Other Expenditures	-	-	3,298,338
Total: Uses of Funds	127,920,644	169,094,719	308,903,732
Change in Fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	(66,481,282)	(19,885,434)	48,775,960
Opening Fund balance (1 January)	135,142,675	68,661,393	-
Closing Fund balance (31 December)	68,661,393	48,775,960	48,775,960
Net Funded Amount (Includes Direct Cost)	127,919,781	169,093,562	305,602,657
Recipient Organizations' Expenditure (Includes Direct Cost)	33,078,807	83,423,237	120,611,421
Balance of Funds with Recipient Organizations			184,991,236

2. Partner Contributions

Table 2 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this Fund as of 31 December 2020.

The **Spotlight Initiative Fund** is currently being financed by **3** contributors, as listed in the table below. The table below includes commitments made up to 31 December 2020 through signed Standard Administrative Agreements, and deposits made through 2020. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond 2020.

**TABLE 2. CONTRIBUTORS' COMMITMENTS AND DEPOSITS,
AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)**

Contributors	Total Commitments	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019 Deposits	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020 Deposits	Total Deposits
ALBANIA	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
EUROPEAN UNION	516,315,696	207,056,647	148,770,807	355,827,454
PORTUGAL	27,972	-	27,972	27,972
Grand Total	516,348,668	207,061,647	148,798,779	355,860,426

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 Recipient Organizations (Agency earned interest) where their Financial Regulations and Rules allow return of interest to the AA.

As of 31 December 2020, Fund earned interest amounts to USD **1,819,265**.

Details are provided in the table below.

**TABLE 3. SOURCES OF INTEREST AND INVESTMENT INCOME,
AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)**

Interest Earned	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020	Total
Administrative Agent			
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	1,408,758	410,506	1,819,265
Total: Fund Earned Interest	1,408,758	410,506	1,819,265
Recipient Organization			
Total: Agency earned interest			
Grand Total	1,408,758	410,506	1,819,265

4. Allocation of Funds

Allocations to Recipient Organizations are approved by the Operational Steering Committee and disbursed by the Administrative Agent.

As of 31 December **2020**, the AA has transferred USD **295,062,537** to **11** Recipient Organizations (see list below) for the programme implementation in countries selected by the Operational Steering Committee: 8 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Africa, 6 countries Programme and 1 Regional Programme in Latin America, 3 countries and 2 Regional Programmes in Asia, 6 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Caribbean, 4 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Pacific, 3 UN Women CSOs Regional and 3 CSO Country Programmes.

Direct cost transfers (Secretariat and AA) are reflected in the Section 6. Direct Costs.

Transfer by Region/Countries

Table 4.1 provides additional information on the approved amount and transferred amount per projects.

TABLE 4. TRANSFER, REFUND, AND NET FUNDED AMOUNT BY RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Recipient Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019			Current Year Jan-Dec-2020			Total		
	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded
ILO	6,246,887		6,246,887	4,370,710		4,370,710	10,617,597		10,617,597
IOM				191,626		191,626	191,626		191,626
OHCHR	592,187		592,187	815,018		815,018	1,407,205		1,407,205
PAHO/WHO				300,015		300,015	300,015		300,015
UNDP	19,167,656		19,167,656	32,683,131		32,683,131	51,850,787		51,850,787
UNESCO	1,160,953		1,160,953	2,199,509		2,199,509	3,360,462		3,360,462
UNFPA	21,818,283		21,818,283	42,745,174		42,745,174	64,563,457		64,563,457
UNHCR	1,136,457		1,136,457	1,635,389		1,635,389	2,771,846		2,771,846
UNICEF	14,940,542		14,940,542	31,163,315		31,163,315	46,103,857		46,103,857
UNODC	429,227		429,227	801,062		801,062	1,230,289		1,230,289
UNWOMEN	60,904,696		60,904,696	51,760,700		51,760,700	112,665,396		112,665,396
Grand Total	126,396,889		126,396,889	168,665,649		168,665,649	295,062,537		295,062,537

TABLE 4.1 APPROVED AND TRANSFERRED AMOUNT BY REGION/COUNTRIES, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2019 Transferred	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Transferred	Total Transferred
Africa					
119124	Africa Regional Programme	25,620,000	0	6,000,000	6,000,000
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	15,844,000	6,496,041	9,226,829	15,844,000
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	20,000,000	8,200,000	11,628,425	20,000,000
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	18,000,000	7,380,000	10,442,487	18,000,000
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	20,000,000	8,200,000	11,619,872	20,000,000
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	17,000,000	6,970,000	9,855,943	17,000,000
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	25,000,000	10,250,000	14,570,067	25,000,000
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – AF	20,636,792	20,636,792	0	20,636,792
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	7,075,472	7,075,472	0	7,075,472
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	22,000,000	9,020,000	12,801,128	22,000,000
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	21,000,000	8,610,000	12,309,536	21,000,000
Africa: Total		212,176,264	92,838,305	98,454,287	192,556,264

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2019 Transferred	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Transferred	Total Transferred
Asia					
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	16,500,000	0	4,950,000	4,950,000
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	4,248,584	0	1,499,604	1,499,604
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	4,700,000	0	4,700,000	4,700,000
108309	Safe and Fair	29,370,587	6,597,855	6,462,673	16,775,666
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	2,000,000	0	700,000	700,000
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	4,900,000	0	1,960,000	1,960,000
Asia: Total		61,719,171	6,597,855	20,272,277	30,585,270
Caribbean					
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	0	990,000	990,000
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional Programme	9,552,830	0	3,821,132	3,821,132
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	1,650,000	0	660,000	660,000
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	3,700,000	0	1,480,000	1,480,000
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	0	3,959,999	3,959,999
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	6,600,000	0	2,640,000	2,640,000
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	2,000,000	0	700,000	700,000
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight	3,700,000	0	1,479,999	1,479,999
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	0	15,731,130	15,731,130

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2019 Transferred	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Transferred	Total Transferred
Latin America					
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	5,400,000	2,430,000	2,856,623	5,400,000
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	0	1,160,001	1,160,001
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	7,200,000	3,240,000	3,831,349	7,200,000
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme*	5,400,001	2,430,000	0	2,497,496
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	7,200,000	3,240,000	3,890,945	7,200,000
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	3,500,000	1,575,000	1,925,000	3,500,000
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	6,300,000	2,834,999	3,272,037	6,300,000
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – LA	5,660,378	5,660,378	0	5,660,378
Latin America: Total		43,560,379	21,410,377	16,935,955	38,917,875
Pacific					
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	7,077,830	0	1,650,000	1,650,000
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	15,680,000	0	6,272,000	6,272,000
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	0	2,900,000	2,900,000
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	2,000,000	0	1,500,000	1,500,000
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	0	3,960,000	3,960,000
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	0	990,000	990,000
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	0	17,272,000	17,272,000
Grand Total		397,066,474	120,846,537	168,665,649	295,062,539

* Guatemala is still processing the operational and financial closure of the programme. As of 31 December 2020, no funds had been refunded yet.

5. Expenditure and Financial Delivery Rates

All final expenditures reported for the year **2020** were submitted by the Headquarters of the Recipient Organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Recipient Organization and are reported as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The reported expenditures were submitted via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The **2020** expenditure data has been posted on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

5.1 Expenditure Reported by Region / Countries

As shown in table below, the cumulative net funded amount is USD **295,062,537** and cumulative expenditures reported by the Recipient Organizations amount to USD **111,819,304**. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of **38** per cent.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 provide additional information on the transferred amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Region and RUNO.

Direct cost transferred amounts and expenditures reported (Secretariat and AA) are reflected in the Section 6. Direct Costs.

TABLE 5.1A EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT WITHIN REGION, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Region / Project No. and Project Title		Total Approved Amount	Total Transferred Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Africa					
119124	Africa Regional Programme	25,620,000	6,000,000	499,064	8.32
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	15,844,000	15,844,000	6,572,279	41.48
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	20,000,000	20,000,000	7,624,426	38.12
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	18,000,000	18,000,000	7,461,064	41.45
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	20,000,000	20,000,000	9,893,726	49.47
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	17,000,000	17,000,000	7,209,103	42.41
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	25,000,000	25,000,000	10,109,806	40.44
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – AF	20,636,792	20,636,792	2,818,130	13.66
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	7,075,472	7,075,472	736,652	10.41
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	22,000,000	22,000,000	12,778,053	58.08
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	21,000,000	21,000,000	8,166,161	38.89
Africa: Total		212,176,264	192,556,264	73,868,464	38.36

Region / Project No. and Project Title		Total Approved Amount	Total Transferred Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Asia					
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	16,500,000	4,950,000	0	0.00
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	4,248,584	1,499,604	85,242	5.68
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	4,700,000	4,700,000	878,852	18.70
108309	Safe and Fair	29,370,587	16,775,666	10,311,679	61.47
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	2,000,000	700,000	0	0.00
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	4,900,000	1,960,000	610,212	31.13
Asia: Total		61,719,171	30,585,270	11,885,985	38.86
Caribbean					
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	990,000	653,235	65.98
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional Programme	9,552,830	3,821,132	0	0.00
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	1,650,000	660,000	155,829	23.61
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	3,700,000	1,480,000	217,575	14.70
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	3,959,999	1,816,662	45.88
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	6,600,000	2,640,000	903,668	34.23
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	2,000,000	700,000	0	0.00
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight	3,700,000	1,479,999	578,084	39.06
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	15,731,130	4,325,052	27.49

Region / Project No. and Project Title		Total Approved Amount	Total Transferred Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Latin America					
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	5,400,000	5,400,000	2,624,248	48.60
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	1,160,001	-	0.00
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	7,200,000	7,200,000	4,937,857	68.58
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme*	5,400,001	2,497,496	20,390	0.82
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	7,200,000	7,200,000	3,376,642	46.90
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	3,500,000	3,500,000	1,062,646	30.36
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	6,300,000	6,300,000	2,544,236	40.38
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – LA	5,660,378	5,660,378	935,834	16.53
Latin America: Total		43,560,379	38,917,875	15,501,854	39.83
Pacific					
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	7,077,830	1,650,000	808,921	49.03
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	15,680,000	6,272,000	2,980,355	47.52
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	2,900,000	687,074	23.69
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	2,000,000	1,500,000	-	0.00
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	3,960,000	1,406,316	35.51
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	990,000	355,283	35.89
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	17,272,000	6,237,949	36.12
Grand Total		397,066,474	295,062,539	111,819,304	37.90

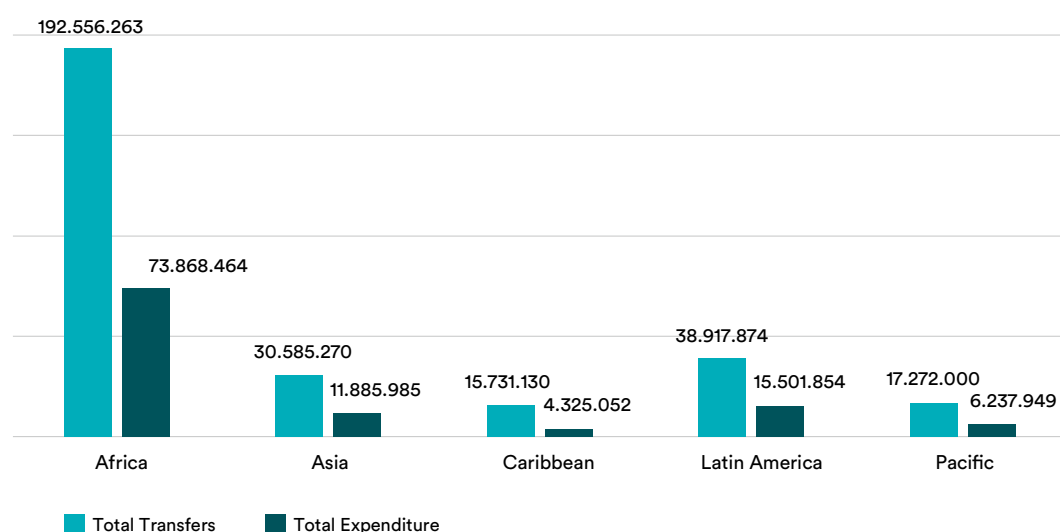
* Guatemala is still processing the operational and financial closure of the programme. As of 31 December 2020, no funds had been refunded yet.

TABLE 5.1B TRANSFERRED AMOUNT, REPORTED EXPENDITURE, AND FINANCIAL DELIVERY BY REGION AND RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Region	Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Transferred Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Africa					
	ILO	632,362	632,362	99,958	15.81
	OHCHR	1,026,387	1,026,387	308,833	30.09
	UNDP	34,343,663	32,719,183	14,369,434	43.92
	UNESCO	2,456,797	2,456,797	1,097,552	44.67
	UNFPA	54,929,955	46,793,962	21,635,948	46.24
	UNHCR	2,771,846	2,771,846	2,120,233	76.49
	UNICEF	41,645,860	34,430,988	13,614,110	39.54
	UNWOMEN	74,369,394	71,724,738	20,622,397	28.75
Africa: Total		212,176,264	192,556,263	73,868,464	38.36
Asia					
	ILO	16,334,125	9,197,576	5,139,990	55.88
	UNDP	4,969,078	2,521,742	407,184	16.15
	UNFPA	7,608,633	3,071,606	386,705	12.59
	UNICEF	5,242,009	2,435,745	351,560	14.43
	UNODC	276,451	276,451	92,012	33.28
	UNWOMEN	27,288,874	13,082,149	5,508,533	42.11
Asia: Total		61,719,171	30,585,270	11,885,985	38.86
Caribbean					
	PAHO/WHO	750,038	300,015	146,001	48.66
	UNDP	9,417,460	3,766,982	1,105,319	29.34
	UNFPA	7,887,159	3,154,863	1,179,472	37.39
	UNICEF	7,465,277	2,986,112	1176902.33	39.41
	UNWOMEN	14,057,896	5,523,158	717,358	12.99
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	15,731,130	4,325,052	27.49
Latin America					

Region	Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Transferred Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
	ILO	524,828	524,828	196,789	37.50
	OHCHR	380,818	380,818	182,315	47.87
	UNDP	10,155,048	8,900,884	3,614,895	40.61
	UNESCO	341,480	153,666	0	0.00
	UNFPA	8,834,716	7,847,092	3,656,374	46.60
	UNICEF	3,826,081	3,627,872	2,360,663	65.07
	UNODC	953,838	953,838	326,816	34.26
	UNWOMEN	18,543,570	16,528,876	5,164,001	31.24
Latin America: Total		43,560,379	38,917,874	15,501,854	39.83
Pacific					
	ILO	657,076	262,831	121,041	46.05
	IOM	479,062	191,626	28,627	14.94
	UNDP	8,515,294	3,941,995	1,577,751	40.02
	UNESCO	749,999	749,999	299,423	39.92
	UNFPA	8,417,847	3,695,934	1,427,799	38.63
	UNICEF	6,278,582	2,623,140	1,088,981	41.51
	UNWOMEN	14,934,970	5,806,475	1,694,327	29.18
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	17,272,000	6,237,949	36.12
Grand Total		397,066,473	295,062,537	111,819,304	37.90

**FIGURE 1: TRANSFERRED AMOUNT AND REPORTED EXPENDITURE BY REGION
(AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020)**



5.2 Expenditure Reported by Category

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Recipient Organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. All expenditure incurred are reported in the eight categories. See tables below for the reported expenditure by Region.

2012 CEB Expense Categories

1. Staff and personnel costs
2. Supplies, commodities and materials
3. Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation
4. Contractual services
5. Travel
6. Transfers and grants
7. General operating expenses

Indirect costs⁴⁹

⁴⁹ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Recipient 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%.

TABLE 5.2A AFRICA EXPENDITURE BY UNDГ BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	18,880,033	8,483,516	12.29
Supplies, commodities and materials	7,270,804	2,773,844	4.02
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	4,983,851	2,758,917	4.00
Contractual Services	35,285,173	9,609,772	13.92
Travel	12,940,624	2,906,903	4.21
Transfers and Grants	106,374,400	32,912,599	47.69
General Operating	12,560,688	9,566,208	13.86
Programme Costs Total	198,295,573	69,011,759	100
Indirect Support Costs Total	13,880,690	4,856,707	7.04
Total⁵⁰	212,176,263	73,868,466	

TABLE 5.2B ASIA EXPENDITURE BY UNDГ BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	13,864,510	4,562,287	41.07
Supplies, commodities and materials	112,623	67,498	0.61
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	377,071	99,860	0.90
Contractual Services	22,162,226	4,547,195	40.93
Travel	2,582,018	338,629	3.05
Transfers and Grants	15,665,990	296,396	2.67
General Operating	2,917,030	1,196,721	10.77
Programme Costs Total	57,681,468	11,108,586	100
Indirect Support Costs Total	4,037,703	777,398	7.00
Total⁵¹	61,719,171	11,885,984	

⁵⁰ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Recipient 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%.

⁵¹ Ibid.

TABLE 5.2C CARIBBEAN EXPENDITURE BY UNDГ BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	5,031,089	527,183	13.04
Supplies, commodities and materials	829,703	86,519	2.14
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	342,011	95,270	2.36
Contractual Services	8,697,301	1,171,051	28.97
Travel	2,292,849	42,897	1.06
Transfers and Grants	16,517,446	1,844,470	45.64
General Operating	3,278,227	274,360	6.79
Programme Costs Total	36,988,626	4,041,750	100
Indirect Support Costs Total	2,589,204	283,302	7.00
Total⁵²	39,577,830	4,325,052	

TABLE 5.2D LATIN AMERICA EXPENDITURE BY UNDГ BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	1,418,875	658,739	4.55
Supplies, commodities and materials	1,698,149	445,393	3.08
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	925,508	510,434	3.53
Contractual Services	16,266,111	6,701,024	46.30
Travel	1,819,224	195,501	1.35
Transfers and Grants	16,013,501	4,528,782	31.29
General Operating	2,569,265	1,434,146	9.91
Programme Costs Total	40,710,633	14,474,019	100
Indirect Support Costs Total	2,849,744	1,027,833	7.10
Total⁵³	43,560,377	15,501,852	

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

TABLE 5.2E PACIFIC EXPENDITURE BY UNDG BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	5,710,561	1,396,557	23.96
Supplies, commodities and materials	1,067,227	274,720	4.71
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	85,450	79,402	1.36
Contractual Services	7,459,368	1,244,765	21.36
Travel	2,103,437	231,630	3.97
Transfers and Grants	19,275,804	1,608,690	27.60
General Operating	1,712,012	993,132	17.04
Programme Costs Total	37,413,859	5,828,896	100
Indirect Support Costs Total	2,618,970	409,053	7.02
Total⁵⁴	40,032,829	6,237,949	

⁵⁴ Ibid.

6. Direct Costs

In the reporting period, direct costs transfers amounted to USD **427,913**. Cumulatively, as of 31 December 2020, the total of USD **13,838,457** has been transferred as Direct Costs, including USD **10,540,119** as Direct Costs for the Secretariat, and USD **3,298,338** for the Administrative Agent. Overall, USD **11,059,769** was reported in expenditure. This equates to an expenditure delivery rate of **80** per cent for the Direct Cost.

TABLE 6.1 TOTAL TRANSFERRED AND EXPENDITURE OF THE SECRETARIAT AND ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT DIRECT COSTS BY RUNOS, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

Recipient Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019		Current Year Jan-Dec-2020		Total		Delivery Rate, %
	Transfers	Expenditure	Transfers	Expenditure	Transfers	Expenditure	
UNDP	4,483,931	2,150,846		1,035,111	4,483,931	3,185,958	71
UNFPA	65,190	63,408			65,190	63,408	97
UNWOMEN	5,563,086	2,998,160	427,913	2,544,592	5,990,999	5,542,752	93
AA/UNDP	3,298,338	1,184,051		1,083,600	3,298,338	2,267,651	69
Grand Total	13,410,545	6,396,465	427,913	4,663,303	13,838,457	11,059,769	80

TABLE 6.2 TOTAL APPROVED AND EXPENDITURE AMOUNT OF THE SECRETARIAT AND ADMINISTRATIVE AGENT BY UNDГ BUDGET CATEGORY, AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2020 (IN US DOLLARS)

CATEGORY	Secretariat Management Unit		Secretariat Technical Unit (incl. UNFPA)		Administrative Agent		TOTAL	
	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported
Staff and personnel costs	5,883,840	2,088,596	6,217,377	3,293,595	3,835,268	1,835,288	15,936,485	7,217,479
Supplies, commodities and materials			426,632	24,209			426,632	24,209
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	62,000	17,689	80,000	1,970			142,000	19,659
Contractual Services	362,243	331,127	665,173	664,254	210,000		1,237,416	995,381
Travel	500,000	167,520	787,500	380,637	323,000	62,536	1,610,500	610,694
Transfers and Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Operating	1,195,362	372,597	751,886	874,737	478,524	221,475	2,425,772	1,468,810
Total Direct costs	8,003,445	2,977,530	8,928,568	5,239,402	4,846,792	2,119,300	21,778,805	10,336,232
Indirect Costs Total	560,241	208,428	625,000	366,758	215,779	148,351	1,524,516	723,537
Total	8,563,686	3,185,958	9,553,568	5,606,160	5,062,571	2,267,651	23,303,321	11,059,769

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](#). 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 Recipient 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.

Annex 1 Expenditure by Project, grouped by Country, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Malawi						
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	UNDP	4,506,896	4,506,896	2,603,735	57.77
		UNFPA	5,565,312	5,565,312	1,998,190	35.9
		UNICEF	4,077,502	4,077,502	1,728,232	42.38
		UNWOMEN	5,850,290	5,850,290	1,294,268	22.12
Malawi Total			20,000,000	20,000,000	7,624,425	38.12
Mali						
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,302,646	2,302,646	1,178,137	51.16
		UNFPA	6,800,496	6,800,496	2,873,461	42.25
		UNHCR	910,987	910,987	374,611	41.12
		UNICEF	4,172,489	4,172,489	1,655,627	39.68
		UNWOMEN	3,813,382	3,813,382	1,379,228	36.17
Mali Total			18,000,000	18,000,000	7,461,064	41.45
Mozambique						
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	UNDP	3,916,817	3,916,817	2,873,386	73.36
		UNFPA	6,232,153	6,232,153	2,959,077	47.48
		UNICEF	3,812,322	3,812,322	1,730,985	45.4
		UNWOMEN	6,038,708	6,038,708	2,330,279	38.59
Mozambique Total			20,000,000	20,000,000	9,893,727	49.47
Niger						
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	UNDP	4,048,345	4,048,345	928,131	22.93
		UNFPA	5,651,624	5,651,624	3,346,497	59.21
		UNICEF	4,410,485	4,410,485	1,984,252	44.99
		UNWOMEN	2,889,546	2,889,546	950,224	32.88
Niger Total			17,000,000	17,000,000	7,209,104	42.41

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Uganda						
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	UNDP	5,260,270	5,260,270	2,483,947	47.22
		UNFPA	4,987,971	4,987,971	2,797,395	56.08
		UNHCR	1,860,859	1,860,859	1,745,622	93.81
		UNICEF	3,566,973	3,566,973	2,042,769	57.27
		UNWOMEN	6,323,927	6,323,927	3,708,320	58.64
Uganda Total			22,000,000	22,000,000	12,778,053	58.08
Zimbabwe						
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	ILO	632,362	632,362	99,958	15.81
		UNDP	2,917,695	2,917,695	1,525,270	52.28
		UNESCO	631,129	631,129	255,100	40.42
		UNFPA	4,388,564	4,388,564	1,980,362	45.13
		UNICEF	6,956,514	6,956,514	2,150,533	30.91
		UNWOMEN	5,473,736	5,473,736	2,154,939	39.37
Zimbabwe Total			21,000,000	21,000,000	8,166,162	38.89
Liberia						
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	OHCHR	1,026,387	1,026,387	308,833	30.09
		UNDP	3,097,358	3,097,358	1,452,498	46.89
		UNFPA	4,363,521	4,363,521	1,881,812	43.13
		UNICEF	1,745,875	1,745,875	619,911	35.51
		UNWOMEN	5,610,859	5,610,859	2,309,225	41.16
Liberia Total			15,844,000	15,844,000	6,572,279	41.48

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Nigeria						
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	UNDP	6,159,157	6,159,157	1,321,912	21.46
		UNESCO	1,825,668	1,825,668	842,452	46.14
		UNFPA	6,314,321	6,314,321	3,338,868	52.88
		UNICEF	3,498,828	3,498,828	1,671,144	47.76
		UNWOMEN	7,202,026	7,202,026	2,935,430	40.76
Nigeria Total			25,000,000	25,000,000	10,109,806	40.44
Afghanistan						
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,268,797	380,639	0	0
		UNFPA	4,804,967	1,441,490	0	0
		UNICEF	3,084,040	925,212	0	0
		UNWOMEN	7,342,196	2,202,659	0	0
Afghanistan Total			16,500,000	4,950,000	0	0
Kyrgyzstan						
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,181,114	1,181,114	175,440	14.85
		UNFPA	901,529	901,529	204,853	22.72
		UNICEF	1,078,910	1,078,910	230,581	21.37
		UNODC	276,451	276,451	92,012	33.28
		UNWOMEN	1,261,996	1,261,996	175,966	13.94
Kyrgyzstan Total			4,700,000	4,700,000	878,852	18.70
Tajikistan						
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,500,210	600,084	171,304	28.55
		UNFPA	1,214,127	485,651	173,599	35.75
		UNICEF	1,079,059	431,623	120,980	28.03
		UNWOMEN	1,106,604	442,642	144,329	32.61
Tajikistan Total			4,900,000	1,960,000	610,212	31.13

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Belize						
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	UNDP	901,279	360,511	295,014	81.83
		UNFPA	592,602	237,041	186,533	78.69
		UNICEF	981,119	392,448	171,687	43.75
Belize Total			2,475,000	990,000	653,234	65.98
Grenada						
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	PAHO/WHO	372,210	148,884	58,170	39.07
		UNDP	363,523	145,409	13,415	9.23
		UNICEF	206,479	82,592	18,913	22.9
		UNWOMEN	707,788	283,115	65,331	23.08
Grenada Total			1,650,000	660,000	155,829	23.61
Guyana						
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	UNDP	787,875	315,150	32,305	10.25
		UNFPA	1,223,524	489,410	149,984	30.65
		UNICEF	793,243	317,297	16,485	5.2
		UNWOMEN	895,358	358,143	18,801	5.25
Guyana Total			3,700,000	1,480,000	217,575	14.70
Haiti						
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,777,156	1,110,862	266,941	24.03
		UNFPA	2,115,931	846,372	515,887	60.95
		UNICEF	1,934,775	773,910	591,796	76.47
		UNWOMEN	3,072,138	1,228,855	442,038	35.97
Haiti Total			9,900,000	3,959,999	1,816,662	45.88

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Jamaica						
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,585,915	634,366	290,149	45.74
		UNFPA	1,565,796	626,318	169,435	27.05
		UNICEF	1,644,055	657,622	346,856	52.74
		UNWOMEN	1,804,234	721,694	97,229	13.47
Jamaica Total			6,600,000	2,640,000	903,669	34.23
Trinidad and Tobago						
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight Programme	PAHO/WHO	377,828	151,131	87,831	58.12
		UNDP	1,108,251	443,300	207,494	46.81
		UNFPA	898,581	359,432	157,633	43.86
		UNICEF	452,807	181,123	31,166	17.21
		UNWOMEN	862,533	345,013	93,959	27.23
Trinidad and Tobago Total			3,700,000	1,479,999	578,083	39.06
Argentina						
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	ILO	524,828	524,828	196,789	37.5
		UNDP	1,729,421	1,729,421	821,454	47.5
		UNFPA	1,526,201	1,526,201	909,472	59.59
		UNWOMEN	1,619,550	1,619,550	696,533	43.01
Argentina Total			5,400,000	5,400,000	2,624,248	48.60
Guatemala						
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,641,475	806,159	20,390	2.53
		UNESCO	341,480	153,666		0
		UNFPA	1,034,140	465,363		0
		UNICEF	360,380	162,171		0
		UNWOMEN	2,022,526	910,137		0
Guatemala Total			5,400,001	2,497,496	20,390	0.82

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Mexico						
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	OHCHR	380,818	380,818	182,315	47.87
		UNDP	741,447	741,447	421,790	56.89
		UNFPA	1,475,705	1,475,705	495,279	33.56
		UNICEF	717,027	717,027	215,249	30.02
		UNODC	953,838	953,838	326,816	34.26
		UNWOMEN	2,031,165	2,031,165	902,786	44.45
Mexico Total			6,300,000	6,300,000	2,544,235	40.38
El Salvador						
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,246,458	2,246,458	1,188,641	52.91
		UNFPA	1,580,809	1,580,809	1,096,875	69.39
		UNICEF	1,570,299	1,570,299	1,294,941	82.46
		UNWOMEN	1,802,434	1,802,434	1,357,400	75.31
El Salvador Total			7,200,000	7,200,000	4,937,857	68.58
Honduras						
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,030,773	2,030,773	944,964	46.53
		UNFPA	1,452,387	1,452,387	749,185	51.58
		UNICEF	1,178,375	1,178,375	850,472	72.17
		UNWOMEN	2,538,465	2,538,465	832,021	32.78
Honduras Total			7,200,000	7,200,000	3,376,642	46.90
Ecuador						
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	UNDP	698,079	279,232		0
		UNFPA	698,079	279,232		0
		UNWOMEN	1,503,842	601,537		0
Ecuador Total			2,900,000	1,160,001	0	0

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Papua New Guinea						
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	UNDP	3,757,450	1,502,980	829,347	55.18
		UNFPA	3,982,112	1,592,845	767,853	48.21
		UNICEF	3,218,408	1,287,363	616,294	47.87
		UNWOMEN	4,722,030	1,888,812	766,862	40.6
Papua New Guinea Total			15,680,000	6,272,000	2,980,356	47.52
Samoa						
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	UNDP	893,130	893,130	236,085	26.43
		UNESCO	749,999	749,999	299,423	39.92
		UNFPA	547,992	547,992	25,435	4.64
		UNICEF	186,180	186,180	207	0.11
		UNWOMEN	522,699	522,699	125,924	24.09
Samoa Total			2,900,000	2,900,000	687,074	23.69
Timor-Leste						
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	ILO	657,076	262,831	121,041	46.05
		UNDP	2,448,706	979,482	298,337	30.46
		UNFPA	1,624,202	649,681	244,341	37.61
		UNICEF	1,758,519	703,407	253,512	36.04
		UNWOMEN	3,411,497	1,364,599	489,085	35.84
Timor-Leste Total			9,900,000	3,960,000	1,406,316	35.51
Vanuatu						
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	IOM	288,491	115,397	22,207	19.24
		UNDP	624,725	249,890	22,314	8.93
		UNFPA	1,120,944	448,377	204,222	45.55
		UNICEF	440,840	176,336	106,540	60.42
Vanuatu Total			2,475,000	990,000	355,283	35.89

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
United Nations						
108309	Safe and Fair	ILO	16,334,125	9,197,576	5,139,990	55.88
		UNWOMEN	13,036,461	7,578,089	5,171,688	68.25
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – AF	UNWOMEN	20,636,792	20,636,792	2,818,130	13.66
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	UNWOMEN	7,075,472	7,075,472	736,652	10.41
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – LA	UNWOMEN	5,660,378	5,660,378	935,834	16.53
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	1,500,000		0
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	700,000		0
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	700,000		0
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	IOM	190,571	76,229	6,420	8.42
		UNDP	791,283	316,513	191,669	60.56
		UNFPA	1,142,597	457,039	185,947	40.69
		UNICEF	674,635	269,854	112,429	41.66
		UNWOMEN	4,278,744	530,365	312,456	58.91
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	UNDP	1,067,395	1,067,395	217,657	20.39
		UNFPA	1,067,395	1,067,395	405,563	38
		UNWOMEN	1,365,210	1,365,210	439,427	32.19
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional Programme	UNDP	1,893,461	757,384		0
		UNFPA	1,490,725	596,290		0
		UNICEF	1,452,799	581,120		0
		UNWOMEN	4,715,845	1,886,338		0

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	UNDP	1,018,957	359,905	60,439	16.79
		UNFPA	688,010	242,936	8,253	3.4
		UNWOMEN	2,541,617	896,763	16,550	1.85
119124	Africa Regional Programme	UNDP	2,134,479	510,000	2,417	0.47
		UNFPA	10,625,993	2,490,000	460,287	18.49
		UNICEF	9,404,872	2,190,000	30,658	1.4
		UNWOMEN	3,454,656	810,000	5,702	0.7
United Nations Total			118,742,473	69,519,043	17,258,168	24.83
Grand Total			397,066,474	295,062,538	111,819,305	37.9







**Spotlight
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