



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

Annex B

# Summaries of the 2021 Programme Annual Reports

01 January 2021 – 31 December 2021

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations



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# LIBERIA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 26,220,923	 USD 22,634,286	 USD 3,586,637	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, OHCHR

**Other partners:** UNHCR, IOM, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Ministry of Education (MOE), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Law Reform Commission (LRC), Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR), National Council of Chiefs and Elders of Liberia (NACCCEL), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

## Context

Liberia ranks 175th out of 189 countries in the [Gender Inequality Index \(GII\)](#), indicating that women and girls face comparably high levels of inequality in health, empowerment, and the labor market. Women and girls continue to suffer from the normalization of violence due to deep-seated patriarchal norms, multiple and intersecting forms of violence, harmful practices, and widespread impunity. Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Services (SRHS) remains limited, girls report being coerced into their first sexual experience, and child marriage and child labor are common. The Government has instituted laws and policies to address sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices (SGBV/HP) but due to citizen's lack of information and awareness, they tend to not claim their rights. Although Liberia has ratified the relevant international and regional instruments and has progressive laws in place, their implementation remains weak. 2021 was a year shaped by the continued challenges and adaptation to the realities of COVID-19 and its profound impact on women and their communities. By mid-2021, the country was in the third wave of the outbreak<sup>1,2</sup>, recording a 100% increase in cases weekly. Food insecurity was a growing concern for most households due to increases in staple food prices. This further impacted access to education access by affecting the ability to pay school fees, registration, and books. The primary economic burden remained on women, mostly uneducated single mothers who earn a daily wage to feed their families averaging four to five school aged children.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) in Liberia, supported by the European Union, achieved significant milestones in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) throughout 2021 despite the challenges caused by COVID-19 and a new virus variant. Prohibition of large gatherings of 20 persons caused a restructuring of the Initiative, including telecommuting options and increased usage of information technology, replacing face-to-face meetings among actors. The SI prioritized the prevention of SGBV/HP and the provision of comprehensive and integrated services by applying a COVID-19 lens to its programming, to ensure that work is progressive and tailored to operational and contextual constraints. During the reporting year, Spotlight Initiative has further worked to build capacity for legal action, reinforce subnational coordination mechanisms in five counties, enhanced the capacity of Liberia's Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and developed plans to foster long-term, sustainable norm change. The Initiative undertook a mid-term assessment, a key exercise that helped the Programme refocus, redesign and adjust interventions for Phase II. Coordination with Government Partners resulted in strengthened dialogue aimed to improve coordination, communication, and implementation between the United Nations and the Government of Liberia. Furthermore, delivering in the spirit of UN Reform has strengthened joint recruitments and joint procurement among RUNOs, contributing to fast-track processes and implementation hindered by COVID-19.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Advancing gender-sensitive legislation through CSOs (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** Women human rights defenders from the five counties, including CSO Human Rights Advocacy Platform (CSO-Platform), have enhanced capacities on drafting legislations, shadow reports and developing advocacy strategies on the implementation of legislation and Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendations. The Human Rights Advocacy Platform, including women human rights defenders, drafted a shadow report for the CEDAW and is embarking on the drafting of a National Human Rights Defenders Protection Policy. In addition, gender and human rights are being integrated into the law reform processes

<sup>1</sup> National Public Health Institute of Liberia [COVID-19 Situation Reports](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Finding the Balance: Public Health and Social Measures in Liberia](#)

with a focus on EVAWG. Aligned with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, the Initiative drafted a policy guidance to align customary laws with international human rights standards that protect the rights of women, girls, persons with disability and the LGBTQI community.

- ✓ **Strengthening Institutions for effective prevention and response to VAWG (Pillar 2: Institutions):** The SI strengthened the capacity of the GBV taskforce - a task force set up by the Spotlight Initiative to enhance coordination among CSOs and other stakeholders working to EVAWG in Liberia in collaboration with the government ministries. Additionally, to enhance operational capacities and improve coordination among those working to end GBV, the Initiative procured and shared ICT equipment with the GBV taskforce. The GBV Taskforce leadership at the country level, headed by the Gender County coordinators through the MGCSP also contributed to enhancing coordination, data collection and reporting within the Spotlight Counties. The Programme also supported a national CSO to review the curriculum of three institutions, the Judiciary, the Ministry of Justice and the Liberia National Police, in order to integrate a manual on gender mainstreaming and the prevention of and response to SGBV crimes.
- ✓ **Preventing violence through community-driven solutions (Pillar 3: Prevention):** The Social Behavioral Change Communication strategy was validated and is in place to guide social and behavioral change. The construction of vocational and heritage centers was near finalization during the reporting year, soon offering multicultural centers where positive cultural practices will be conducted.
- ✓ **Strengthened service provision by aligning with global standards and local priorities (Pillar 4: Services):** To enhance quality service delivery, including the delivery of SRHS, two safe homes and two Women and Children Protection Services (WACPs) facilities were refurbished and one Maternity Waiting Home including a delivery room, labor room and post-partum service space was constructed also handed over to the Government. Two DNA machines were procured to enhance evidence during the prosecution of rape cases, and the SGBV early-warning mechanism was further strengthened by training WACPs and the Peace Hut women network in logistic support for the implementation of the early warning mechanism. There is now improved jurisdiction over cases of rape, sexual assault, and abuse.
- ✓ **Evidence based data and enhanced CSO capacities in addressing social norms (Pillar 5: Data and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** In partnership with key Ministries, the Initiative continued to support and strengthen the GBV- IMS to ensure regular, harmonized GBV data collection and analysis. SI also enhanced the capacities of CSOs and Women's Movement in addressing harmful cultural norms and can now ably develop various policies, for instance - the anti-Corruption Policy and the SEA Policy that are currently employed to address SGBV in their communities.

## One Story of Impact: Traditional Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practitioners have a newly found commitment to end FGM

Often FGM is performed for financial as well as cultural reasons. Fifty percent of girls and women aged 15 to 49 in Liberia have undergone the harmful practice of FGM. The Alternative Economic Livelihood programme provides climate-smart agriculture and business management training to FGM practitioners, so they have alternative ways of earning an income. Kema Dahn is a community leader and former practitioner of FGM in Nimba County in North-Eastern Liberia. To date, Dahn is one of 300 traditional practitioners who benefitted from the livelihood programme, and now has an opportunity to gain income through other sources, shifting the belief in FGM.

### In her own words...

"What will make us leave these traditional things is empowerment to start our businesses," says Dahn. "I never knew much about farming. The new skills I have learned in agricultural business development and management provided a great opportunity for me to get another source of income." - *Kema Dahn, Community Leader*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Community involvement is a good practice and key to advancing social behaviour change and communication, particularly on SGBV and harmful practices such as FGM, topics that are quite sensitive and deeply rooted in the traditional society of Liberia. Working with rural-based Women's Organizations to share information on SGBV and harmful practices, has raised wider awareness of these issues particularly in hard-to-reach communities. The collective work of these women - speaking out against SGBV - has increased pressure on social and political structures in their communities to better address SGBV. The women also ensure that cases are followed through to prosecution, perpetrators are brought to justice, and survivors are offered support. These women have created a savings system to support each other economically, as well; many have established their own businesses and run their own collective farms to complement their sustainability strategy. This strategy has contributed to sending their children to school and fending for their families. Fighting against SGBV has created a sisterhood among the various women groups the Initiative works with.

# MALAWI 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 30,115,741	 USD 28,571,429	 USD 1,544,312	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNHCR, Ministries of: Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW); Local Government; Education, Science and Technology; Home Affairs; Health; Labour; Youth Sports and Manpower Development; Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Malawi Human Rights Commission, Law Commission, Malawi Police, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Media, Academia, Traditional & Religious Leaders

## Context

In Malawi, shifting harmful social norms related to violence against women and girls (VAWG) and access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services remains challenging. According to the 2021 World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report, Malawi ranked 115 in the Global Gender Gap index out of 156 countries. During the 2020 outbreak of COVID-19, rape and child marriage saw a steep increase in numbers, with 13,000 child marriages and 40,000 teenage pregnancies between April and September 2020. In 2021 the country struggled to recover from the lasting effects of this spike in violence, as well as the disproportionate socio-economic impact of the pandemic on women and girls. The Malawi Human Rights Commission conducted a national survey on sexual harassment in 2021 that illustrated that 98% of sexual harassment cases in the workplace and schools go unreported due to fear of repercussions. The reallocation of funding by the UK away from another major Programme to end VAWG, has left an important gap in the broader response to this issue. More positively, important strides were made in the protection of girls' human rights after Muslim and Christian leaders signed a Memorandum of Understanding allowing female Muslim learners to wear hijabs in public and Christian-owned schools, where previously they had been turned away.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) in Malawi focuses on six districts with a high prevalence of VAWG (Mzimba, Nkhata Bay, Ntchisi, Dowa, Nsanje and Machinga). In 2021, SI co-sponsored the Africa Gender Equality Conference, the most important event commemorating International Women's Day on the continent. Spotlight Initiative featured prominently throughout, and a dedicated high-level event was launched on the sidelines commemorating SI@2 years. The Government of Malawi demonstrated a commitment to ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) through their commitment to the Spotlight Initiative at both national and local levels. District authorities play a key role in leading the successful implementation of the Programme, coordinated through the district SI Communities of Practice. In keeping with the "Leaving No One Behind" principle, the Initiative partnered with a broad spectrum of CSOs (39 in total) representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including sex workers, refugees, women and girls living with HIV-AIDS, and women and girls with disabilities. The Programme entails a comprehensive approach to EVAWG, with activities under all 6 pillars described below, with a strong emphasis on Prevention, Service Delivery and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), particularly prevention of and response to teenage pregnancies and child marriage.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Advancing gender-sensitive laws and policies to EVAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The SI strengthened literacy on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), SRHR and child marriage among 1,100 key community stakeholders and leaders, including informal and formal legislators. An additional 195 leaders from 85 communities were trained to develop bylaws using national normative guidelines, resulting in the formulation of 7 draft bylaws abolishing or amending 18 Harmful Practices. In support, the SI facilitated the review of the Chiefs Act and Chiefs Policy, which will guarantee their mandate to continue the efforts in EVAWG. The integration of SGBV, harmful practices and SRHR indicators in the minimum data requirements for District Development Plans enabled the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare to report on gender indicators at district level for the first time. Thanks to the Spotlight Initiative Gender and Disability Mainstreaming tool, Village Action Plans and District Development Plans in beneficiary districts now dedicate at least 40% and 50% of their budgets respectively to specific gender related interventions, while gender is mainstreamed throughout.



In collaboration with the National Council of Higher Education (NCHE), a model Anti-Sexual Harassment and Gender Policy was developed to support tertiary education entities institutionalise a systematic response to gender-based violence, in particular sexual harassment; 22 Universities adapted the model. The Initiative also supported the development and launch of Malawi Human Rights Commission's Guidelines for Developing Anti-Sexual Harassment Workplace Policies, which oriented 12 ministries to develop their own anti-sexual harassment policies.

- ✓ **Stronger services, better information and data (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** To ensure access to quality and essential SGBV and SRH services, Spotlight Initiative enhanced the capacities of 1,286 service providers in all sectors (health, mental health, justice), benefitting a total of 36,439 survivors of SGBV which were referred for services. These figures represent an 87% increase in the number of cases reported compared with 2020, signaling significant service demand creation in SI districts. The distribution of 120 motorcycles and 400 bicycles to service providers enhanced access to services of women and girls in hard-to-reach areas. The training of 670 community service providers and health practitioners on integrated services benefitted 48,272 women and girls. The training of case workers in Psychological First Aid benefitted 12,345 females. The SI Community Fund allowed 873 women and girls to access services, while the SI Survivor Fund economically empowered 2,024 GBV survivors through the provision of start-up capital to engage in economic activities. Both funds are managed by communities, a key step towards sustaining the Programme's gains. Mobile Courts and legal clinics were scaled up to enhance survivors' access to justice, with 193 court sessions and 179 legal clinics conducted, benefitting 1,171 women and girls, and concluding 179 cases. The establishment of a harmonized data collection system was facilitated for the collection of standardized and quality data on VAWG by the judiciary, health, and social welfare sectors, the first of its kind in Malawi. Since its establishment, the hub has 2,798 recorded cases.
- ✓ **Prevention of violence, transformation of norms and women's movement building (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Following the graduation of 11,239 mentees from the Safe Space Mentorship Programme in July 2021, the programme enrolled a second cohort of 13,758 mentees from 447 safe spaces. As a result of the mentorship sessions, close to 12,000 girls are empowered to report violence and challenge negative social norms promoting harmful practices. The mentees supported 959 girls from safe spaces to go back to school, referred 1,945 SGBV cases, and organized interactive sessions with health personnel, through which 1,335 girls accessed family planning services. The SI funded Safe School Programme granted 112,219 learners in 98 schools access to violence reporting mechanisms managed directly by 180 Police Officers who are part of the One School One Police Officer Initiative; 1,131 complaints were registered and investigated in 2021. The SI Scholarship enabled 584 adolescent girl survivors to access secondary education, of which nearly half have graduated. A total of 6,459 male champions became active agents of change and are promoting positive masculinities using the male engagement operational guide launched during the year. The strengthening of six district-wide movements pulled together 69,155 women's rights activists who are lobbying decision makers and duty bearers to end VAWG, including through the use of social accountability scorecards.

## One Story of Impact: Malawian Chiefs Step Up EVAWG Efforts and Abolish Harmful Practices

Traditional leaders are demanding an end to violence against women and girls in their communities, having understood this is vital for their communities' developmental progress. The establishment of Chiefs' forums facilitates the exchange of lessons learned and best practices, including drafting of bylaws in favor of the protection of women and girls. Following the capacity building of 1,561 members of the Chiefs' Forums to monitor VAWG, traditional leaders collectively annulled 1,222 child marriages representing 98% of registered child marriages in the 6 districts.

### In their own words...

"The Spotlight Initiative has played a role in changing mindsets towards some harmful traditional practices in Nsanje. Communities did not know that some of the traditional practices are a danger to our women and girls, now they do and we are seeing changes. This is good," - *Jeke Nsanje, Senior Group Village Headman*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Community and survivor funds are an ongoing intervention aimed at improving accessibility to services, as well as supporting the long-term recovery of survivors of VAWG. The intervention was initiated in 2020 following reports from communities that most survivors are from poor households who cannot afford to seek justice or essential services. The survivor fund supported 2,024 survivors to engage in economic activities towards their long-term recovery and social reintegration in the community. The Community fund allowed 873 survivors to access specialized services, facilitated the conclusion of 2,964 GBV cases in courts and enabled 109 women and girls with Obstructed Fistula to have access to assessment and medical repair. The funds are managed by communities and therefore entirely sustainable, particularly as part of the funds were reinvested for growth purposes.

# Mali 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I+II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 29,635,599	 USD 25,714,286	 USD 3,921,313	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN ORGANIZATIONS:** UNFPA, UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR

**Other partners:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Ministry of Women, Children, and the Family Promotion; Justice and Human Rights, Keeper of the Seals; Security and Civil Protection; Health and Social Development; National Education; Youth and Sports, in charge of Civic Education and Citizen Construction; Religious Affairs, Worship and Customs; Economy and Finance; Communication, the Digital Economy and the Modernization of the Administration; Civil Society Organizations

## Context

The implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in Mali was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic, the socio-political instability due to the absence of a National Assembly since August 2020, and the persistence of insecurity in several areas of the country. The programme has also faced resistance from several religious leaders to adopt a law to tackle gender-based violence (GBV).

## Spotlight Initiative's response

Spotlight Initiative in Mali, with the support of the European Union Delegation, is committed to a strategy to end all violence against women and girls (VAWG), harmful practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage, and to remove barriers encountered by women related to their reproductive health. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative achieved significant results in changing positive behavior towards GBV. The restrictive measures taken by the Malian authorities following the COVID-19 pandemic have affected some Spotlight Initiative activities, especially those related to capacity-building sessions and advocacy. In order to overcome this problem, social distancing was respected during training, and the local radio stations were used to disseminate information.

## Key results

- ✓ **Progress on legal and institutional aspects (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** Through the Spotlight Initiative's support implementing partners contributed to strengthening institutions in Mali. The Initiative has strengthened the capacities of 2190 actors including religious, community, and human rights leaders on the legal framework for GBV and harmful practices. At least 751 actors, including gender focal points from sectoral departments, police, and justice, have had their capacities strengthened in gender-responsive planning and budgeting. This training will enable actors to mainstream gender in programmes and projects. The capacities of 45 key justice actors, including magistrates, prosecutors, and deputy prosecutors have been strengthened to analyze and review legislation related to the elimination of GBV. Activities with a focus on boosting multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms to prevent and combat GBV enabled 120 people, including 78 women and 42 men, to acquire knowledge on coordination, triangulation, and reporting of information related to GBV, FGM and harmful practices and promoted a framework for the exchange and sharing of information between actors.
- ✓ **A growing commitment among stakeholders to end GBV in Mali (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The Spotlight Initiative program in Mali, through appropriate and often innovative strategies, has raised awareness among at least 1,074,722 people. At least 5,171 public declarations of support for the abandonment of child marriage and FGM have been recorded by stakeholders, and 221 villages have signed agreements to abandon harmful practices. There is a growing trend of strong support from Muslim religious leaders who were previously reluctant to participate in the programme. Approximately 70,304 adolescent girls aged 10-17 and young women aged 18 and over have benefited from prevention and care interventions to effectively combat child marriage and FGM. The TV series "Danse inlassable" or "Don ni Dongoma" has positively contributed to the awareness of the consequences of GBV. At least five CSO networks have been set up to advocate with administrative, political, traditional, and religious leaders on the issue of GBV. The capacities of 160 radio hosts were strengthened in tackling GBV. The ZERO GBV application created within the framework of the Spotlight Initiative, is a mobile



application for information, awareness and denunciation of GBV. The application is simple, conveniently accessible from the Google Play store and available in 3 National languages. Thus far, the app has been downloaded 900 times.

- ✓ **Better data and stronger services to end GBV (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** In the interest of effective and sustainable holistic care, the programme has set up 10 One Stop Centers in the intervention areas. At least 712 key care providers (from health, police and justice, and social services sectors) have new skills in the delivery of quality care. These providers provided holistic care to 869 GBV survivors. Approximately 925 community leaders were trained on reporting cases of violence and referring them to comprehensive multisectoral services. In addition, 52 community-based mechanisms of prevention and control of GBV are functional. One of the most important results of Pillar 5 remains the establishment of the National GBV Database in Mali. With support from the Initiative and the National Institute of Statistics, the Ministry of Women, Children, and the Family Promotion developed the information system needed to establish the national database. This support has also strengthened the capacities of 262 regional actors to produce quantitative and qualitative statistical data on GBV.

## One Story of Impact: Prevention through Adolescent Agents of Change

Spotlight Initiative partners have mobilized and raised awareness among many communities on the prevention of gender-based violence, including FGM. Young people and adolescents have been mainly targeted by prevention activities. At least 731 young people and adolescents have seen their capacities strengthened on GBV issues through the safe spaces supported by the programme. Indeed, safe spaces are frameworks for bringing young people and adolescents together under the supervision of mentors to raise awareness about GBV and other reproductive health issues affecting their lives. According to the school authorities, the student club's dissemination of the good practice for prevention of GBV charters has largely contributed to the reduction of violence against students. Thanks to the programmes implemented at school (conferences, debates, model lessons, dissemination of charters of good practice and comics on FGM and child marriage), zero cases of school drop-out related to child marriage have been reported in participating schools.

### In their own words...

*"Child marriage does not exist anywhere in the holy books." - A muslim religious leader from the village of N'Gonikoro, a rural commune of Didiéni*

## Innovative, Promising, or Good Practices

In response to the social distancing measures put in place by the Government of Mali to avoid the spread of COVID-19, the Programme adopted a number of promising practices to raise awareness on VAWG, and particularly child marriage and FGM. For starters, information caravans led by young people were carried out with Spotlight support. The caravans adopted approaches to spread information on legislation and policies regarding tackling GBV and the care of survivors. Remote activities, such as the creation and engagement of virtual local GBV and advocacy networks, reached 430 local actors in the 5 areas of the Initiative. The use of local community radios also played an important role in indirectly reaching 3 million people in all localities of the Spotlight Initiative. Activities with social distancing and a limited amount of people were also organized in open spaces with the participation of human rights CSOs, as well as person-to-person awareness-raising activities based on methods and tools inspired by local practices - like the door to door approach - to secure information from hard to reach and marginalized groups, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.

# MOZAMBIQUE 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 29,575,934	 USD 28,571,429	 USD 1,004,505	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** Ministries of Gender, Children and Social Action; Health; Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs; Interior; Economy and Finance; Education and Human Development; Secretary of State for Youth and Employment, Parliament, Attorney General's Office, Professional Council of the Judiciary, Family and Minors Courts, Supreme Court, Non-Governmental Organizations, National and Local Civil Society Organizations, National Civil Society Reference Group.

## Context

The Spotlight Initiative has been working to prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) in Mozambique since the beginning of 2019, both at the national level and in the three focus provinces of Gaza, Nampula and Manica. The programme transitioned into Phase II in 2021, and recorded notable achievements during the year, despite a challenging period due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures to mitigate its spread; The effect of climate change, with recurring storms and flooding in some programme implementation areas, and conflict in the North of the country. These significant challenges impacted programme delivery, but also represented opportunities for the Initiative, which responded in an innovative and timely manner to mitigate their impact. Through the renewed leadership of the Government of Mozambique and the UN Resident Coordinator Office, new programme governance and coordination approaches were created, with the support of the European Union Delegation, bringing multiple partners closer together, expediting approval processes and strengthening results-based management for the Initiative to continue delivering in the spirit of the UN Reform.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on Spotlight Initiative's activities, much of the work was carried out virtually. Instant messaging apps, community radios, tv, mobile brigades and information delivered by SMS were used to continue reaching communities. Concurrently, the Spotlight Initiative expanded the use of mobile units to provide quality GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services to remote areas of Mozambique, leaving no one behind.. To respond to the impacts of the conflict in Northern Mozambique and in the focus provinces, the Spotlight Initiative strengthened the coordination with humanitarian actors working to prevent and respond to GBV in impacted communities.

## Key Results

- ✓ **In 2021, the Initiative reached 1.3 million<sup>1</sup> rights holders and 26.1 million persons<sup>2</sup> indirectly (All Pillars):** This impact is a result of a comprehensive approach across pillars through the support for government legislation and policies, strengthened institutions, boosting social norms changes, the provision of GBV and SRH services, the strengthening of GBV data, and strengthened Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Women's Movements.
- ✓ **Reinforcing the legislative and policy framework and institutions related to VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The SI reinforced the dissemination of information on key legislation and policies related to ending violence against women and girls (VAWG). As a result, more than 4,000 community members were sensitized on their rights and existing legal services related to GBV and SRH. More than 1,000 government service providers received training on the new regulations to improve the operationalization of the Integrated Assistance Centers (CAIs) for GBV survivors. To enhance institutional strengthening to end VAWG, the SI led the process of developing Gender Strategies and GBV Action Plans for four justice institutions and trained 874 budget officers from different government entities on gender sensitive budgeting.

<sup>1</sup> Breakdown of 1.3 million right holders is provided in the table of rights holders under section 7 of the Annual Narrative Report 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Breakdown of 26.1 million right holders is provided in the table of rights holders under section 7 of the Annual Narrative Report 2021.

- ✓ **Prevention and transformation of social norms contribute to enhanced demand to quality services (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Over 700,000 boys and girls were reached through awareness raising sessions. A total of 13,389 adults and 11,524 adolescents were involved in 210 community dialogues to raise awareness of GBV, which contributed to identification and reporting of 239 cases of child marriage.
- ✓ **Improved access to quality services for GBV survivors (Pillar 4: Services):** In 2021, over 400,000 GBV survivors had access to essential services, as the SI support to ensure quality essential services for survivors continued.
- ✓ **Enhanced GBV data management (Pillar 5: Data)** the SI contributed to the development of the GBV information management system InfoViolencia and the digital migration of the Justice sector to expedite criminal investigation processes.
- ✓ **Strengthened CSOs' and Women's Movements (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** More than 60 women led CSOs benefitted from capacity development of which five have been registered and gained legal status, subsequently increasing their access to financial loans and funding.

## One Story of Impact: A traditional leader's quest to end gender-based violence

In Mozambique, community and traditional leaders are highly respected and act as the guardians of social norms. They can also be powerful allies in deconstructing harmful practices against women and girls. And that is precisely what is happening in Marere. Mr. Cabide is a traditional leader from Marere chiefdom, in Nampula province, Northern Mozambique. In 2021, he took part in a training session for traditional leaders on GBV prevention and response. The training was promoted by the Integrated Assistance Center (CAI), with support from the Spotlight Initiative. This 'one-stop' center in Nampula city is among 24 government-run centers that integrate health, social action, police, and justice services under one roof, delivering vital care, especially to women and girls experiencing violence.

### Local institutions and traditional leaders working together

Mr. Cabide learned about the country's multisectoral mechanism and laws to respond to GBV and he is now determined to end all types of violence against women and girls. Now, Mr. Cabide knows what to do when he receives a report of violence in his community; instead of seeking a settlement through customary practices, Mr. Cabide refers the case to the centre.

Mr. Cabide knows that once in the CAI, survivors access lifesaving and integrated support without retelling their story, revisiting their trauma multiple times, or traveling to different locations. He also knows that cases will be referred to the justice system, increasing the chances of punishing perpetrators and protecting survivors.

Government institutions from the social welfare, health, justice, and police sectors are the backbone of the Spotlight Initiative in Mozambique, along with over 20 civil society organizations. These institutions can now count on the support of over 300 traditional leaders trained by the Spotlight Initiative to end GBV in the country.

### In their own words...

"We received training here at the CAI, and now we know that we play a part in gender-based violence prevention and response in our communities. When a case [of violence] is reported to me, I now refer it to the CAI, and I'm telling other leaders they should do the same", said Mr. Cabide. *Read Mr. Cabide's [full story](#) and find out how he is fighting against gender-based violence in Mozambique*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative supported mobile clinics that serve hard to reach communities, including those living in rural areas and locations affected by environmental disasters as a result of climate change. The Initiative brigades have proven successful by being widely implemented in all 10 districts of the Initiative and by producing good results. In 2021, Spotlight Initiative deployed 188 brigades that reached a total of 36,462 people (61 percent women), with 15,523 women and girls receiving SRH services, including family planning, and 712 GBV survivors receiving assistance.

# NIGER 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I+II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 27,435,163	 USD 24,285,715	 USD 3,149,448	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNWOMEN

**Other partners:** Ministries of Women's Promotion and Child Protection, Justice, Planning, Finance, Primary Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Secondary Education, Public Health, National Defense, Interior, National Assembly, Islamic Council, Association of Traditional Chiefs of Niger, National Institute of Statistics, National Agency for Legal and Judicial Assistance (ANAJJ), Civil Society Organizations.

## Context

For several years, the Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Nigeria, and Niger) have faced increasing insecurity. The poor security and humanitarian contexts in Niger have increased protection incidents, including child separation, rape, sexual exploitation, child marriage, and child labor. The Gender Inequality Index (GII), which reflects the gaps between three areas (reproductive health, women's empowerment, and women's economic activity) shows that Niger, with a GII of 0.642, compares poorly with the sub-Saharan African average GII of 0.570. Early marriage remains prevalent with younger generations, despite the combined efforts of the Government, Civil Society, Financial and Technical Partners. The 2021 National Study on gender based violence (GBV) revealed that 53.4% of girls aged 20-24 were married before 18 years and 22,9% before 15 years versus 76.3% (under 18) and 28% (under 15) in 2012. Further the legal age to marry in Niger is 16 for girls, however, the African Girls' Summit organized by the African Union in Niger from 16 to 18 November 2021 recommended raising the age of marriage for girls to 18 years. On a promising note, Niger elected a new Head of state, and a new parliament, and for the first time in the country, 50 women were elected out of 166 members of the Parliament (30%). That is above the 25% minimum stipulated in the quotas law, and an increase from 20% female in the previous parliament. In addition, women account for 27% of locally elected officials. Although the COVID-19 pandemic wasn't widespread in Niger, prevention measures were still applied. Plus, the country faced meningitis and cholera outbreaks in six out of the country's eight regions.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

In partnership with the European Union, and with high-level political leadership, as shown by the involvement and commitment of the Government of Niger and key ministries, the Spotlight Initiative in Niger has worked to strengthen legal frameworks and institutions, to mobilize and empower communities and women's rights organizations, to increase access to holistic care services, and to improve data on violence against women and girls (VAWG). By bringing together a range of partners, the Spotlight Initiative focused on building strong relationships and facilitating a multi sectoral response to address VAWG. In the spirit of UN reform, the Spotlight Initiative worked to systematically build inter-agency convergences and synergies that contribute to changing social behaviors to promote and protect the rights of women and girl victims of violence.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Promoting gender-responsive laws and budgeting (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the office of the Mediator, organized a nationwide advocacy tour to address the urgent need to update the national legal framework to protect women and girls from violence. Within the Spotlight Initiative's four provinces, 216 people were reached, including 74 women. Each region has presented and adopted a regional statement. The national tour resulted in recommendations for a legal framework study. Legislative reform has made significant progress with the validation of a new draft law on GBV by the members of the ministerial committee in charge of monitoring the study. Additionally, 50 "community workers for gender promotion" were established in the Zinder region to serve as focal points in the fight against VAWG, GBV and harmful practices. Similarly, 3,960 other community workers (approximately 60% women and girls), were recruited to support social mobilization and advocacy for legislative reform and changing behaviors and social norms. The Spotlight Initiative provided capacity building to 125 defenders of women's and girls' rights on GBV and the current legal framework. In terms of development planning, 20 managers, including 3 women from the Ministries of Planning, Education, Health and Women's Promotion, have had their capacities strengthened on the use of gender analysis and integration tools, in order to support the sectors to integrate gender into the new National Economic and Social Development Plan. Nine (9)



communes out of 14 have taken into account Menstrual Hygiene Management in their Local Water and Sanitation Plans and the rural commune of Doguéraoua in the Tahoua region, has integrated menstrual hygiene management in its Communal Development Plan. As part of parliamentary day, the Programme sensitized 110 MPs on gender-sensitive planning and budgeting to ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are taken into account in national and sectoral policies, plans and budgets, which led to parliament's signing of a resolution that ensures gender is mainstreamed in the country's plans, budgets and policies.

- ✓ **Building partnerships with multiple stakeholders to prevent VAWG and strengthen services (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 4: Services):** Through interpersonal communication approaches, community mobilization and mass media campaigns, 931,109 people (231,007 men, 336,887 women, 199,116 girls and 163,999 boys) have been sensitized and their knowledge improved on GBV and harmful practices. An additional 490 new adolescent girls joined the knowledge sharing network in 2021, accessing a platform to share knowledge and skills with their peers. To better promote menstrual hygiene management, 54 block latrines were built for 7,971 students (3,437 girls and 4,534 boys) in 27 primary schools in Tahoua region. Similarly, 200 schools in the four Spotlight provinces were provided with 10,000 menstrual hygiene management kits for training support, sensitization and distribution to girls. Forty regional technical services' managers organized awareness raising activities, through which 2,957 people were reached and strengthened their knowledge on menstrual hygiene management issues to break the taboo on menstruation and to adopt positive behaviors in favor of women and girls. In 2021, a total of 6,716 GBV cases were managed at the regional multifunctional holistic one center. Out of 150 GBV cases that received legal and judicial assistance, 57 cases were referred to the courts and 10 cases were judged; and 600 women victims of GBV received economic kits (500 received a livestock kit, 57 small business kits) to support their socio-economic reintegration and improve their income.
- ✓ **Generating quality data and strengthening civil society (Pillar 5: Data and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** A national survey on the scope and determinants of GBV was conducted to generate updated and reliable data on GBV in Niger. The conclusions of this study will be useful for the programme's strategies and will serve as guidance for implementing partners. To strengthen the routine GBV data collection system, two awareness-raising missions for regional police and gendarmerie managers were conducted, and 46 GBV stakeholders from the Tahoua and Tillabéri regions were trained on data collection in accordance with the GBV data management system. Police and gendarmerie staff in women and minors protection units were equipped to use smartphones to collect GBV data. As part of the "Leave no one behind" principle, the Niger Federation of Disabled Persons received 50 motorcycle tricycles to help reduce the vulnerability of children with cerebral palsy. The Federation also received support to help 300 children with Cerebral Palsy with travel expenses to health centers, purchase of medicines, orthopedic prostheses and other assistance materials. The Initiative strengthened the skills of 70 young people from youth organization networks in communication and effective advocacy techniques in order to increase their power to influence decision-makers

### One Story of Impact: WhatsApp network for the empowerment of adolescent girls

The Spotlight Initiative has supported the creation of a WhatsApp network for adolescent girls to promote women's and girls' rights in their communities within 60 villages. Through engagement with the network, adolescent girls felt empowered and strengthened their leadership and influence with their peers. As a result, they joined the child protection committees of their villages to introduce GBV cases and voice their opinion on ending violence against women and girls in their communities. As a best practice and lesson learned, such approaches can be duplicated to create other networks, such as a network of GBV survivors who have received support from the Spotlight Initiative or adolescent girls who are willing to speak up on violence, share experiences and offer mutual support.

#### In her own words...

"Our role is to talk to our peers about gender equality and to teach our male friends to respect their sisters and mothers. We feel empowered and we are changing the way people perceive us as young women." - *Girl correspondent, in Droum, Zinder*

### Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

As a best practice, the Civil Society Reference Group has been strongly engaged in the implementation of the participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy through the development of an advocacy dashboard and data collection tools that have allowed for direct exchange with beneficiaries and communities. Additionally, a promising practice has emerged to address women's access to justice. In Niger, traditional leaders are considered auxiliaries to the central administration and as such, they represent the State in their communities. When disputes occur in the community, they are the first referees, despite availability of police or judicial services in the locality. They are also responsible for conciliation in family-related matters (separation, inheritance, marriage, etc.). Therefore, even in serious cases such as rape, victims of GBV will first file a complaint with their village chief. However, victims do not always feel comfortable because they must first engage the chief's male entourage (advisors) to seek access to the chief. As a changemaker, the Sultan of Tibiri has appointed two women as advisors on GBV issues and on child marriage/ girls' education. His initiative is a first in the history of traditional chiefdoms and provides women access to female advisors, potentially improving their access to justice.

# NIGERIA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 38,362,512	 USD 35,714,286	 USD 2,648,226	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, UNESCO, UNFPA

**Other partners:** Ministry of Budget and Planning; Women Affairs and Social Development; Health; Justice; Finance; Education, Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on the Sustainable Development Goals, National Orientation Agency, National Bureau of Statistic, National Human Rights Commission at Federal and State level, Office of the Vice President

## Context

Despite the recent progress in gender equality in Nigeria, inequalities between men and women still prevail, with increased risks of violence and harmful practices (HP) for women and girls. In Nigeria, 30% of women and girls aged 15 to 49 reported having experienced sexual violence, while 43% have experienced child marriage, and 20% have undergone Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Additionally, during the outbreak of COVID-19, Nigeria experienced a rapid increase in reports of violence against women and girls (VAWG). With the support of the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative in Nigeria aims to achieve a country “where all women and girls, particularly the most vulnerable, live a life free from violence and harmful practices.” This vision is realized by addressing the linkages between sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices and focusing on cross-cutting themes, including sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

In Nigeria, one of the overarching achievements of the Spotlight Initiative during the reporting period was the establishment, in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, of the emergency obstetric care for women in hard-to-reach areas through the establishment and maintenance of a Maternal Waiting Home (MWH). The MWH initiative identifies and brings high-risk pregnant women closer to a health facility as they approach their delivery due dates. Through this service, the Spotlight Initiative has reached 60 women in 2021 all having safe deliveries with maternal deaths averted. In addressing the coordination and GBV data reporting at the National level, the Strategic Knowledge Management Technical Working Group on GBV was inaugurated, which brings together key players in the GBV program monitoring and implementation. The working group ensures quality and timely reporting of GBV data in the 36 states. In the spirit of UN reform, the Spotlight Initiative has designed innovative and flagship models to foster inter-agency coordination mechanisms to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG).

A ground-breaking aspect of the Initiative has been the development and roll-out of the Unified Response Protocol and Referral Pathway (URPRP) accompanied by a mobile digital app that guides the operations of all stakeholders in providing domestic violence response services. The unified response (URPRP) sets minimum standards for the provision of quality and efficient services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence through a multi-disciplinary approach and outlines a state-wide, consistent, predictable, and holistic response mechanism to incidents of domestic violence from access to healthcare, legal support, law enforcement, and other services.

In addressing the spike in violence during the pandemic, the UN system, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, called for immediate and urgent actions to tackle violence at the National Policy Dialogue on EVAWG. At the dialogue, the government through the Vice President of Nigeria, restated their commitment to invest in support services that protect children, particularly girls, affected by violence including encouraging more states to establish Sexual Assault Referral Centres ensuring that survivors have an integrated care pathway.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Strengthened and developed, gender-sensitive laws and legislation (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** High-level progress was made for EVAWG by providing technical support to the development and strengthening of legislative and policy frameworks. All Six Spotlight Initiative focus states have now adopted, passed, and started implementing the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) (VAPP) Act. The passage of this Act has signalled a significant shift toward greater legal protection throughout the country. Indeed, there is a ripple effect from the passage of the VAPP Act from the Six Spotlight state, leading to additional passages of the VAPP Act in 26 other states in 2021. This



is the fastest bill to be passed at the sub-national level in the history of the country, indicating increased political buy-in. Relatedly, the draft Child Protection Bill in Sokoto was passed into Law by the Sokoto State House of Assembly and signed by the Governor in December 2021, following a wide consultative process with state leaders and community sub-structures led by the Programme. This is an unprecedented achievement, as efforts to domesticate the Child Rights Act in northern states have been ongoing for at least a decade without any success. This law provided a pathway and framework for other states.

- ✓ **Improved access to services, information collection, and data use (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative contributed to strengthening the capacities of 1,403 service providers, including health workers, police, and justice sectors, with a focus on providing essential services for victims of violence. This has resulted in strengthened multi-sectoral coordination, ensuring access to inclusive, timely, and quality services for survivors. As a result, 7,701 women and girls have gained access to essential services, and 1,193 women and girls' survivors accessed long-term recovery services. Furthermore, quality essential services for SGBV survivors were maintained despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, through the four one-stop centres supported by the Spotlight Initiative in the Federal Capital Territory, Lagos, Sokoto, and Adamawa. As a result of the strengthened capacity of 104 National Statistical Officers, government personnel, including service providers, GBV data is being reported from 36 states into the National GBV data hub at the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs. Indeed, there is a significant improvement in the use of data for decision-making, as timely quarterly GBV factsheets and advisory analyses are made available to decision-makers.
- ✓ **Civil society engagement and leadership to prevent violence (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Thanks to the unprecedented synergies that have emerged among civil society organisations, the Spotlight Initiative has been able to bring together partners that have not traditionally worked together, supporting coordination mechanisms and dialogues, which have resulted in 6 joint recommendations on how to prevent and respond to VAWG, including in the context of COVID-19. The Spotlight Initiative has also enhanced the capacity of 303 representatives of women's rights movements and civil society organizations, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, to monitor and assess the Sustainable Development Goal Benchmarks for VAWG, Harmful Practices, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. In partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Spotlight Initiative revised the national curriculum to include VAWG and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights components. Indeed, the mass media prevention campaign is gaining ground as 6,0665,427 million people were reached through campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping in communities.

## One Story of Impact: Second-Chance Education and Livelihood support for Survivors

In Nigeria, the restoration of the dignity and rights of survivors of gender-based violence received a boost as 15,737 young women and girls left furthest behind, those experiencing Child Early and Forced Marriage, and persons with disability, benefitted from second-chance education programs, and the livelihood intervention, which provided them with life-skills, vocational training, financial literacy, and business management skills. This approach empowers survivors to be self-reliant and assertive against associated negative masculinity.

### In their own words...

"We appreciate the immense support from Spotlight Initiative on the push to begin the Nigerian Network of this chapter (WIFTI). Working with you has brought us together to work in collaboration on issues that affect women and girls, we know we have the power to shape minds, now we are going to learn together and work together for the good of womankind, for the good of humankind and for the good of Nigeria." - *Joke Silva-Nigerian Actress (Convener, WIFTI)*

## Innovation, Promising or Good Practices

In Nigeria, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to enhancing access to justice for survivors of VAWG through the establishment of the "Solution Room"- a prosecution hub that promotes access to justice for women and girls. This practice is the first of its kind in Nigeria. It led to important results in a very short period of time (98 cases prosecuted within three days as opposed to a few cases prosecuted over several months) The service providers are seeing the benefits of working together under one roof to address issues that often delay cases in courts. A pro-bono professional legal aid provider guarantees its affordability through free service provision. Subsequent meetings are held in agencies' conference rooms, thus eliminating the high costs for venues. This practice represents a new vista for survivors of sexual violence and their families and is aimed to ultimately break the culture of silence and impunity, and restore hope and confidence in the ability of the justice system to hold perpetrators accountable.

# UGANDA 2021 Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I (or Phase I + II Where Approved)	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 33,205,805	 31,428,571	 USD 1,777,234	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN WOMEN, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR

**Other partners:** Ministries of Gender, Labour & Social Development, Health, Education & Sports, Internal Affairs, Local Government, Energy & Minerals Development, Trade Industry & Cooperatives; Office of the Prime Minister, District Local Governments, National Planning Authority, National Population Council, Equal Opportunities Commission, Ministry of Public Service, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Uganda Human Rights Commission, Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa, Non-governmental organizations, Inter-Religious Council of Uganda, Uganda Women's Network, Makerere University, International Financing Institutions, Media, Private Sector Foundation Uganda, IOM, Pulse Lab Kampala

## Context:

The national general elections held in 2021 further halted progress on legislative reforms and government capacity-building activities, as government partners were focused on the elections. Incidents of violence against women and children spiked considerably during the COVID-19 lockdown. The demand for Emergency Shelters increased by 60.5%, and public awareness of violence against women and girls (VAWG) expanded. In November 2021 Western Uganda (Kisoro District) experienced an influx of people fleeing conflict and violence from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the European Union, designed and implemented acceleration plans to mitigate against time lost due to general elections and COVID-19, by enabling rapid implementation, and transitioning to remote and virtual meetings and activities. Further, the Programme successfully lobbied for the appointment of women to senior government positions, and to restore the review processes of sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) laws that suffered setbacks in adoption due to the aforementioned delays. In alignment with the recommendations of the mid-term assessment, the Spotlight Initiative increased stakeholder engagement and financial support for the Programme's Civil Society National Reference Group's work plans and participation in the Initiative's governance. In the spirit of UN reform, the Spotlight Initiative and the Government of Uganda adopted a "Deliver as One" approach, evidenced by a joint memorandum of understanding between the 5 UN agencies implementing the Spotlight Programme and the Government of Uganda, which solidified all parties' mutual commitment to collectively mobilize resources to support interventions that protect the rights and dignity of women and girls, while ensuring that those women and girls that are most-at-risk of being left behind benefit equally from the objectives of the Spotlight Initiative in Uganda. Collaboration and collective consultative processes that brought together the UN implementing agencies, the United Nations Country Team, and the Government of Uganda, provided inputs into the EU 2021–2027 Financing Strategy Uganda Country Assessment. This led to further engagement with the EU Delegation, resulting in the Spotlight Initiative being included in the Gender 4 Development in Uganda Action Plan, which allocated Euro 20 million over 3 years beginning in 2023, after the initial allocation from the Spotlight Initiative ends, ensuring sustainability. In 2021, the EU Delegation continued to support the programme with national multi-stakeholder engagement and visibility for the programme, allowing the Spotlight Initiative to reach key partners and rights-holders more effectively. Finally, securing the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development's commitment to oversee GBV responsive budgeting at national and sub-national levels provided a strong basis for ensuring sustainability.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Building the capacity of the Ministry of Gender, Labor & Social Development results in improved GBV financing, mainstreaming in GBV services and integration of GBV into policies and coordination mechanisms (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** The Spotlight Initiative's support to the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development enabled the revision of the *National Policy on Disability* to integrate GBV and sexual and reproductive health services; and the finalization of the *Compendium of GBV and Harmful Practices for Service Providers*, improving their capacity to provide quality essential services. Furthermore, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development led the development of a policy brief

on *Financing of GBV Prevention and Response Interventions*, which was used to engage Permanent Secretaries and Members of Parliament through two high-level advocacy dialogues. Advocacy focused on increasing commitments to GBV financing and strengthening the capacity of government agencies for gender mainstreaming, to deliver a multi-sectoral approach that addresses the fragmentation of service delivery. The Initiative also supported the Ministry of Public Services to develop an eCourse on mainstreaming GBV in budgeting and planning processes, and the Ministry of Health to integrate the Minimum Initial Service Package for Management of GBV survivors.

- ✓ **The adoption of the Prosecutor Plea Bargaining Guidelines increases the conviction rate for perpetrators of VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** Through the support of the Spotlight Initiative, the Prosecutor Plea Bargaining Guidelines are now in place to facilitate the reduction of case backlogs which often impede the timely prosecution of sexual violence cases. The Guidelines were used to train 72 (34F, 38M) prosecutors, police officers and probation officers, resulting in a reduction in case backlogs and increased the conviction rate.
- ✓ **Preventing VAWG by challenging attitudes to shift harmful gender norms and the empowerment of survivors (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative multimedia campaigns on VAWG and GBV reached 4,898,034 (2,889,840M: 2,008,194F) people with messages challenging harmful social norms, resulting in a 15% increase in citizen condemnation of GBV as captured through a dashboard which tracked the perceptions of women and men as voiced on radio. Additionally, the Spotlight Initiative supported the Second Chance Education Programme, focused on women and girl victims of GBV and harmful practices. The programme provided 355 young women with diverse vocational skills training, and protection, to prevent further victimization. Coupled with vocational training, the Spotlight Initiative supported the Forum for African Women Educationalists to collect data on the barriers to the Second Chance Education policy, which revealed a 22.5% increase in pregnancy among girls aged 10-24yrs during the COVID-19 lockdown and the Initiative supported the completion of an assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on schoolgirls and young women in Uganda, which provided evidence for the adoption of the school re-entry guidelines for pregnant girls.
- ✓ **Strengthened CSOs and Women's Movements amplified advocacy efforts to end VAWG and harmful practices. (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The Spotlight Initiative reached 40 organisations, including community-based women's groups, with capacity building for joint advocacy on ending VAWG and harmful practices, as well as access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. This exceeded the programme's target of 24 organizations. Further, the Spotlight Initiative facilitated women's rights advocates to lobby for the representation from and inclusion of issues affecting female sex workers and adolescent girls and young women in the Universal Health Coverage.

## One Story of Impact: Disability is not inability

In 2019, Rose Christine Adikini, 56, took part in the Spotlight Initiative-supported leadership training run by the National Union of Women with Disabilities of Uganda. Covering confidence, leadership, self-esteem, and public speaking, these sessions equip women and girls with disabilities with essential knowledge about their rights and entitlements, as well as the skills to advocate for those rights. This training is critical given women with disabilities are at greater risk of violence and discrimination due to social exclusion, limited mobility, a lack of support structures, and communication barriers. Today, Ms. Adikini is a Councilor of Persons with Disabilities in Tororo District. [‘Disability is not inability’ - women and girls with disabilities lead the way in Uganda | Spotlight Initiative](#)

### In her own words...

“Through the training, I acquired knowledge on how to lead effectively and counsel other women going through violence. I am equipped to receive and work on cases of violence against women with disabilities. As a leader, I am proud because my fellow women with disabilities are living happily.” - *Rose Christine Adikini, Councilor*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

A Good Practice from the Initiative in Uganda is the Gender Equality Seal (GES) for private enterprises, a collective effort by the government and Private Sector Foundation Uganda to establish and achieve standards to promote gender equality and women's rights in the workplace. To date, 90 companies have adopted the GES, providing the structure and guidance for them to adopt gender responsive policies and procedures as a precursor to tackling sexual harassment in the workplace, address the gender pay-gap, and break the glass ceiling by facilitating women's access to management and leadership positions. The private sector employs more than 70% of the Ugandan working-age population, therefore the more companies which adopt gender responsive measures through the GES certification process, the larger the transformative impacts are for women in the labour market.

# ZIMBABWE 2021 Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 33,029,279	 USD 30,000,000	 USD 3,029,279	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** ILO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN WOMEN

**Other partners:** Ministries of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Health and Child Care, Public Service, Labor and Social Welfare, Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Home Affairs and Cultural Heritage, Finance and Economic Development, Education (Primary and Secondary; Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology), Local Government, Public Works and National Housing, Office of the President and Cabinet, Zimbabwe Gender Commission, Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, Parliament of Zimbabwe, Public Service Commission, Women's Rights Organizations, Women Community Groups, Disable Persons Organizations, Faith-Based Groups, Human Rights Organizations, Children's Rights Groups, Private Sector, Academic Institutions and the Media.

## Context

Zimbabwe is a multi-hazard environment experiencing successive droughts, humanitarian crises, food shortages and uneven economic reforms. Coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic, these crises disproportionately affect women and girls who are among the poorest and most vulnerable. Their vulnerabilities to all forms of gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices (HPs) such as forced early marriages are pronounced in all humanitarian crises and development challenges. Intimate partner violence is the most prevalent form of GBV with 1 in 3 women reporting physical abuse since age 15. During the prolonged closure of schools due to the COVID-19 lockdown, teen pregnancies and early marriages increased. In Manicaland, one of the Spotlight Initiative Provinces, a government official reported to the local media that some 1000 girls in different districts had fallen pregnant and were married between March 2020 and January 2021.<sup>1</sup> The country has ratified the core international conventions addressing gender equality, women's rights and addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) and the strong gender equality provisions in the Constitution (enacted in 2013) reflect the inputs of the women's movement. The Zimbabwe Government remains attentive to the widening gender inequalities. Gender is mainstreamed in the new development plan, the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1) and the strategy prioritizes gender equality to enhance women's participation in all development sectors.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative in Zimbabwe is strengthening the GBV-Humanitarian-Development nexus approach in the current context while continuing to advance a multisectoral government approach to addressing VAWG at the highest level, evidenced by the High-Level Political Compact on Ending GBV and Harmful Practices (HLPC) launched and signed in October 2021. Further to the HLPC, the Initiative focuses on the delivery of strategic interventions in the areas of laws and policies and strengthening institutions which provide a strong foundation for sustainability of the SI's interventions and strategic direction. Civil society organizations (CSOs) are the most strategic partners for reaching communities with information, education and communication (IEC) materials, reaching the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach women and girls, ensuring no one is left behind, and mobilizing community activism on ending VAWG (EVAWG). In 2021, SI began to consolidate the programme models to increase the programme's reach. In the spirit of UN Reform, SI has a strong model of collaboration and the coordination mechanisms created greater efficiency in programme delivery with the collaborative efforts of the Resident Coordinator, the European Union Ambassador, the Minister of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development were pivotal to the achievement of the 2021 results.

## Key Results

- ✓ **High-level Political Compact, Forensics Evidence and Protection against Online Violence (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The High-Level Political Compact on Ending GBV and Harmful Practices (HLPC) (2021-2030) strategically places ending violence against women and girls, including harmful practices, on the country's national

<sup>1</sup> See [Teen Pregnancies Haunt Manicaland](#)



development agenda. Signed by the President His Excellency Dr. E.D. Mnangagwa, the HLPC contains a Declaration, Action Plan and M&E Framework and elevates the issue to the level of the Executive and on the country's political agenda. The Data Protection Act, passed by Parliament in December 2021, includes online violence provisions, and criminalizes the use of Information and Communication Technologies to commit these acts. Spotlight Initiative technically supported the crafting of the online violence provisions, which is the first for Zimbabwe. This Act includes key strategies such as clear reporting mechanisms for customers, and the development of codes of conduct to end online violence against women and children. SI Zimbabwe applied a holistic approach to target both the technical and legal aspects of forensic analysis and capacity strengthening to fortify the country's forensics/DNA analysis and to supply the new state of the art forensics lab, which contributes to the implementation of the Multi-Sectoral Protocol on the Management of Sexual Offences in Zimbabwe. The new equipment and lab can process up to 40 cases a day which will assist to clear the backlog of more than 1000 sexual violence kits to be analyzed.

- ✓ **Prevention of GBV, Sexual Harassment in the World of Work, expanded Delivery of Services to GBV Survivors (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 4: Services):** In 2021 the Initiative placed a strong emphasis on ending Sexual Harassment and GBV in workplaces. Technical support was given to 10 Zimbabwean companies (9 private and 1 public enterprise) to develop and implement GBV Model Workplace Policies and Programmes; More than 5000 employees at all levels participated in the workplace policy programme. To bolster the work with the companies, Spotlight Initiative supported the Zimbabwe Gender Commission to develop and launch in 2021 the national Strategy for the Elimination of Sexual Harassment and GBV in the Workplace in Zimbabwe (2021-2025). This strategy highlights the intersectionality of GBV with other vulnerabilities such as women and girls living with disabilities and with HIV; It applies to workers in private and public companies with a focus on the formal economy in urban and rural areas, and a detailed work plan accompanies the strategy. SI has upscaled the services provided to GBV survivors through the Community-based Shelters Model, the GBV Remote Service Delivery Model, and the GBV Community-Based Surveillance Model. Using these models, SI reached 51,099 GBV survivors with services in 2021, the highest reach since the country programme began in 2019. Of this reach, 30,959 were girls below 18 years.
- ✓ **GBV Information Management System (GBVIMS) pilot, Knowledge Products, GBV Community Ambassadors, Movement Building between Gender Equality and Women's Rights Activists and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (Pillar 5: Data and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Zimbabwe has been selected as one of the pilot countries for the development of a GBVIMS outside of a humanitarian context and the Spotlight Initiative supported the start of the pilot in 2021. Spotlight supported the production of more than 50 Knowledge Products which range from assessments, policy briefs, national studies on gender equality, and training manuals and handbooks for different sectors, among others. GBV Community Ambassadors continued door-to-door initiatives and the convening of community meetings to mobilize community activism against GBV and the National Women's Movement and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities joined forces in a 2021 National Women's Symposium to create an inclusive gender agenda for 2021 and beyond.

## One Story of Impact: Spotlight Initiative delivers justice to a GBV survivor

It took eight years for Loveness (not her real name) in a rural area of Zvimba to get justice after she was raped by her father at 16. She fell pregnant and her father threatened to kill her if she reported the rape. With support from her uncle, his wife, and a traditional leader in her area, the case was reported to the police and for her own safety, Loveness was moved to one of the Spotlight Initiative-supported GBV shelters. The shelter assisted her to get a DNA test to prove the child's paternity which became the key evidence used for her father's conviction. In 2021, eight years after the rape, her father was convicted of rape and sentenced to 18 years in prison.

### In their own words...


"This case is a good example that with the right support, a survivor can be assisted to get justice" - *Programme officer of the SI Implementing Partner that operates the GBV shelter*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

A major achievement to ensure sustainability, ensure continued progress on efforts to end violence against women and girls, and to advancing women's rights, was the launch and signing of the HLPC – a first for Zimbabwe and within the global Spotlight Initiative. Signed by His Excellency, President Emerson D. Mnangagwa on behalf of all of the Government, the HLPC is a multi-sectoral document including a Declaration of Commitments, an Action Plan, and an M&E Framework. This Compact provides a strong foundation for the sustainability of the vision, goals, objectives, interventions, and gains of the Spotlight Initiative.

# AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAMME

## 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 26,982,281	 USD 25,620,000	 USD 1,362,281	Jul 2020 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** African Union Commission, UNECA, UNDCO, Academia, Regional Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (including Faith-Based Organizations)

### Context

In Africa, an estimated 200 million girls and women alive today are believed to have been subjected to female genital mutilation (FGM) and if the current trends are not checked, 68 million more girls will be at risk of FGM by 2030. Furthermore, across Africa 125 million girls and women alive today were married before their 18th birthday. In 2021, Africa continued to be challenged by COVID-19 leading to a total of 10,809,726 cases and 239,615 recorded deaths (February 2022). According to a new report that measures the impacts of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls (VAWG), nearly 7 in 10 women (68%) believe the incidence of physical or verbal abuse by a spouse/partner has increased during the pandemic, with Kenya (92%) and Nigeria (74%) falling under countries with the highest perception of increased violence. Globally, it's estimated that due to COVID 19, an additional 10 million girls are at risk of becoming child brides, and 2 million additional female genital mutilation (FGM) cases are expected before the end of 2030. The disruption of legal services during the pandemic resulted in survivors of FGM experiencing significant delays in accessing justice and legal protection or undertaking other legal measures, including the arrest of perpetrators. Unfortunately, progress remains stalled and in some cases regressed due to a lack of resources needed to enforce legislation and policies into action and the impact of COVID 19. Nevertheless, there is an encouraging trend in the adoption of Human Rights instruments and policies, both at the regional and national levels.

### Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme (SIARP) is a global partnership between the United Nations, European Union, and African Union with a continental scope to enhance the regional approach to end violence against women and girls (EVAWG), Sexual gender-based violence, and harmful practices, as well as strengthening sexual and reproductive health and rights. The Regional Programme leverages the existing regional strategies such as the African Union) Gender Strategy 2017-2027, Agenda 2030, Agenda 2063, and the Maputo Plan of Action on the Operationalization of the Continental Policy Framework for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (2016-2030). SIARP works through two streams of work; Stream I promotes and protects the rights of women and girls through support to the African Union Commission by enhancing existing capacities and mechanisms to eliminate VAWG. Stream II, in the spirit of UN Reform, was built on the programmatic and operational governance framework of the ongoing UNFPA-UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage and UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. Amid the host of COVID 19 challenges, in 2021 both streams included the African Union Commission, Member States, and Regional Economic Commissions to continue to implement a model of collaboration to ensure the coherent delivery of the Regional Programme.

### Key Results

- ✓ **Ratification, domestication, and enforcement of regional laws and policies (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation);** SIARP mobilized regional partners (Regional Economic Commissions, African Union, Member states, CSOs) for the development of the first Regional Action Plan for Africa on Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls. The program also supported a regional assessment on the status of enforcement of EVAWG laws and policies. The findings & recommendations of the assessment are serving as key inputs for the ongoing regional capacity building and development of regional action plans on EVAWG. In addition, SIARP collaborated with regional and international high-level events such as the African Union summit, the commemoration of the international day of zero tolerance to FGM, and the 3rd Africa Girls summit to strengthen the accountability of national and regional level responses in implementing policy commitments addressing EVAWG and harmful practices. In 2021, the program also supported the development of key strategic documents including the African Union Report



on FGM and Score Card, and the African Union Harmful Practices Accountability Framework that will support AUC to monitor the progress of national and regional commitments on harmful traditional practices.

- ✓ **Strengthen availability and use of reliable data on VAWG and SGBV/HP/SRHR (Pillar 5: Data).** SIARP supported the relaunching of the African Union Commission regional data and research gender observatory and scorecard. The platform aims to ensure periodic, inclusive, and quality reporting by member states and CSOs on VAWG, sexual and gender based violence, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights. The program also enhanced the capacity of national statistical officers and CSOs on data collection, management, and analysis. This capacity building will contribute to making national data accessible and easily disseminated to be used by decision-makers and civil society for oversight purposes. In this reporting period, SIARP developed a knowledge management strategy to foster the processes and methods of capturing, documenting, and disseminating VAWG, sexual and gender based violence, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights' information assets.
- ✓ **Strengthening technical, institutional, and networking capacities of CSO Women's Movements (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society)** SIARP created a partnership with fourteen regional CSOs in order to implement the Spotlight Initiative at the grass-root level and to advocate on EVAWG and ending harmful traditional practices in Africa. The Civil Society Regional Reference Group, composed of 15 (14 women) members was also established in this reporting period. The reference group will provide advisory, technical, and monitoring support to both streams. In addition, an assessment of the status of civic spaces in Africa was conducted. Findings of the assessment are being used to advocate for amendment of restrictive legislation and promote the protection of CSOs' freedom to work for the rights of women and girls. In collaboration with regional CSOs, SIARP also supported the development of an advocacy strategy and community mobilization tool for the engagement of men and boys. In 2021, the regional program also enhanced the capacity of CSOs/Women rights movements in 21 countries on shadow/alternative reporting processes to improve accountability implementation of the relevant regional and global instruments.

### **One Story of Impact: Regional Action Plan (RAP) for Africa with an M&E framework on EVAWG**

Africa is experiencing increased prevalence of GBV that has further escalated during the COVID-19 pandemic. With only 26 out of 55 African Member States having National Action Plans on EVAWG, the need for a regional framework is timely to provide a common action plan and a guiding framework for all Member States to deliver on EVAWG commitments. As a result, SIARP supported the development of the first-ever Africa Regional Action Plan on EVAWG with a comprehensive M&E framework. The participatory development process that involved regional actors (Regional Economic Commissions, member states, CSOs, and UN) has demonstrated increased commitment and ownership by stakeholders. The action plan development process also helps to identify common actions, frameworks, structures, mechanisms, strategies, and investments to be taken at the regional and national level to end VAWG, prevent harmful practices, and promote sexual and reproductive health and rights. It will also mobilize different actors in the region to implement comprehensive and evidence-based actions so that every woman and girl can live free of violence. Further detail of the consultation process is published as a blog entitled [Regional partners developed first Regional Action Plan for Africa on Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls | UNDP in Africa](#).

#### **In their own words...**

"Africa has the instruments needed to end Violence against Women and Girls, such as the African Union's Agenda 2063, Agenda 2030, and the African Union's Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2018–2028. All we need is to implement our commitments. It's great to see regional partners coming together to develop a Regional Action Plan to eliminate violence against women and girls" - *Odette Kabaya, Regional Programme Senior Gender Advisor, UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa*

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

The Spotlight Initiative, through a coordinated response of UN agencies, applied a participatory approach and supported the FGM Innovation HackLab. The INNOHackLab aims at stimulating the innovation market to increase the number of FGM solutions that emerge from the community, including young people. It commenced in 2021 with a call for innovative ideas from young people across Africa. The call for ideas solicited 113 applications from young people from 18 countries across the continent, of which over 60% of the submissions were from young women. Four ideas (2 male, 2 female), two from Uganda, one from Nigeria, and one from Burkina Faso were selected to proceed to the incubation phase (3-6 months business support) and will benefit from the seed fund (\$70,000).

# ARGENTINA

## 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I (or Phase I + II Where Approved)	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 8.630.252	 USD 7.714.286	 USD 915.966	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women

**Other partners:** Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity, Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, Ministry of Security, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Ministry of Education, Local Secretary of Sports, Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Secretary for Children, Adolescents and Family, Ministry of Social Development, Public Defender, Local Women's Office, Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, Public Prosecutor's Office.

### Context

For about ten years, Argentina's feminist movement has gradually gained space in the public and political agenda, achieving important legislative advances in favor of women's rights. By the end of 2019, these advances were also translated into the setting up of novel institutional architecture at national and subnational levels that have given a stronger mandate to long-standing feminist causes. Amongst them the aim to reduce gender-based violence has become central in national policy plans, resulting in a variety of policies aimed at addressing structural obstacles of all kinds. Argentina's choice as one of the countries to display Spotlight objectives came at good timing with national priorities and efforts. Like in the rest of the world, the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020, has led to increased challenges related to tackling gender-based violence (GBV) and its most extreme form: femicides. While 2021 has been a more favorable year in this regard, the social and economic consequences of COVID 19 are still present in women's lives. Besides the challenges which resulted in certain delays and difficulties of implementation, Spotlight keeps moving forward with its objectives for the country afresh as the country gradually moved back to a non-pandemic context.

### Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative in Argentina continued its support of the work of women's rights national & subnational institutions like the National Ministry of Women, Gender & Diversity. As the COVID-19 situation improved overall, Spotlight could also move forward in planning actions with other key Ministries such as Health and Security. Furthermore, in its planning of phase II, the Initiative in accordance with the programmatic suggestions of the EU delegation, decided to ensure 60% of the remaining funds were strategically used to enable access to GBV services of all kinds: legal, psychological, reparation, and services-oriented also to prevent and redress violent actions of male aggressors which were given high centrality. The enhanced capacity of interagency collaboration, in the spirit of UN Reform, in all pillars but particularly in pillar 4, was central to the new phase. Additionally, a further commitment was expressed to the need of strengthening grassroots work in new prioritized geographical areas of the country where it was considered crucial to develop specific strategies to reach women suffering multiple discriminations.

### Key Results

- ✓ **High-level collaboration with key National & Subnational Ministries has contributed to the strengthening of the work of the new gender institutions that exist in the country (Pillar 2: Institutions, Pillar 4: Services, and Pillar 5: Data):** The National Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity (MWGD) has been strengthened through a variety of actions that included technical assistance aimed at improving service provision (phone or on site) for women looking for support services. Likewise, support was given to the Ministry to maintain and improve data registry of GBV cases. At the local level, the subnational counterparts in the selected provinces had their capacity to tackle violence against women and girls enhanced, through the development of subnational data registry systems that monitor GBV cases and feed the data into a national system. The training of public officials in charge of implementing GBV programs has also been key in enabling the launching and improvement of specialized services with regard to the provinces' realities.

- ✓ **Key advances were made in order to transform ideas about gender roles, toxic masculinities and the prevention of GBV (Pillar 2: Institutions, Pillar 3: Prevention, and Pillar 4: Services):** The design of various public campaigns aimed at challenging gender roles contributed to move forward social discussions around the need of building healthy & alternative forms of masculinities. This in turn has also generated further legitimacy and acceptance of the need to work with men more systematically. Some provinces have been supported in the development of specific services aimed at working directly with offenders. The work carried out in this respect reached out to multiple Ministries at national and subnational levels, such as Labor, Education, and Security.
- ✓ **A more sophisticated understanding of GBV cases, cycles and how to manage cases how they occur and how to accompany them once occurred (Pillar 2: Institutions, Pillar 4: Services, Pillar 5: Data, Pillar 6: Women’s Movements and Civil Society):** The Initiative supported a variety of specialized studies at national and subnational levels aimed at providing evidence based data to support decision makers about how and the circumstances in which GBV occurs. Looking forward to a more effective design of public policies aimed at addressing GBV, all this important information and know-how obtained throughout the Spotlight programme has been properly documented and shared across the country through a knowledge management platform [sinviolenciasdegenero – Iniciativa Spotlight](#). The platform will also help ensure the sustainability of what has been achieved so far. Finally, Spotlight Argentina has supported different CSOs to deliver services to those in most need women in different areas of the country, contributing to strategical learning and knowledge management of regional specificities.

### **One Story of Impact: The NGO: It’s impact in the lives of their communities.**

Throughout 2021, several CSOs providing services to women and LGBTQ communities victims of GBV have been able to make an impact in the lives of their communities. “Enredadas”, an alliance of two NGOs in the province of Buenos Aires, was able to provide effective support to women in need of legal and psychological assistance throughout challenging pandemic times. They were also able to train and raise awareness to a larger number of interdisciplinary experts who are now able to assist GBV victims in different parts of the province. In a similar path, the NGO Juanita Moro in Jujuy was able to mobilize 10 CSOs, strengthening the ending GBV network in the province. In their approach, providing legal and psychological assistance has been fundamental as a way to ensure that victims do not fall into similar traps again. Another important support was the development of collective empowerment, with great emphasis on rebuilding self-esteem.

#### **In their own words...**

“I work as a lawyer, a legal advisor that provides direct assistance to women that come over to the Counselling Centre (in Jujuy). I assist them with everything related to precautionary measures, their safety (...) I'm the first one to interview them, followed then by psychological assistance (...). There is a huge demand, women come torn into pieces in need of measures that forbid aggressors from getting close to them. (...) Spotlight’s contribution in making visible services provided by our Counselling Centers is great. There is no public recognition of the multiple cases of violence that there are in the province. Spotlight gives visibility to the work of professionals, and helps professionals access expert training and resources of all kinds. Counselling Centers need to be equipped with basic technology means so that we can solve immediate problems women are facing. The economic resources of these women are very precarious, in fact, many women find themselves in violence cycles because they do not have adequate economic means to come out (...) Thus in our case it is fundamental that we help them with basic means to carry out the legal procedures: printing of paperwork, internet access. - *Lawyer, member of the Provincial Council for Women and Gender Equality*

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

**Doña María & financial inclusion.** The decision to train public agents of the Ministry of Women, Gender Politics and Sexual Diversity within the province of Buenos Aires on skills around financial education using a trainers-to-trainers methodology (ToT). This rather low investment was of high impact since the Ministry decided to adopt it as a public policy, stating it as a good practice, and continue working with it under the program of “Doña María”

**Federal map of services for working with offenders and positive masculinities.** Considering the innovative work that has been done, Spotlight supported the National Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity, in gathering a country-level map to properly identify governmental and civil society organizations working in the provision of services to male aggressors and/ or in prevention strategies to promote healthy masculinities. This map is crucial for enabling further knowledge and practice exchange. It is also key for public policy purposes and future plans in ensuring all these actors receive proper support in terms of capacities and resources.

# ECUADOR 2021 Country Program Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 3,220,680	 USD 2,900,000	 USD 320,680	Nov 2020 - Dec 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women

**Other partners:** Ministries of Government, Finance, Health and Education; Secretariats of Human Rights and Higher Education; General Prosecutor's Office; Judiciary Council; National Boards of Equality and Communication; National Assembly; National Institute of Statistics; National Police; Local Governments; Cantonal Boards of Protection; Network of Shelters for Women Victims of Violence; Women Rights Organizations and Networks; Alliance for Mapping and Monitoring Femicides in Ecuador; Academia; Private Sector

## Context

In Ecuador, roughly 65 out of every 100 women aged 15 to 49 have experienced violence within their lifetime. Moreover, cases of violence against women and girls (VAWG) rose alarmingly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ecuador 911 emergency line recorded an increase in domestic violence calls in 2020, and the number kept rising to surpass over 100,000 domestic violence calls by November 2021. Fundación ALDEA, a non-governmental organization specialized in the collection of data on gender violence, registered 197 femicides during 2021, indicating 1 femicide case every 44 hours. Given the high prevalence, there are various efforts in place to prevent and eradicate VAWG and femicide. The Comprehensive General Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women issued in 2018 upholds the approval of comprehensive policies for providing support, protection, and reparation for victims, by promoting healthy masculinities and transforming the socio-cultural patterns that perpetuate inequality. In February 2022, Ecuador updated the National Plan to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women (2019-2025) which aims to design a coordinated and comprehensive response from public entities responsible for the National Integral System to prevent and eradicate violence against women.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

With the support of the European Union, the State, women's organizations, and the broader civil society organization (CSO) network, the Spotlight Initiative in Ecuador is committed to developing holistic strategies to prevent and eradicate VAWG by strengthening and consolidating national stakeholders' response. With a focus on 6 municipalities (Azogues, Chone, Cuenca, Morona, Pastaza and Portoviejo) the programme supports the implementation of human rights standards in relation to VAWG, guided by the key principles of inclusion (i.e. Leave No One Behind, accessibility, security, non-discrimination and non-re-victimization). The programme fosters sustainability by anchoring activities and measures in existing policies and laws, actively engaging the State and CSOs, and strengthening local institutions. The programme strategically identifies and addresses gaps for implementing the Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women and the legal framework on femicide. Moreover, the Spotlight Initiative is committed to advancing UN Reform, promoting a participatory approach to implementation, focused on permanent dialogue with government stakeholders and CSOs, as well as using innovation and technology to attain results and reach more vulnerable populations.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Reinforcing the legislative and policy framework related to VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** The Spotlight Initiative provided technical assistance to the National Assembly for the inclusion of international human rights standards in the debate and approval of the Law on Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy in Cases of Rape. The law complied with the Constitutional Court's ruling on the decriminalization of abortion in cases of rape. Further, criminal investigation agencies now have a National Protocol for investigating femicides and other violent deaths of women and girls, which supports the collection and analysis of evidence and facilitates the review of convictions. The National Protocol was adopted by an administrative resolution and the Attorney General's Office trained 113 prosecutors for its implementation. The Spotlight Initiative also contributed to the participatory design of a comprehensive reparation policy for VAWG victims and dependents of femicide victims, which is an important step toward the restitution of rights of women and their families. At the local level, reforms to the "Prevention, Integral Attention and Eradication of Violence against Women Ordinance" in Cuenca, were approved by the Municipal Council. With these reforms, more resources will be allocated towards ending VAWG and femicide through municipal programs.



- ✓ **Creating institutional transformation by mainstreaming gender equity (Pillar 2: Institutions):** The Spotlight Initiative adopted the Gender Equity Seal (GES) for public institutions. The GES is a global standard, which recognizes organizations which make significant effort to achieve equity between men and women in line with the sustainable development goals. At the end of this accreditation process, institutions across sectors, will have the capacity and tools to assume their role in the implementation of the Comprehensive General Law to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women.
- ✓ **National media campaigns raise awareness on the prevention of VAWG (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Through radio and television advertising, billboards, and social networks, the communication campaign #EseTipoNo reached 2,067,905 people nationwide with messages that challenge social norms related to VAWG and promoted positive relationships. This national media campaign included strategies to reach hard-to-reach communities, ensuring no one was left behind. The municipalities of Azogues and Morona's citizen groups have new and strengthened capacities for media observance and gender equality. In these two municipalities, new spaces for reflection and debate on sexist versus inclusive advertising were opened as part of the creation of Citizen Communication Observatories and the development of Advertising Showrooms.
- ✓ **Improved capacity of service providers to deliver essential services, meeting international standards, for victims of VAWG and Femicide (Pillar 4: Services):** Shelter staff and care centers for gender based violence (GBV) victims acquired comprehensive tools for case management and self-care practices. Moreover, a self-instructional virtual course was developed in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health on the Technical Standards for Comprehensive Care of GBV and Serious Human Rights Violations.
- ✓ **Promoting innovative methods of data generation (Pillar 5: Data):** During 2021 eight femicide stories were collected through a participatory social mapping process in Cuenca, Portoviejo, and Lago Agrio. This collaborative mapping approach aimed at recognizing the stories of and compiling the voices of women victims of femicide and their families, honoring their lives through the recovery of memory, as symbolic reparation. These stories serve as powerful advocacy tools to fight for reparations for the families of victims and improved protection of women and girls from the State.
- ✓ **Strengthened CSOs' and Women's Movements (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The Programme continued to develop courses for CSOs and Women's Movements to build their capacity to litigate on issues related to VAWG and femicide. Additionally, the Programme is developing another course for communication professionals on the ethical handling of information on VAWG and femicide in the media. All 12 partner CSOs implementing activities under pillar 6, having received capacity building supported by the Spotlight Initiative, reported that they now have the capacity to influence the prevention and eradication of VAWG in 2021, as opposed to only 58% in 2020.

## One Story of Impact: Spotlight strengthens teams in foster homes and care centers

Merly Capote, 39 years old, lives and works as a volunteer at the San Antonio de Pichincha Temporary Shelter. She provides care to the women who survived violence and seek refuge. She reported not being able to practice self-care because she is often busy looking after other people. Merly attended a series of workshops, supported by the Spotlight Initiative, which provided front line caregivers with self-care tools, to prevent secondary stress and burnout. Merly affirmed that the workshops helped her to understand aspects of her physical and mental behavior related to her daily work, as well as to have more empathy towards others.




### In their own words...

"With this workshop I took time for myself, to also express myself with colleagues who, like me, are attending to vulnerable populations. It was a free, open, spontaneous space. The importance of these workshops is self-love, as I care for other people, I also need to care for myself and to love myself." - *Merly Capote*. The full story [is available here](#).

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

A promising practice in the management of information on VAWG and femicide, was the participatory social mapping initiative "Flowers in the Air - Mapping for the Memory of Femicide Victims." This initiative provides symbolic reparations to the families and friends of women and adolescent victims of femicide. This tool uses OpenStreetMap to identify public spaces in cities and generate activities, strategies, and projects to recover the memory of the lives of these women. Moreover, memory routes of femicide victims are constructed with families, friends, and CSOs, to generate collective narratives. Families and friends of femicide victims receive acknowledgement that is more visible and in line with their feelings. As a result of this activity, connections were made with families and CSOs that carry out processes of support services, enforceability of rights, prevention, and community justice.

# EL SALVADOR 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I + II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 10,727,762	 USD 10,285,714	 USD 442,048	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP

**Other partners:** Institutions from the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-governmental Organizations

## Context

According to data from the Attorney General's office, El Salvador maintained a high prevalence of femicide and sexual violence, which further increased in 2021. Violent female deaths increased 12.8% when compared with 2020. There were 132 femicides (7% girls aged 0 to 12 years and 41% women aged 19 to 29 years), 18 femicide suicides and 69 attempted femicides, increasing the rate of femicide to 6.50 per 100,000. In addition, 464 women were registered as missing (rate 13.77 per 100,000) and there was a 24% increase in reported cases of sexual violence, with 2700 cases reported. The COVID-19 pandemic required the continual adaptation of Spotlight Initiative's methodologies to virtual formats. In addition, in 2021 the national political context changed, with a new Legislative Assembly and local governments taking office, which prompted the need for new induction processes.

## Spotlight Response

The Spotlight Initiative's main targets were to increase face-to-face and remote assistance channels for women and girl's victims of violence, to enhance assistance for trans-women, to strengthen outreach to women and girls in rural communities, and to comply with the principle of leaving no one behind by delivering materials in Braille and the LESSA system, making the materials accessible for women and girls with visual and hearing disabilities. More than 1,000 staff from 44 institutions have been trained in the care of girls and women, and 10 Health Centers of the national hospital network strengthened their care services for victims of sexual violence. During the first quarter of 2021, 3 important activities took place simultaneously: the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE); The acceleration plan which included the closure of the first phase of the Spotlight Initiative in El Salvador; and the participatory design process for the second phase work plan. The second phase of implementation and the design of the sustainability strategy were initiated in the second half of the year. Different mitigation measures were put in place as part of the acceleration plan, pushing stronger coordination among Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs), in the spirit of UN Reform, as well as by civil society organizations (CSOs) and the National Care System.

## Key Results

- ✓ **An overhaul of the systems that support access to justice for survivors and families of femicide victims (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The work within the justice sector strengthened its internal tools and capacity to provide quality services. This accomplishment was achieved through a series of changes to policies and legislation such as the updating of the "National Policy on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence", the approval of its Action Plan (2021-2026), and the development and approval of the institutional gender policy of the Supreme Court of Justice. In addition, comprehensive technical tools for coordination and governance of specialized services for women facing gender-based violence (GBV) (UIAEM Guidelines) were developed, seeking to guarantee universal access to justice and care. This was reinforced by specialized training modules on violence against women and girls (VAWG), which were developed and delivered to prosecutors and multidisciplinary teams. Additionally, proposals and draft bills were developed and shared with the Executive Branch, preparing a joint roadmap for the Legislative Assembly and facilitating their approval.
- ✓ **Prevention of VAWG through changes in social norms through education and engagement with civil society (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The transformation of harmful behaviors and attitudes was addressed through various campaigns (TV, radio, and social media) reaching more than four million people. The Ministry of Education strengthened the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) curriculum by making material available virtually and available in LESSA and Braille for persons with visual and hearing disabilities, as well as enhancing teacher qualifications with the "I Am Music!" a teacher certified program. At the local level, training on alternative masculinity was carried out with young



people and public officials to improve the care they provide to service users and to foster positive masculinity. The Spotlight Initiative promoted transformational leadership with children and adolescents in and out of school and raised awareness amongst communities and private sector companies. The capacities of women's organizations were increased, enabling them to position their rights on the political agenda, follow up on compliance with the recommendations of international mechanisms, exercise social control over services, and provide psychosocial and legal services. There has been further engagement with strategic allies such as faith-based organizations, training their leaders on GBV prevention through partner universities, which in turn improved their capacities to offer specialized courses on the subject.

- ✓ **Strengthened capacity to provide information and services focused on survivors, using technology to involve men and adolescents (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative contributed to improving remote, and face-to-face psychosocial care for women and girls by providing survived-centered specialized training and material to duty bearers. Services provided by the Institutional Units for Specialized Care for Women Facing Violence of 5 national hospitals and investigation institutions (such as judicial and police headquarters), were expanded and their providers had their capacity improved with equipment and materials with the Spotlight Initiative's support. Coverage was expanded through grants to CSOs that offer advisory services and there was improved coordination between CSOs and the State institutions. Medical and psychosocial care services for trans-women who are traditionally excluded, were strengthened by adapting services to their needs (for example access to hormone therapy). To improve access to justice, the Integrated Electronic Judicial File Management System was implemented, which will facilitate proper follow-up of cases. Spotlight Initiative also contributed to the public dissemination of relevant information on violence against women, crimes related to the legislation regarding women's rights to live a life free of violence, and violence against the LGBTI+ population. Tools for analysis, production, and publication of statistical data of the Ministry of Justice and Public Security were enhanced, in coordination with the Institute of Legal Medicine, the National Civil Police, the Attorney General's Office, and the Ministry of Health. Among the publications, 5 studies were carried out by CSOs, highlighting civil society's strategic role in generating data on VAWG.

## One Story of Impact: Leave no one behind

The Spotlight Initiative works to improve trans women's access to information related to violence that affects them and their rights, and their access to specialized care. To overcome these barriers, Trans/Diké, a non-governmental organization that fights for the rights of transgender people, has been strengthened in 3 main areas: 50 trans women had their knowledge of human rights strengthened; materials were produced and disseminated on the challenges faced by trans women; and, finally the transgender health clinic which provides specialized services for transpeople in the region, was strengthened. The clinic is now recognized by the Superior Public Health Council and the National Directorate of Medicines, improving trans women's access to medical care. The clinic is operational in three locations, including the San Salvador area, the headquarters in Santa Ana and a multidisciplinary office in San Miguel. The goal is to reach all 14 departments of El Salvador.

### In her own words:




"As trans women, we do not have laws that benefit us, nor a care protocol in the health area, we do not exist legally speaking because we do not have an identity document, we do not have access to a formal job, and we do not have access to education due to discrimination. But with Spotlight support, we now access to essential services through Diké+." - *Catalina Ayala, Community Center Host*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The awareness raising activities, specifically the stories of 7 families whose daughters, mothers, and/or women have been murdered showcased in the exhibition "*Traces of Absence*," has led to the realization of a comprehensive care program for relatives of victims of femicide that recognizes the human rights of victims' families. Since 2011, 5,402 women have been murdered, with none of their families having received any support to face this situation. With this program, the family members are assured effective access to assistance, care, protection, and reparation services from a rights-based approach, with special regard to their particular conditions of vulnerability. This program was developed in partnership with the Salvadoran Institute for the Development of Women, which has allowed the design of institutional mechanisms that open the door to reparation processes. This process has strengthened the coordination between institutional units related to social assistance, protection, and reparation of the families affected by femicide to achieve the adequate fulfillment of their obligations.

# HONDURAS

## 2021 Country Program Results

Total Budget Phase I+II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 11,638,803	 USD 10,285,714	 USD 1,353,089	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** Central Government Organizations and Municipalities, Civil Society Organizations, National/Local Organizations Women's and Feminist Organizations, Academia, Private Sector, Religious Sector

### Context

In Honduras, the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical storms Eta and Iota, exacerbated the pre-existing gender gaps, contributing to deepening conditions of inequality experienced by vulnerable population groups, generating a climate of greater uncertainty and violence, which especially affected women, children and adolescents. The COVID-19 pandemic in Honduras, infected 247,728 people and, according to official data, women were the most affected (52%). In 2021, COVID-19 continued to pose enormous challenges for women and girls, as well as for women's rights organizations. According to a UN Women report, 45% of women declared that since the pandemic began, they or someone they know had experienced some form of violence against women. Additionally, the political crisis in the country and social polarization have worsened in the pre-electoral context, which had a negative impact on the development of joint actions between the government and civil society, affecting interventions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls (VAWG). The Rapid Gender Analysis of Care and UN Women (2021) indicates that "In Honduras, the effects of the multi-crisis resulted in an increase of multidimensional poverty, in the manifestations of gender-based violence (GBV), difficulties in accessing essential services and the protection of fundamental rights, including the rights of women and girls"<sup>1</sup>.

### Spotlight Initiative's Response

Despite the difficulties of the political and social context, Spotlight Initiative in Honduras has strengthened relationships with key allies and partners, including a wide range of civil society organizations (CSOs), through an approach focused on complementing existing initiatives, building unprecedented synergies between partners, and ensuring long-term sustainability. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the Spotlight Initiative has stepped up inter-agency work as part of the implementation of UN Reform, undertaking joint field missions and events, establishing joint institutional partnerships and collaboratively streamlining operations. With the support of the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative has also helped to elevate the issue of ending VAWG on the national agenda through its advocacy work with civil society and government partners, progress on legal reforms, and strengthened institutions and services.

### Key Results

- ✓ **Working towards stronger laws with national institutions and civil society organizations (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation, Pillar 2: Institutions, and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The Spotlight Initiative has developed numerous capacity-building actions, including training on gender mainstreaming, at the national and local levels. These actions have led to the formulation of GBV Agendas in 5 municipalities and in gender-focused budgeting for 24 institutions. In coordination with the National Women's Institute, 12 CSOs benefited from financial support, ensuring adequately resourced efforts to eliminate VAWG. Further, an analysis of existing gaps in the criminality of femicide in national legislation and policies was conducted, providing recommendations on areas to be strengthened for the adaptation of the Latin American Protocol Model. Another important step forward is the contribution of CSO partners to the proposal and advocacy for a comprehensive law to end VAWG, which is still lacking in Honduras. The Initiative has provided technical support to both national policymakers and CSOs to advocate for legal reforms.

<sup>1</sup> CARE y ONU Mujeres. [Análisis Rápido de Género – ARG. Honduras, 2021. Desafíos para las mujeres y niñas ante una sostenida crisis sanitaria y ambiental](#), 2021.

- ✓ **Engaging education, public services and ambassadors to prevent violence and respond to the needs of survivors (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 4: Services):** To advance prevention efforts, the Spotlight Initiative has made important headway across numerous sectors: from designing guides for violence prevention and a comprehensive approach to sexuality, to using art at the community level to challenge social norms or using new technologies to foster online conversations on healthy masculinities. In addition, the program has been able to push the needle on access to justice and psychosocial support for survivors and families of victims of femicide. Alliances, dialogues and publications have been generated with leaders of the private sector, faith-based organizations, and the media, which have been widely disseminated; a very important study to identify patriarchal social norms embedded in society and in national institutions, which contribute to reinforcing tolerance and reproduction of VAWG, was carried out using an intersectional approach, which will be the basis for a prevention strategy. This will go hand-in-hand with the establishment of a media observatory that will contribute a Communications for Development (C4D) Strategy. To encourage the inclusion of a gender lens in broadcast news about VAWG and femicide, the Spotlight Initiative conducted special training for major media companies, news reporters and press editors in ethics regarding the treatment of GBV. The Initiative also established a campaign named “La Otra Pandemia” (“The Other Pandemic”), broadcasting a TV documentary on the country’s highest rated news network and an awareness campaign in social media. Further, in alliance with the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO) Argentina, the program designed and implemented training for the justice sector on the implementation of the Latin American Protocol for the investigation of femicides.. The Spotlight Initiative also strengthened psychosocial care services of key government bodies, including family councils and municipal services for women and girl survivors of violence.
- ✓ **Supporting women’s movements and institutions to improve data on VAWG (Pillar 5: Data and Pillar 6: Women’s Movements and Civil Society):** The Initiative has worked with public institutions and CSOs to identify data gaps and opportunities for incorporating femicide within official statistics, currently absent from the data. The Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with CSO partners, contributed to the design of a new VAWG index that will soon be publicly accessible. Moreover, the program has conducted a study to learn about the different types of violence faced by women and girls in the indigenous and afro-descendant populations. The capacities of women’s rights organizations were improved by providing them with resources and tools to scale up their advocacy efforts and instrumental work at the community level, addressing the needs of the most marginalized. Innovative approaches to address VAWG, developed with women’s organizations, contributed to the strengthening of grassroots women’s networks, especially those working with communities that face multiple forms of discrimination.

## One Story of Impact: entrepreneurship and training for survivors of violence

In the Village of Corozal in La Ceiba, Atlántida, young Garifuna males (from an afro-descendant tribe in Northern Honduras), participated in training on transformative masculinities. To end VAWG, it is necessary to make radical changes in the social norms and gender stereotypes that reinforce and justify this type of violence, especially in societies that have historically replicated it. In this sense, Spotlight Initiative in alliance with Women in the Arts (MUA) organization, created the CREARTE project, to transfer knowledge on ending VAWG methodologies linked to art, culture, information and communication technologies. Training sessions with young males have taken place using various art techniques such as photography, music, dance, and drawing, among others, to address gender equality and promote non-violent behaviors, raising awareness and knowledge about positive and transformative masculinities. Likewise, CREARTE has worked simultaneously to sensitize girls and adolescents about gender approaches and their empowerment.

### In their own words...

“Participating in these activities has given me greater freedom and security. I can express what I feel without thinking about what others will say, I have realized that I am a human being like everyone else and that crying or showing affection does not make me less of a man”– *Joslin Ariel Diego Fernández, 18 years old, a participant in CREARTE trainings*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Creation of the Emergency Fund to promote economic independence of women survivors of GBV. This Fund was designed within the pandemic context, and was integrated into the Municipal Women’s Offices of Intibucá, Distrito Central, Choloma and La Ceiba, community response plans to address women’s needs, which identified and promoted the economic independence of women who were vulnerable due to GBV. The delivery of an emergency fund aimed at women entrepreneurs and survivors of violence was prioritized based on the increase in cases of violence since the start of the pandemic, and the impact of tropical storms (Eta and Iota), which caused losses of housing and infrastructure, as well as the loss of thousands of jobs in sectors mostly comprised of female employees. Through the fund \$700 USD was distributed to 35 women entrepreneurs and survivors of violence.

# MEXICO 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I+II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 10,673,292	 USD 9,000,000	 USD 1,673,292	2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF (Phase I), UN Women, OHCHR, UNODC

**Other partners:** National Commission to Prevent and Eradicate Violence Against Women, National Institute of Women, Ministry of Foreign Relations, Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, Community Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations

## Context

The Federal Government of Mexico looked for new strategies in 2021 to enhance the prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG), especially femicide, and to guarantee access to justice for survivors with a gender perspective. Among the Government strategies there was strengthening the collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative, local governments at a state and municipal level, with key institutions like the Justice Centers for Women, and also strengthening the justice procurement system.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

To address the increasing prevalence of violence experienced by women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative aims to contribute to the effective prevention and eradication of femicide and other forms of VAWG in Mexico. With the support of the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative works to strengthen different sectors to secure the rights, development, and wellbeing of women and girls. The programme focuses on the State of Mexico (Naucalpan and Ecatepec), Chihuahua (Ciudad Juárez and Chihuahua), and Guerrero (Chilpancingo). In response to COVID-19 and the rise in reports of VAWG, the Spotlight Initiative reevaluated its implementation strategy to adapt activities and ensure the continuation of programming during the pandemic. In the spirit of UN Reform, UN agencies coordinated closely to devise new and creative ways to carry out work and develop strategies to mitigate challenges and accelerate implementation, ensuring significant impacts, despite the limitations caused by the new context.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Approval of legal reforms at the federal, state, and municipal levels with support from civil society to effectively contribute to the prevention and eradication of violence, and the access to justice for survivors (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** On December 10, 2020, the first package of reforms prepared by the Spotlight Initiative on the eradication of violence against women was presented to the Chihuahua Congress and was adopted by several deputies to initiate the legislative process. These reforms comprise implementing strategies for the prevention and eradication of discrimination in Chihuahua. It also incorporates orphan girls and boys in the provision of services at Centers of Attention and creates a unified mechanism to register cases with high risk of femicide. This package was approved in April 2021, becoming the first set of regulations technically advised by the Spotlight Initiative. At the National level, 6 reform packages were presented and 1 was approved on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2022. These reforms will contribute to Gender Violence Alerts, establishing 45 days as the time limit for the government's official recognition of the critical condition of gender-based violence (GBV). The Spotlight Initiative, through strategic alliances with El Colegio de México and OXFAM Mexico, worked to strengthen the capacities of local and grassroots organizations by providing funding for 12 civil society organizations working on the frontline in the prevention and response to cases of violence. In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, organizations focused on serving domestic workers, women with disabilities, indigenous women, women's movements seeking missing persons, women and girls from peripheral areas with high levels of vulnerability, girl victims of sexual violence, among others.
- ✓ **Toolbox strengthens Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Experiencing Violence (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** The Spotlight team delivered technical tools aimed at strengthening the capacities of 700 duty bearers of services for women and girls facing violence. The use of tools, together with the capacity building for staff, increased access to quality essential services for survivors, which are now focused on their needs and prioritizing their safety and integrity. The tools integrated international standards of the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Experiencing Violence which includes referral mechanisms, communication material, a training curriculum for public officials, and guidelines for the provision of first-contact care for survivors. So far, 700 workers on the emergency line have been trained and more than 1,400 emergency kits



were given to women and children victims of violence. Products were developed in close consultation with providers of essential services within the police, judicial and social services sectors. Civil society organizations also participated and users' experience of the services was also incorporated. While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the piloting of the tools due to restrictions and reduction of essential services, a toolbox will be delivered and is expected to strengthen the capacities of more than 1,220 providers of essential services in different sectors.

- ✓ **Systematization of data with an intersectional perspective of survivors' (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 5: Data).** 649 women, teens, and girls were trained as community promoters for GBV prevention in the municipalities of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Ecatepec, Naucalpan and Chilpancingo. 79,502 people were indirectly benefited through the rehabilitation of 14 safe public spaces for women in Naucalpan, Ecatepec at the State of Mexico; Chihuahua and Ciudad Juarez in Chihuahua. With the programme *Schools in Action for Equality*, the Spotlight Initiative helped develop social and emotional abilities to boost social norm changes related to gender violence in 61 schools in the 5 Spotlight municipalities, benefiting 729 teachers and 7,123 students between the ages of 6-17 years old. The Forum of Statistics on Violence against Women and Girls reached more than 300 participants per day. The Datathon had the participation of 61 young women between 16 and 25 years old, contributing to uncovering gender violence through the analysis, use, interpretation, and visualization of VAWG data. Due to this seminar, 700 public officers at the state and municipal levels working on VAWG now have stronger information and can make better use of VAWG data.

## One Story of Impact: The power of partnerships

Grupo Posadas, one of the largest hotel chains in the country and a Spotlight Initiative partner, provided free accommodation to 178 women and girls who were victims of violence in 19 cities and 4 Spotlight Initiative municipalities, as part of the programme's COVID-19 Response Plan. 251 women and 296 girls, boys and adolescents have benefited so far, and 700 hygiene kits were provided. The partnership was recognized by many parties, including state and municipal government institutions and Grupo Posadas staff; 496 people have been trained in person and more than 10,000 were trained virtually to assume the role of frontline responders. An employee of Grupo Posadas commented on this partnership, saying "the value of this initiative is immeasurable in financial terms because, by offering a safe space, we are saving lives." So far, 4 new hotel chains have expressed interest in joining this activity.

### In their own words...

"It is a very beautiful space, I never thought I could be in such a place... 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 reception and the space." - *A 27-year-old indigenous woman who fled from her violent husband in Chiapas, Mexico, and found safe accommodation with Grupo Posadas*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative started the *Strategy of Small Grants* to strengthen feminist and local organizations, giving flexible and accessible financing directed to small organizations working with women victims of violence. The objective of the small grants program is to support the institutional strengthening of grassroots organizations working on prevention and/or providing support, information, and assistance services to women and girls in situations of gender-based violence. It is expected that the grants modality will contribute to enhancing organizational capacities, technically strengthen their teams, amplify their scope of work and improve prevention of VAWG through a strong women's organizations' network. Two announcement calls have been open to organizations, in 2020, and in 2021. A third round is planned for 2022. So far, 23 civil society organizations were financed, directly benefiting 3,450 women and indirectly benefiting 24,000 women and girls.



# LATIN AMERICA 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I+II	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 6,030,510	 USD 5,000,000	 USD 1,030,510	June 2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNDP, and UNFPA

**Other partners:** From the United Nations System: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and World Health Organization (WHO); Regional, Inter-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); Academia; and Private Sector.

## Context

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Latin America at a time of political, economic, and social fragility, with countless countries facing low economic growth, rising levels of poverty and inequalities, and the instability of their democracies. In 2021, mobility restrictions continued and generated greater risks of violence against women and girls (VAWG), including femicide/femicide (FF), by intensifying their isolation, and creating additional barriers in accessing essential justice, education, health, and social protection services. The risk was exacerbated in contexts of high exclusion and vulnerability, especially affecting women and, among them, those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression, such as indigenous women, Afro-descendants, refugees, migrants, those who live in areas with the presence of organized crime, human rights defenders, and land defenders, etc. Civil society has been exhausted after two years of work in highly challenging conditions, and, at the government level, the pandemic has captured a large part of their attention, efforts, and prioritization, noting a weakening in the work in other areas of state responsibility, such as the prevention and response to VAWG+FF.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Regional Programme, working in close collaboration with the European Union Delegation, continued to analyze the role of the pandemic as a constitutive element of emerging situations in the region, as well as the most relevant data on the context and its impact on women and girls. Despite this challenging context, the Regional Programme continued to generate knowledge and innovation on ending VAWG+FF. The Regional Programme identified a great need to improve the participation of government authorities in a broader conversation for a holistic and coordinated approach to ending VAWG+FF, including with the different United Nations Agencies participating in the Spotlight Initiative. In addition, the Regional Programme recognizes the collection and exchange of knowledge between existing national and regional initiatives as an effective strategy to strengthen ties and improve joint results. In the spirit of UN Reform, the implementing partners also took stock of successful experiences of inter-institutional coordination in strategic alliances, which allowed joint efforts to prosper, processes to be optimized and partners to pool resources and thus achieve more strategic results.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Transforming the reality of women in Latin America by strengthening regulatory frameworks (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** The Spotlight Initiative and the Mechanism to Follow Up on the Implementation of the Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (MESECVI) have joined forces to promote the Inter-American Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate the Violent Death of Women for Reasons of Gender and the Latin American Model Protocol for the Investigation of Violent Deaths of Women for Gender Reasons. Both are key tools to develop awareness and political will to improve the response to VAWG+FF in the region, framed in the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against women, Belém do Pará Convention. As a result of this partnership, a series of studies and strategies to end VAWG+FF and promote progress in the adoption, adaptation, and implementation of the Model Law on Femicide, were developed. These resources seek to provide tools to the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention to contribute to strengthening the capacities of legislators, representatives of national mechanisms for women, the justice sector, and CSOs in the region, as well as deepening the knowledge and harmonization of national legislation and policies with the principle of enhanced due diligence and the Convention of Belém do Pará.

- ✓ **Private sector diagnostic tool for violence against women (VAW) promotes five company-wide action plans to address VAW. (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Ten companies in the region (Cementos Argos in Colombia, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic, Ege Haina, Grupo Mutual, AVON in Costa Rica, Garnier & Garnier Desarrollos Inmobiliarios, Garnier Arquitectos and Property Pro) participated in a pilot programme “Violence against women in the private sector,” which applied a diagnostic tool to address VAW in each company’s work environment. The tool identifies existing organizational practices in terms of prevention, care and punishment of violence, prevalence of cases of GBV and VAW, through a multi-thematic survey addressed to the staff and technical group of each company. The data, automatically processed by the platform, captures the following components: (a) The organizational violence index, which identifies the degree of organizational commitment and effectiveness in prevention and attention to cases of GBV and VAW; (b) the indicators of violence against women in the workplace, which identifies whether or not the company has an explicit commitment to zero tolerance for violence; and (c) a policy and management framework, which assesses whether the staff knows the organizational response mechanisms in situations of violence and whether they trust the corrective actions employed. Upon receiving the organizational diagnosis on GBV, with interpretations of the indicators and recommendations, five companies translated the results into “Action Plans for the Management of Organizational Violence” that is tailored to their needs and the capacity of each company.
- ✓ **New guidance and an artificial intelligence tool are improving the analysis of homicide cases of women in Latin America by using a gender perspective (Pillar 5: Data):** An artificial intelligence tool was designed for justice operators to support the analysis of female homicides using a gender perspective; and to improve the response of the justice system in the identification and subsequent treatment of femicide cases in the region. This tool was developed collaboratively with the National Council of Justice (CNJ) of Brazil. By broadening the understanding of the phenomenon of femicide, the use of this tool brings the classification of gender crimes closer to the reality of violence and, consequently, responses to the phenomenon of femicide may be more effective. This methodology, used in combination with the police policy of approaching the community, contributes to an improvement in citizen security.

### **One Story of Impact: In Latin America, shelter networks are a lifeline for women experiencing violence.**

Only 1 in 10 women survivors of violence seek help from the police, globally. Of those that seek help, many withdraw from the justice process due to poor responses from police or other judicial actors. Women's access to justice starts with believing survivors and taking immediate and continued action. Applying the principle of leaving no one behind, the Latin America Regional Programme helped develop a guide for shelters and safe houses to address the specific needs of women survivors in the region, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In Argentina, the Spotlight Initiative also provided equipment to the hotline service to meet increasing call volume, and technical assistance to better analyze the data coming in. Diana Salas is among 199 women survivors housed at the shelter affiliated with the Inter-American Shelter Network (RIRE), supported by UN Women through the Spotlight Initiative in Latin America. The shelter has also provided psychosocial support and legal assistance to more than 1,057 women since 2017.

#### **In her own words...**

“I encourage women to seek help. At first, you think you won't be able to leave because you have children or you don't have enough to eat, but that's not true. You can do it!” - *Diana Salas\**, survivor of GBV

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

As part of the Regional Programme's work on the use of innovative tools and technology to end VAWG, the partnership with IPSOS company enabled the use of big data analysis to develop a study on online reactions and exchanges on the topic of VAWG before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. An interactive dashboard was designed and launched to show the results. The results and analysis will be used for future activities in 2022, possibly in partnership with the respective national Spotlight Initiative programmes and country offices.

# AFGHANISTAN 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Cost Phase I	Spotlight Phase I	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 16,921,384	 USD 16,500,000	 USD 421,385	Nov 2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA

**Other partners<sup>1</sup>:** Ministries of Women's Affairs, Justice, Haj and Religious Affairs, Youth Affairs, Education, Interior Affairs, Public Health, Labour and Social Affairs, National Statistics and Information Authority; Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

## Context

The Taliban takeover in August 2021 established an all-male 'caretaker' de facto authority. Gender institutional mechanisms were effectively dismantled and fundamental rights and freedoms of women and girls were severely curtailed. The abrupt change in governance authorities and ensuing drastic changes in the operational context and deteriorating security situation, coupled with the rapidly growing humanitarian crisis, led to a temporary suspension in the programmatic delivery of the majority of activities and repivoting of the Spotlight Initiative in Afghanistan (SI-A) plans. Systematic and widespread restrictions on women and girls' participation in civic and public life, and their freedom of movement, impacts on women's access to basic services including access to education, healthcare, justice and economic participation. Access to essential services and support is further limited by the current legal and judicial vacuum which further exacerbates systemic and institutionalised gender-discriminatory practices, disproportionately impacting women and girls, increasing economic inequality and worsening the rates of gender-based violence (GBV).

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The first half of 2021 offered a valuable opportunity for the SI-A team to build strong foundations, adopting the Initiative's principles of leaving no one behind and UN Reform, with key programme partners, particularly the government and the European Union. During this period, the SI-A has successfully secured meaningful engagement with key ministries in the programme as well as its overall commitment to the elimination of violence against women and girls (EVAWG) in Afghanistan. The Spotlight Initiative team has i) supported the establishment of the SI-A governance structures, including the National Steering Committee, ii) conducted preparatory work for the establishment of the Civil Society National Reference Group, iii) strategically planned for the implementation of the SI-A and proceeded with procurement, recruitment and partnering processes, including the development of the joint annual work plan for 2021. However, plans to officially launch SI-A and deliver against the AWP 2021, were thwarted with the Taliban takeover. As a result, there have not been significant transformations at the outcome level at this stage, however some significant preparations had taken place which laid the groundwork for delivery of further interventions. Considering the complex and fast-evolving operating environment and above-mentioned challenges, SI-A i) conducted joint provincial advocacy with de facto authorities on the importance of allowing CSOs to operate, ii) suspended some interventions due to the link with the government for fear from the de facto authorities to implement women's rights activities, whereas others were at risk of adopting directions that were not consistent with UN's values, iii) formed new partnerships with additional CSOs, which enabled scaling up of grassroots level programmes and activities, providing access to vital information and life-saving services to women and girls and iv) rolled out community level dialogue and information sessions for the local stakeholders, as well as fast-tracked capacity building training for the project management, new staff and volunteers.

<sup>1</sup> Since the Taliban seized the power on 15 August 2021, there has not been any engagement with the de facto Authorities (DFA), and Ministry of Women Affairs and Independent Human Rights Commission have been abolished.

## Key Results<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ **Mobilising communities to drive change in attitude and norms at local levels (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Preparations for conducting prevention studies, community mobilisation action plans and training materials for primary GBV prevention were all completed. Communities were mobilised through the establishment of 18 Men's and Boys' networks. The programme secured commitment from 280 religious and influential leaders to reduce VAWG and child marriage in their communities by integrating key messages in their Friday prayers and featuring several of the trained scholars and key influencers on TV and radio programmes, disseminating messages with regards to Islamic laws and its links to the protection of women, reaching 21,970 individuals.
- ✓ **Improved GBV service provision from both institutional and CSO actors (Pillar 4: Services):** Spotlight Initiative supported the development of various guidelines, capacity building interventions, advocacy and the establishment of protection centres. SI-A partners provided training on GBV case management for 353 frontline responders including child protection network members, health workers in the targeted provinces, members from the existing Child Protection Action Network and community Shuras' members. The 15 Girl Friendly spaces previously established maintained essential quality services, reaching 1,112 women and girls, under the de facto authority rule. The nationwide Youth Health Line remained operational as well, providing counselling, information, and referral services to 168,308 young people. In support of the reopening of women's services, advocacy missions to Kandahar and Herat were organised at the end of October/mid-November 2021 and de facto authorities formally authorised the opening of the Family Guidance Centre in Paktia and the Women Protection Centre and Family Guidance Centre in Kandahar.
- ✓ **Ensuring the continuity of the women's movement in the new political context (Pillar 6: Women's movements and Civil Society):** The establishment of the Spotlight Initiative Civil Society National Reference Group was completed prior to the fall of Kabul on 15 August 2021 but was put on pause to not increase the risk profile of the selected civil society representatives. Women's movements at the provincial level were continuously supported through women's CSOs roundtables which were organised in Kandahar and in Herat in November.

### One Story of Impact: Girl's safe spaces transform the lives of victims of violence

"I come to the Girls' Safe Space every day" - These were the words of Faiqah (19), when she first met with the SI-A psycho-social counsellor at the Girls Safe Space in Herat. "My father abuses me so much that I feel worthless", said Faiqah, crying. Her mother died when she was a little girl. Faiqah's father, a heavy gambler, and drug addict, forced her to marry at 13 as a repayment of his gambling debt. A widow at 15, Faiqah had no choice but to return to her abusive father. She said she hated him so much that having to sit at the same table and calling him "father" was driving her to desperate thoughts. It took several sessions of spiritual and psycho-social counselling to start healing and repairing the relationship with her father, who also attended counselling to help him deal with his gambling and drug problems.

#### In her own words...

"I come to the Girls Safe Space every day so that I could have a better mental state and be able to solve my problems. Finally, I was able to overcome my problems and love my father." - *Faiqah (19), Herat*

### Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Through strategic partnerships with local CSOs in three provinces (Paktia, Herat and Kandahar), Spotlight Initiative managed to mobilise communities through dialogue, public information sessions and advocacy campaigns that promoted gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours. These series of dialogues were possible through men's and boys' community networks that were formed and capacitated to champion gender equality and positive masculinity around VAWG and child marriage. In total, through partners, SI-A established 18 community men's and boys' networks in Paktia (2), Herat (4) and Kandahar (12). These men's networks have a total of 192 active male participants. The networks managed to reach a total of 3,121 people (1,078 men, 959 women, 580 girls and 504 boys) through dialogue sessions in the three provinces.

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<sup>2</sup> Following the Taliban's rise to power in 2021, the Spotlight Initiative in Afghanistan reassessed and revised its work plan to ensure the programme could continue implementation in the new context while ensuring the Do No Harm principle. The programme is focusing on work under Pillars 3, 4, and 6 to maximise impact and effectiveness. For Pillars 1 and 2, the team is identifying revised modalities to undertake work without directly engaging the de facto authorities. Due to the contextual change, most work under Pillar 5 has been postponed.

# KYRGYZSTAN 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I*	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 5,396,071	 USD 4,700,000	 USD 696,071	2020 - 2023

\*This programme was the first to receive approval for Phase II from the Caribbean, Central Asia and Pacific regions. As of 2022, their total budget, inclusive of Phase I+II for both UN Agency and EU contributions, is now **USD 7,794,510**.

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNODC

**Other partners:** Office of the President, Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Vice Prime Minister, Deputy Chair of the Cabinet of Ministers, General Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Labor, Social Security, and Migration, Ministry of Justice, National Statistics Committee, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ministry of the Economy, Local and national Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

## Context

The life choices of women and girls in Kyrgyzstan are restricted by deeply rooted patriarchal norms and behaviors, and more recently, threatened by a resurgence of conservative voices as evidenced in recent public attacks on women's rights events. Nationally, 50% of men and 34% of women surveyed agreed that a husband can hit his wife if, for example, she leaves the house without telling her spouse or burns the food.<sup>1</sup> Of ever-married women and girls aged 15 to 49, 25% have experienced domestic violence.<sup>2</sup> Child marriage and forced abduction of girls for marriage are widespread practices, yet are ignored as social problems. Despite the country having signed multiple global human rights conventions, many challenges remain on the enforcement of local laws and monitoring reforms. While Kyrgyzstan has a strong legal framework recognizing different forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), survivors' rights to services, and punishment for perpetrators, it still faces issues in ensuring public awareness, engagement, and trust, as well as public funding. During COVID-19 related restrictions, VAWG surged, with a 62% increase in reported cases during the year's first quarter as compared to 2019.<sup>3</sup> In 2021, Kyrgyzstan also experienced a number of context-related challenges including armed open conflict at the border with Tajikistan, constitutional reform, and an abrupt turnover of state officials at all levels of government.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

In collaboration with the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative (SI) prioritizes engagement and listening to survivors, women and girls to ensure human centric approaches that leave no one behind; building broad coalitions of support for its work; strengthening the sectors most in need of gender-responsive training; and carefully researching the context to inform its response. The Spotlight Initiative noted that despite progressive laws and significant resources, the response to VAWG during the COVID-19 emergency highlighted areas of the system needing additional support such as capacity-building towards a unified, multi-sectoral response to VAWG in humanitarian settings.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Enhancement of legal frameworks to better protect women and girls (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative supported a participatory design process for the National Strategy for Gender Development 2022-2030 and the National Action Plan for 2022-2025. Further the Programme completed an overarching review of 36 laws and 60 by-laws and conducted gender expertise reviews of an additional 37 priority laws in the area of ending VAWG, gender equality and women's rights, and developed a report on judicial practices and legal reforms related to child marriage. The Spotlight Initiative's work generated concrete recommendations for the enhancement of legal frameworks to better protect women and girls.

<sup>1</sup> [Medical and demographic research 2012](#)

<sup>2</sup> The Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2018, Statistical Committee

<sup>3</sup> Data of National Statistical Committee, 2020



- ✓ **An enabling environment for women and girls to report cases of violence (Pillar 2: Institutions, Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 4: Services):** SI built the capacities of direct service providers who interact with sexual and gender based violence survivors such as state-guaranteed legal aid lawyers, district-level social workers, and private practice lawyers. It also partnered to develop standard operating procedures for social workers and police who respond to gender-based violence (GBV), trained 253 police officers and 143 service providers on the provision of social assistance to women and girls who have been subjected to domestic violence, and assisted 12 target municipalities in reviewing and improving their annual work plans in light of the new standard operating procedures. In addition, the SI conducted participatory gender self-assessment exercises to encourage the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Bar Association, and 14 media organizations to strengthen internal gender mainstreaming mechanisms within and across institutions. At the policy level, 27 inter-ministerial working group members engaged in drafting the National Strategy for Gender Development and critically examining gender norms, power relations, and system-related gaps in service provision during an experiential learning process, while 152 members of local committees on the prevention of domestic violence attended workshops to improve their understanding of the legislative framework around GBV prevention. Finally, teachers, girls, boys, and caregivers attended GALS (Gender Action Learning System) training to increase their sensitivity to violence and the gender-based stereotypes that enable such violence.
- ✓ **Enabling change in attitude and norms through broad-based strategies (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The Spotlight Initiative undertook a comprehensive quantitative and qualitative study to understand men's and women's attitudes and practices on a wide variety of topics related to gender equality. The SI also mapped CSO actors in three target provinces by engaging regional researchers and Women's Kurultai, assessing existing capacities to inform future SI programming. The Programme piloted a Leading Change approach by supporting CSOs engaging in transformative approaches to promoting gender equality, and created a platform where 40 local women actors identified during the mapping could gather to exchange their experiences, knowledge in ending VAWG, and key challenges.

## One Story of Impact: UN Reform in Practice

Spotlight Initiative organized programme presentation meetings in three provinces jointly with five RUNOs and under coordination of the Programme Coordination Unit. More than 200 key local stakeholders from local authorities and CSOs attended the presentations. These presentations communicated to key field partners and community representatives the SI programme goals and planned community-level interventions to consult and receive their feedback and suggestions on how best to implement. Another exercise held in the spirit of UN reform is "Expectations Mapping," The main objectives of this exercise were to gain an up-to-date understanding of key stakeholders' views on the core focus of the SI in light of the structural and political changes in the country; to develop a balanced understanding of, and vision for the SI Programme and improve program effectiveness and relevance via adaptations and risk mitigation.

### In their own words...

"Provincial-level Spotlight Initiative presentation meetings helped us to integrate perspectives from local stakeholders into programme design and implementation. This ensured that key field partners, local authorities and CSOs had a voice in how the Spotlight Initiative would engage and serve their communities." *Samara Papeva, Spotlight Initiative Country Programme Coordinator, UN Resident Coordinator's Office*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Design-thinking/User Journey methodology helped local actors map the journeys of domestic violence survivors, identify issues and needs, as well as prototype and test participatory solutions (inter-agency) with the involvement of survivors. The instrument was adapted from the business sector to promote multi-stakeholder dialogue with the aim of finding local solutions to ending VAWG. After 3 test workshops, the design thinking/user journey approach was replicated and reached 15 different target groups while showing a high level of adaptability to different themes (sexual harassment, strategic planning, political participation, economic empowerment, etc.). Through these workshops, the SI increased the capacity of 309 people (226 women and 83 men) including representatives of sectoral service providers (health, law enforcement, social workers, crisis centers, lawyers) and civil society activists/organizations on survivor/user-centered service delivery both at the strategic and service delivery levels.

# TAJIKISTAN 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 5,567,037	 USD 4,900,000	 USD 667,037	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** Committee on Women and Family Affairs; Ministries of Justice, Internal Affairs, Health and Social Protection, Education and Science, and Committee on Religion, Regulation of Traditions, Celebration and Ceremonies; Agency of Statistics; Supreme Court, Union of Advocates; Attorney General's Office; Office of Ombudsman, Women's Rights Organizations and Networks; Grassroots and Women's Community Groups; Organizations of Persons with Disabilities; Religious Associations; Human Rights Organizations; Youth Centers; Organizations working on Gender-equality issues; Mass Media; Sport Schools; Research Groups

## Context

The 2019 Gender Development Index ranked Tajikistan 125 out of 189 countries, reflecting women's low levels of participation in the economy and politics. Although the country's constitution guarantees equal rights for women, the legal and regulatory tools needed to enforce those rights require improvement. Violence against women and physical punishment of children are widespread throughout the country, with higher rates in the region of Khatlon, where 32.7% of the population lives in poverty. Survey results, conducted under the Project to Reduce Violence against Women in Tajikistan, showed deep-seated patriarchal values; with over 95% of both women and men agreeing that if a wife angers a husband, it is acceptable for him to punish her through physical, emotional, economic and other forms of violence. The COVID-19 stay-at-home orders were associated with an increase in domestic violence in Tajikistan, which spurred the government to increase its support for ongoing services benefitting all survivors.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, which is supported by the European Union, has laid the foundation for a strong multi-sectoral approach to meet the needs of survivors of violence against women and girls (VAWG) and bring about normative change to end violence at the community level. In line with UN Reform, Recipient UN Organizations joined forces to work in six rural districts and the capital, to support efforts to identify different types of survivor services (medical, legal, counseling) to be strengthened. Longer-term investments in specialized training of gender advocates and working with men are expected to foster changes at community level. Moreover, for sustainability and reaching those farthest behind, the focus of the intervention was on enhancing the capacity of CSOs and the Civil Society Reference Group as key partners for Spotlight Initiative Tajikistan.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Women and girl survivors of violence have access to medical, psychosocial, legal, and social services that meet international quality standards (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The Spotlight Initiative and a team of national and international consultants have collaborated to develop a methodology to comparatively review the adherence to global standards for each service sector (i.e. security, justice, health, labor/social affairs and education). Specifically, the review identifies areas of improvement to foster coordination among service providers that were previously working in silos. It's also expected to further strengthen the efforts of the National Multi-Sectoral Coordination Group which is a group of diverse actors working to establish national and sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms to address VAWG. Reflecting the leave no one behind principle, it is also planned to provide additional learning opportunities to other marginalized groups, such as women and girls living with disabilities. To promote increased access for women competent in prevention of VAWG to decision-making positions in state institutions, a draft of the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy for the period up to 2030 was submitted for the review of state bodies.
- ✓ **A national database on VAWG planned to identify gaps and needs in services for survivors of violence (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** Working closely with the Agency for Statistics and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Spotlight Initiative started a process to revise and harmonize the tools used to collect VAWG data and to create a database to identify gaps and needs in services for women survivors of violence. A preliminary report is now with the Government for review and approval. The Spotlight Initiative supported clinic-based and outreach services reaching 1800 girls of reproductive ages; 9 child survivors

of sexual crimes via legal representation; 126 women and girls' survivors of violence advanced their knowledge and skills on opening and developing businesses; and an additional 10 victim-support rooms provided shelter and timely medical services to 26 women and girls who experienced violence. Further, over 160 health professionals were trained on the National Protocol for the provision of quality essential services for survivors of rape; 270 religious leaders trained on sexual and gender based violence and incorporating tools to end domestic violence into their religious community work; 424 representatives of five service sectors strengthened their knowledge and skills to transform policies on the promotion of gender equality and non-discrimination; 600 teachers enhanced their knowledge on the "Ways and methods of positive upbringing without violence and discrimination;" and 46 representative of mass media, including journalists and bloggers, strengthened their understanding of gender sensitivity, survivor-centered approaches, and usage of gender-sensitive language.

- ✓ **Gender transformative approaches at community level will sustain reduction in VAWG (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Informational videos originally developed for young men to promote positive masculinity and challenge traditional norms were adapted for older men to focus on men's involvement with care work to reduce the domestic burden on women. To address a trend in resistance to social activism, the Spotlight Initiative launched a "School of Gender Activists," working on transformative approaches to ending VAWG. Spotlight Initiative developed a first of its kind "Civil Society Strategy to Leading Change," and provided technical and financial support to operationalize the strategy through 6 small grants. Normative change at the community level will continue to advance through additional informational materials shared through campaigns, challenging traditional gender roles, promoting equality and labor-sharing in six pilot districts.

### **One Story of Impact: Through closer partnerships with the CSOs, reaching the women farthest behind**

The Spotlight Initiative team ensured it reached women furthest behind by organizing 5 mobile health clinics in the remote areas of target districts in order to reach over 1800 women and girls of reproductive age who have limited geographical access to quality sexual and gender-based violence and sexual reproductive health services otherwise. It built the capacity of grassroots CSOs through 6 grants, 5 of which were implemented within consortium-based agreements allowing the remote and left behind CSOs to grow and strengthen their gender potential together with experienced ones. The initiative also provided capacity building activities on Project Management, M&E, fundraising and documenting cases of violence for CSOs working with women with disabilities, women living with HIV and women from low-income communities. As a result, a number of the CSOs received grants to work with those most marginalized and left behind. Moreover, the Spotlight initiative organized a nation-wide futsal (football based game) tournament among girls aged 13-17 to change the social norm that girls do not belong in sport. More than 300 girls from the remotest places participated in the event.

#### **In their own words...**

"At the national level, the futsal tournament among women's teams was held for the first time and we can say that Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan contributed to making a history by organizing the national women's futsal tournament." *Furkat Ahmedjanov, Director of Futsal League of Tajikistan*

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

The first of its kind, School of Gender Activists in Tajikistan, creates a pool of informal local experts as an extended hand of the Committee of Women and Family Affairs (CoWFA) and other ministries to promote implementation of the gender policy. This approach has enabled a strengthened partnership between the Government and the CSOs. The School brought together activists from different sectors and diverse geographical locations, to adopt a common understanding of gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and work on women and girls' empowerment, as well as providing knowledge on ending violence against women. The creation of the School is an important and timely step that contributes to building the capacity of civil society in prevention. Moreover, CoWFA as a key benefactor of this School, as they can rely on the pool of experts for implementation of the national programmes and strategies related to prevention of violence in the family, including the National Strategy on Activation of Roles of Women 2030 and national campaigns, as well as their participation in thematic and technical discussions in their places of origin. The regulation of the School has been validated by the CoWFA and the list of contacts of the School's graduates - gender activists - will be handed over to them in early 2022. CoWFA has supported the idea of an NGO-partner to establish the Network of CSO Gender Activists under the CoWFA and the graduates of the School will be the first members of this network.

# CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN

## 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I (or Phase I + II Where Approved)	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 4,432,461	 USD 4,248,584	 USD 183,877	July 2020 – 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA

**Other partners:** Governments, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Activists, Survivors, Youth, Men, and Faith-based Leaders

### Context

In all five Central Asian countries plus Afghanistan (6 countries total), legislation is in place to tackle sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), yet the legislation contain varied and inconsistent interpretations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), specifically in terms of transforming the impact that gender norms have on women and men, girls and boys, in changing the subsequent power relations between women and men, and in actively prohibiting gender-based discrimination, including its most egregious form, that of SGBV. In all six countries, implementation of non-discrimination and SGBV-related legislation is significantly hindered by the lack of: i) clarity on how to ensure a multi-sectoral, inclusive and survivor-centred approach for all communities; ii) conducive environment to provide the necessary resources to give legislation and its regulatory frameworks the legs needed to transform the prevalence of SGBV and harmful practices; and iii) an active voice on the part of survivors and their communities to demand inclusive, non-discriminatory access to quality support. The absence of regionally owned and led mechanisms or organisations, including academia, remains a challenge in the region. There are also limited opportunities for joint and systematic learning for action, innovation and knowledge generation on transforming the legislation, services, attitudes and practices to eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG) and end SGBV and harmful practices. Underpinning all of this is the need to build upon and foster greater, mutually supportive alliances between and among government and civil society in partnership with a wide array of other non-state stakeholders.

### Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan became fully operational in January 2021, and aims to prevent, respond to, and end SGBV and harmful practices. The programme continues to make progress towards creating the Central Asia Alliance as a regional mechanism to engage governments, civil society, academia, and community leaders to transform prevention, response and provision of services, including for the most marginalized groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which is key to responding to Agenda 2030's *'leaving no one behind'* imperative. Alongside its broader efforts to change discriminatory gender-based social norms and attitudes and close the data gaps on SGBV. In line with UN Reform the programme has fostered the power of collective action, cross-border networking, and the unique expertise of each stakeholder group to contribute towards state and non-state prevention and response to end SGBV and harmful practices. Finally, the programme has taken innovative and multi-faceted approaches to eliminating VAWG by embracing new masculinities perspectives, strengthening multi-sectoral response to GBV issues, encouraging innovation and developing new knowledge products on kNOwVAWdata course for the educational system, enhancing the role of grassroots and local CSOs as actors of change in ending SGBV, and galvanizing the women's movement in the region.

### Key Results

- ✓ **Accelerating the regional approach to gender equality and support for a robust CSO movement (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movement and Civil Society):** Through lobbying and resource mobilization by the Spotlight Initiative, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan joined the Generation Equality Forum and its Action Coalitions on GBV and Economic Justice and Rights as commitment-makers. Further, the Government of Kazakhstan provided financial contributions to the Spotlight Initiative to build the capacity of CSOs in the region and unlock their potential as new advocates and change makers for responding to SGBV. The Government of Uzbekistan, along with civil society partners, made strong commitments and financial pledges at the Forum, in line with the national priorities on delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5. The programme



will further utilize similar global platforms, which present multiple avenues for building vibrant partnerships to bring greater visibility to the nature of VAWG in Central Asia. While widely applying the principle of leaving no one behind, members of the Regional Open Coordination Group on Small Grants prioritized a selection of CSOs which lacked technical capacity to access more traditional funding channels and/or were less-known grassroots organizations representing the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including those in hard-to-reach and rural areas. An informal regional youth alliance on SGBV was created at the forum of youth-led and youth-serving organizations, which brought together thirty-eight representatives from Central Asia who crafted strategic goals and mission, as well as a communication strategy for the informal regional youth network

- ✓ **Developing a unified methodology to review and transform national legislation and law-enforcement practices on SGBV and harmful practices (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** Reviews of the national legal frameworks and law enforcement practices on SGBV and harmful practices in five countries in Central Asia were conducted, to align them with international norms and standards and guide the national SGBV legislation in the region. The review combined desk review, official requests to respective state institutions, and semi-structured interviews with CSOs on law enforcement practices. The Civil Society Regional Reference Group and CSOs in the region reviewed the draft methodology, applying participatory approaches.
- ✓ **Strengthening the regional response to SGBV and harmful practices through draft regional Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) models and tools, and improved data collection (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 5: Data):** Regional SOPs and sectoral training packages/knowledge products on provision of one-stop shop services for GBV survivors were designed for specialists of health, social and police sectors. For the first time ever in Central Asia, disability was integrated into the regional tools and training packages, which were reviewed by Women Enabled International (WEI), the only international organisation for women with disabilities, to guide the provision of health and social support to persons with disabilities who are subject to SGBV. Adaptation and translation to Russian of the kNowVAWdata course in Central Asia will help to strengthen capacity of practitioners to collect data and measure prevalence of SGBV in countries, to support robust evidence based policy development on SGBV and strengthening institutions to provide quality services to GBV survivors

## One Story of Impact: Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CSRRG)

The CSRRG is seen as one of the programme's key gateways to CSOs, women's movements, and activists in Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Group comprises CSO representatives from all six programme countries for: i) providing guidance and advisory support to the programme implementation, ii) advocating for the programme outcome objectives, and iii) ensuring adequate communication and coordination of the programme at the regional level. In addition to support provided for CSOs and reviewing the newly designed draft methodology to guide national SGBV legislation in the Central Asian countries, the CSRRG is expected to provide quality assurance expertise for two multi-country studies, which for the first time ever in the region will help identify the existing data gaps on intersectionality and SGBV in Central Asia, and how intersecting forms of discrimination impact vulnerability to SGBV and access to services, support, and justice. The Central Asia Alliance to be launched later this year will be strengthened by the CSRRG, along with the informal regional youth alliance on GBV, a regional network of police and judges on SGBV, and a regional CSOs network established within the programme.

### In their own words...

"The Spotlight Initiative is mobilizing the countries of Central Asia, in partnership with Afghanistan, to create a common platform for responding to cases of sexual and gender-based violence. We hope that, with support from the Spotlight Initiative's Civil Society Regional Reference Group, measures to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence will be secure and doable." - *Orzu Ganieva (Tajikistan), member of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme's Civil Society Regional Reference Group*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative promoted two innovative practices. Firstly, the programme uses the MenEngage platform, along with developing an innovative strategy and communication plan for the five Central Asian countries, to provide a collective voice for the region on the need to challenge harmful gender norms and advocate for gender-transformative policies at all levels. The platform was successfully implemented in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and is being expanded to other countries in the region. Secondly, an innovative grants competition for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) entitled "Knowledge Created by NGOs for NGOs" was conducted to identify entities with unique experience in working with victims of violence which could arrange peer-to-peer knowledge transfer. This practice will be documented in knowledge products for further dissemination among peer NGOs during Phase II and beyond, including through the virtual knowledge platform.



# SAFE AND FAIR 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 30,000,000	 USD 29,370,587	 USD 629,413	2018 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** ILO, UN Women

**Other partners:** UNODC, Regional and National Counterparts, ASEAN Institutions, Government, Employers Organizations, Workers Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and International Organizations

## Context

With the support of the European Union, the regional programme Safe and Fair "Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region (SAF)" is implemented in the Southeast Asian region (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam). The programme's overriding objective is to ensure that labour migration is safe and fair for all women in the ASEAN region. In 2021, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continued to impose restrictions on workers' mobility while at the same time contributing to increased levels of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Many women migrant workers suffered job losses and returned to their countries of origin; others who stayed in countries of destination, did not have equal access to COVID-19 assistance (information, protective materials, vaccinations, financial assistance etc). Prevailing negative perceptions, and the rise of new narratives blaming migrant workers for being the carriers of the virus, exacerbated the discrimination women migrant workers faced.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The SAF programme mainstreamed three cross-cutting approaches: 1) women's voices and agency; 2) rights-based approaches; and 3) in the spirit of UN Reform, broad engagement of stakeholders, delivering jointly on programme initiatives. Digital services and platforms, partnerships with trade unions, CSOs, front line service providers and migrant worker resource centres (MRCs), have played a crucial role in the provision of information and services on safe and fair migration, on responding to violence, harassment and exploitation, and access to opportunities for decent work. At both the national and grassroots levels, Spotlight Initiative's SAF programme has strengthened partnerships with these organisations as well as women's networks and community-based organisations. SAF has been enhancing the institutional capacity of partner CSOs in outreach, advocacy, case management, service provision (both remote through safe technology, and face-to-face) and coordination, online facilitation, and campaigning. In terms of service provision, SAF supported shelters, hotlines and front-line service providers to expand or adapt their services to respond to the needs of women migrant workers. 2021 also offered continued opportunities for SAF to engage in policy advocacy and legal reforms as ASEAN countries engaged in legislative changes – developing new measures for the placement of migrant workers in the pandemic response, and for addressing violence against women migrant workers (VAWMW).

## Key Results

- ✓ **New and revised laws and policies highlighting women migrant workers' needs (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** SAF provided technical support to ASEAN countries in fulfilling their commitments to gender equality, eliminating VAW and ensuring gender responsive labour migration and decent work through 26 legal and policy instruments; of which, 15 were adopted in 2021. In addition, three regional and national action plans were adopted to eliminate VAW, including women migrant workers, and trafficking. This included the Mid-Term Review of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which measures ASEAN's progress on the implementation of the RPA and provides recommendations to accelerate progress. SAF provided technical support to Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam for legal and policy instruments, including: labour migration regulations, domestic violence laws, national action plans on VAW and trafficking in persons; and national standard operating procedures and protocols, to ensure gender-responsive approaches that are inclusive of women migrant workers' needs, in line with the principles of leaving no one behind.
- ✓ **Building Institutional capacity to provide data driven quality services to women migrant workers and their families (Pillar 2: Institutions, Pillar 3: Prevention, Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** Eleven information systems and 7 referral

mechanisms were established and strengthened with SAF's support to enhance coordinated quality service provision to women migrant workers who have survived violence. Information, outreach, skills' training and service provision were also carried out through 26 MRCs in 8 ASEAN countries. In 2021, 34,885 women migrant workers were provided with information and support services, including psychosocial, health, social and/or legal services; and 608 women had certified vocational skills. Over 5,400 stakeholders, including frontline service providers, developed their understanding of women migrant workers' rights and needs and improved their capacity for gender-responsive and survivor-centric service provision, including remote service provision. Finally, 112 government officials built their capacity to collect VAW administrative data and ASEAN countries increased their submissions of sex-disaggregated datasets to the international labour migration statistics database to 54%.

- ✓ **Networking, and organising women migrant workers to respond to VAW amongst their peers (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Peer networks are informal groups that provide safe spaces for women migrant workers to share information on safe and fair migration, including the risks of violence and the essential services available. With COVID-19, SAF supported these networks to shift to online spaces, with the intent to focus on preventing and responding to violence and trafficking during the pandemic. In 2021, 59,796 users were engaged online around issues of violence against women migrant workers, trafficking and safe migration. Additionally, SAF has strengthened the partnerships and capacity of trade unions, migrant worker associations, as well as community and women's networks in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam to organize and network women migrant workers and to provide referral services. As a result of these efforts 3,395 women migrant workers were organized into trade unions, workers' associations and groups during the reporting period.

### One Story of Impact: Using technology to make labour migration planning safer

SAF supported the development of the ["My Journey"](#) application which allows potential, current and returning women migrant workers in Cambodia to access accurate information on safe migration processes, on how to prevent and to respond to violence, on women migrant workers' rights, and services available in destination countries. The information in the application is available as texts, videos, animations and audios for users of all literacy levels. The app was developed in partnership with Child Helpline Cambodia (CHC); Users can also choose to make direct calls to CHC should they want to receive in-depth information and counseling services.

#### In their own words...

"I went to work in Thailand for 8 months, and it was very hard. I can't speak the Thai language and I have no idea how to find support if I need help. I always feel unsafe. My Journey Mobile App provides relevant and simple information for safe migration, and it works for those who could not read and write. It is simple, people just press the sound icon, then they can listen to voices or watch video conveniently. I'd recommend my friends to use it, of course! Because this app will help them to travel safely" - Ms. Long Leap, Leader of Community Women Led Network, Basedth District, Kampong Speu Province [Read the full story here](#)

### Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

In June 2021, Cirebon District launched the first One-Roof Integrated Centre (Layanan Terpadu Satu Atap) or LTSA-MRC which provides outreach services on safe and fair migration, pre-and post-employment consultation, psycho-social counseling services, case handling, legal aid, training for migrant workers (both potential and returnee) and their families. The practice is the first of its kind in Indonesia where support services to women migrant workers are being provided under one roof, jointly by different stakeholders - Government, Trade Unions, and Women's NGOs. The first LTSA established with SAF support has received an award for provision of excellent services by the central government. Other LTSAs have been subsequently launched and another village in Tulungagung district has also received an award from the government for the best village for migrant workers. The practice of LTSA-MRCs has been recognized as a [global good practice](#) in the UN Network on Migration.

# BELIZE 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 2,948,751	 USD 2,475,000	 USD 473,751	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF

**Other Partners:** Ministry of Human Development, Families & Indigenous Peoples' Affairs; Ministry of Health & Wellness; Ministry of National Defence & Border Security; Ministry of Education, Culture, Science & Technology; Attorney General's Ministry; Special Envoy for the Development of Families & Children; National Women's Commission; National Committee for Families and Children; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Human Rights Commission of Belize, Child Development Foundation, Belize Family Life Association, Productive Organisation for Women in Action, Youth Enhancement Services, Young Women Christian Association); PathLight Belize, Toledo Institute for Development and Environment, Spouses of CARICOM Leaders Action Network; and Academia

## Context

Belize has ratified the core UN Human Rights Treaties, reflecting these principles in their national laws and policies. However, there are limitations in the governance, coordination and management of the policy level mechanisms including under-resourcing; the need to operationalize several laws through regulations and protocols; insufficient implementation of family violence legislation; and the absence of local level and independent mechanisms to hold individuals and institutions accountable. With 52% of the population living at or below the poverty line and dispersed over a very broad, rural geography, poor access to both sexual and reproductive health services and protection services are major impediments to realizing the rights of women and girls. In 2021, Belize was able to utilise many of the lessons learnt from COVID-19 to strengthen prevention and service delivery for the most vulnerable women and girls, in order to leave no one behind. Belize completed its' first Business Operations Strategy 2021-2025 based on guidance issued by United Nations Development Group and in the spirit of UN Reform, the programme is taking advantage of the UN Gender and Human Rights Group platform, where the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse plan of action was developed and approved by United Nations Country Team; and the common UN approach to eliminate violence against women and girls (EVAWG), inter-agency efforts and work at country-level. Further, a new government administration elected in late 2020, demonstrated strong commitment and political will to EVAWG and has continued to engage at the political and technical levels with the initiative.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative Belize is supported by the strong partnership and technical guidance of the European Union and works towards (1) cultivating an enabling environment that responds to and prevents violence against women and girls (VAWG) by addressing knowledge gaps on rights and laws, challenging gender-discriminatory social norms, and strengthening community-level accountability mechanisms; (2) strengthening services by improving access to and the quality of services for survivors, while educating youth and adults to change harmful norms and practices at the community level. In all six districts of Belize, the Spotlight Initiative has supported meaningful collaboration between government and civil society, engaged communities to identify both challenges to implementing legislation on family violence and gaps in essential services guaranteed by law, and developed ministries' and providers' technical capacities; and (3) expanding access to services through hotlines, as well as mobile services for those hardest to reach. The programme's continued engagement and partnership with CSOs, particularly at the community level, have provided multiple opportunities to expand prevention and service delivery reaching marginalised and vulnerable populations. The Civil Society National Reference Group continued to strengthen its capacity and played a key role in the governance of the Programme. As such, despite ongoing economic and social challenges to implementation posed by COVID-19, the Spotlight Initiative achieved an over 80% implementation rate by end 2021 and is well poised to move into Phase II of implementation.

## Key Results:

- ✓ **Revisions of national legislation, policies, national plans, and protocols to strengthen the response to VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the National Women's Commission resulted in strengthened policy frameworks and national plans on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through the evaluation and

revision of the National GBV Action Plan and the National Gender Policy. The capacity of the security forces to respond to VAWG has increased through the development of a [Joint Sexual Violence Programme](#) with an action plan developed for implementation within three security forces (Police, Belize Defence Force, and Coast Guard). Safe Spaces were provided for survivors of violence, including rural and migrant women, through virtual community consultations on family law legislation with key government officials.

- ✓ **Addressing gaps in knowledge and behaviours, engaging men and boys, and tackling social norms to bring an end to VAWG (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Spotlight Initiative partnered with CSOs to expand [comprehensive sexuality education \(CSE\) to adolescents and youth](#) out of school and to train school communities to prevent, detect and respond to family violence. A cadre of [80 community-based youth master trainers](#) were trained to support the roll-out of CSE out of school and have subsequently trained almost 400 young people. Over [1,000 teachers and school administrators](#) were trained in the prevention of family violence creating safer school communities. The programme developed and delivered training which modelled positive behaviours and masculinity [addressing couples](#), including adolescents [in formal and informal unions](#), engaging participants to transform the imbalance of power and build healthy relationships, manage conflicts, and understand the roots of family violence. Boys were also trained in a peer education programme by Spouses of CARICOM Leaders Action Network and an [aggressive public awareness campaign](#) was conducted in various languages.
- ✓ **Expanded access to quality services for survivors of family violence, informed by evidence and enhanced by the development of protocols (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** Equipped with data from the [Spotlight Initiative Baseline Study](#), the initiative engaged a wide cross-section of stakeholders, inclusive of CSOs, to define an essential service package for Belize, in line with international standards. The development of the essential services package is complemented by [capacity building](#) of the social workforce, development of multi-sectoral protocols to guide coordinated and efficient service delivery and expansion of services to survivors of violence, which includes services for reporting of and responding to sexual violence, as well as the rollout of [mobile services](#), through the Mobile Women's Centre, to 1000 plus survivors and women at risk in hardest to reach communities. Belize now has access to globally comparable data on VAWG through the [completion of a comprehensive baseline study](#). The capabilities of the national system for case management and reporting for GBV are being expanded to build a harmonised system that will have M&E functions and allow for deeper analysis of GBV data. Support to the [Judiciary with ICT equipment](#) to address the backlog of cases allows for the continuation of hearings throughout the pandemic, or any unforeseen shocks, and improves case management and access to justice.
- ✓ **Building a robust civil society network (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** In 2021, Spotlight Initiative established key partnerships with 2 additional CSOs: the Belize National Indigenous Council, an umbrella organisation representing 3 indigenous CSOs and Belize Association of Planners. The Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG) has played a significant role in supporting the Initiative by presenting 4 Case Studies at the Human Rights Capacity Building Session in July/August 2021. This created a space for meaningful dialogue with a results-based approach and highlighted the important work of the CSNRG and CSOs in leaving no one behind and working towards eliminating VAWG.

## A Story of Impact: Engaging men and boys to advance gender equality and EVAWG

Belize has made progress in addressing the prevalent issue of GBV through various prevention interventions addressing individuals and communities. As a consequence, one of the outcomes within the National GBV Action Plan calls for men and boys' increased understanding of the dynamics of gender and violence and to be actively involved in reducing GBV. 'Engaging Men and Boys to Advance Gender Equality and Help Prevent Gender-Based Violence' is an initiative spearheaded by Spouses of CARICOM Leaders Action Network and the National Women's Commission with support from the Spotlight Initiative, which challenges traditional views about masculinity and gender by using role modelling and the positive deviance approach to transform attitudes and beliefs which contribute to family violence.

### Listen to "In their own words" from a Trainer of Trainers session...

[Engaging men and boys to end gender-based violence 1/2](#) and [2/2](#)

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices:

Over 1800 faith-based leaders, community leaders, including indigenous leaders and [women mobilizers trained](#) to implement interventions to address the root causes of family violence. This resulted in an expansion of support and services available to women and girls at the community level and capacity for community-led prevention. The Family Violence Toolkit was developed and implemented by Child Development Foundation, Through these interventions, 162 women suspected to be experiencing domestic violence were referred to the Child Development Foundation, 23 of these women were in serious situations and were provided with additional support, including protection.



# GRENADA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 2,474,962	 USD 1,650,000	 USD 824,962	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women, PAHO/WHO

**Other partners:** UNFPA; Government of Grenada, Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment; Women's Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs); and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)

## Context

Grenada ranks high on the UN Human Development Index, but the country is affected by the risks and vulnerabilities of small island developing states and the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Recent studies show female-headed households were poorer than male-headed households and, in 2021, the unemployment rate among female heads of households was 19.2% (9.8% for male heads of households). In 2021, there was an increase in intimate partner violence incidents and sexual offences reported to the police, and over 40% of the cases before the High Court were sexual offences. Also a large segment of the population expressed dissatisfaction with the sentences handed down to convicted offenders of sexual crimes. When delivering the Budget Speech, the Minister of Finance warned that the COVID-19 pandemic had threatened gains made in achieving gender equality and eradicating gender-based violence (GBV). While recognising the contribution that the Spotlight Initiative was expected to make, he further stated that the Government would implement gender mainstreaming, introduce gender budgeting, and require reporting on the gender impact of various initiatives in Grenada. The UN, the European Union, Government and civil society partners remained fully committed to the Programme and resolved to achieve meaningful results with and for the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. However, implementation continued to be affected by the under-developed institutional architecture for advancing gender equality, women's rights and ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG), combined with the effects of time-consuming administrative and operational processes; limited technical capacity; a weak women's movement and a civil society with few people and organisations leading advocacy and response. A level of compartmentalisation also became evident, resulting in fragmented responses in some cases. Despite the challenges, significant milestones were attained, paving the way for achieving greater results in the coming year.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

During 2021, the Grenada Spotlight Initiative, with the support of the European Union Delegation, moved towards reporting on progress, thereby bringing greater focus on the intended outcomes and results. The Programme, in line with UN Reform, continued to utilise various structures and processes to facilitate partnership, technical coherence and programme cohesion, while engagement with the Government for high-level national leadership, as well as other strategic stakeholders continued. The Civil Society National Reference Group was strengthened through the mobilisation of additional members; and representatives were selected for the governance and implementation structures. In addition, the women's movement and civil society played central roles in programme implementation as partners and grantees, through consultations, training activities, and governance. Further, the Programme generated greater visibility for the Spotlight Initiative, its partners, and results, especially within Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The principle of "leave no one behind" was incorporated into policies and the delivery of services, such as identifying strategies for making information and support services accessible for people with hearing and visual impairment. Being victim/survivor centred and using gender equality and human rights-based approaches, programme implementation increasingly adopted the objective of mainstreaming women's rights, while supporting men's engagement for gender equality. Therefore, progress made towards all six outcomes applied the initiative's core principles and contributed to EVAWG.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Rights of victims and survivors were amplified in the national discourse (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 3: Prevention):** A National Gender-Based Violence Victims'/Survivors' Rights Policy for Grenada was drafted, with input from government institutions and CSOs, to highlight how the rights-based approach should be applied by duty bearers. Facilitators were trained in engaging men to prevent intimate partner violence and sexual abuse and reduce harmful masculinities through



the CSO-led Batterer Intervention and Foundations Programmes. Young men were enrolled in an emerging programme entitled “from boys to men” and thirty-five parents and guardians from rural communities participated in the National Parenting Programme. The education sector trained teachers, principals, and counsellors to incorporate comprehensive sexuality education and gender equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours into the school curriculum. Consultations on the reintegration of adolescent mothers in school commenced, and several pieces of draft position papers and bills were prepared. To facilitate cohesive rights-based prevention, the Programme developed communication for development (C4D) messaging to address the root causes of GBV. These aimed at ensuring that the rights-based approach became entrenched across sectors and the strategies for prevention.

- ✓ **Strengthening national institutions, the women’s movement and civil society (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 6: Women’s Movements and Civil Society):** The programme commenced research and consultations to create a national coordinating mechanism, four sub-national coordinating mechanisms, and a National Gender Equality Commission; and for introducing gender-responsive budgeting in two Ministries of Government. A module for training public officials on GBV was piloted and eighteen people completed a ten-week course on Gender Analysis and Mainstreaming for Development Professionals. An assessment of the women’s movement and civil society was undertaken, paving the way for a capacity development programme that would respond to their needs. Five organisations accessed small grants that included support for their development. About 250 women and men participated in training activities, and dozens more in consultations.
- ✓ **Key institutions develop capacity to provide expanded services and collect administrative data (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** The National Standard Operating Procedures were approved by the Cabinet to guide the provision of essential services by the police, justice, health, and social sectors. The capacity of over 100 service providers was strengthened through training in case management, crisis management and sign language. Seven CSOs provided information and services to victims and survivors, including one in a new component of support – entrepreneurship skills training. Victims and survivors from rural communities had increased access to services, as the GBV Unit expanded to provide weekly services at two sub-offices of the Ministry of Social Development and case managers were deployed to different parishes. Twenty Government Officials and two members of civil society improved their capacities for data management and processing, data safety and security, and presenting different types of data to policy makers, while the system for collecting and analysing administrative data was being developed. These were accompanied by the retrofitting of facilities and provision of equipment to enable sustainable transformations in service delivery. Over five hundred victims and survivors benefited from the improved services.

## One Story of Impact: Providing Enabling Conditions for Quality Services

The Gender Based Violence Unit within the Division of Gender and Family Affairs of the Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment, leads the Government’s response to GBV and provides psychosocial services and long-term case management for adult victims and survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual abuse. Up to 2021, the Unit lacked the ability to provide confidential survivor support and interviewing, in a safe and private space. The Spotlight Programme secured another room in the Ministry, which was retrofitted and furnished as a private “interview room.” Now the unit can offer safe and confidential access to support women and girls.

### In her own words...

“The newly retrofitted rights holders interview room has been in use. It offers a comfortable space for them to relax on a couch to discuss their case without the interruptions that we faced years prior. Recently, we had a pregnant woman who fell ill in the room. We were able to keep her comfortable while organising transportation to take her to the hospital. This week we had another right holder with mobility issues due to a stroke. We were able to comfortably accommodate her in the space. We are ecstatic about this.”  
- Ms. Nicole Neva Pitt, GBV Programme Officer (Head of the Gender Based Violence Unit), Ministry of Social Development, Housing & Community Development

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

During 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Programme built upon the good practices developed during the previous year of implementation engaging Government for high-level national leadership and creating structures for increased partnership, technical coherence and programme cohesion. In 2021, the programme created the following structures: continuous engagement with strategic stakeholders; fixed weekly Programme Coordination and Implementation Unit meetings; knowledge sharing with other countries; celebrating results; and monitoring and engaging the local media. Combined, these good practices contributed to mitigating challenges and risks, furthering the successes seen in 2021, and preparing for more meaningful and sustainable results as implementation of the Grenada Spotlight Initiative continues.

# GUYANA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 4,105,441	 USD 3,700,000	 USD 409,380	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** ILO, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNAIDS, Ministries of Human Services and Social Security; Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Finance; Health; Home Affairs; Education; Legal Affairs; Local Government and Regional Development; Amerindian Affairs, Guyana Police Force, Director of Public Prosecutions, Regional and Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, Office of the President, Village Councils, State Institutions, Civil Society Organizations, National Toshias Council, Women's Arms of Political Parties

## Context

Guyana's legal framework addressing violence against women and girls (VAWG) is relatively strong. The country has signed three international women's rights conventions and enacted 12 relevant major laws. However, while the legislation is in place, limited implementation and enforcement, existing negative social norms and behaviour, and challenges with service delivery, make the prevention and response efforts to address VAWG and broader Gender-Based Violence (GBV) difficult. The 2018 Women's Health and Life Experiences survey showed 55% of women aged 15 to 64 had experienced some sort of violence, while 4 in 10 had experienced physical and/or sexual violence from an intimate partner in the 12 months preceding the interview. The factors that exacerbate men's violence as purported by the research include conflicts arising from men's frustration with loss of employment and high rates of alcohol consumption among men. Finally, the challenges of COVID -19 persisted during 2021 and the country experienced major flooding throughout the ten administrative regions, which resulted in disruptions to the livelihood of many. Notwithstanding this, the Spotlight Initiative programme in Guyana adapted to the new context of working and has made progress in the rollout of the initiative.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

During 2021, with the support from the European Union, and under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the Heads of UN Agencies, along with state and non-state actors, and the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (the lead government partner), the Spotlight Initiative Guyana initiated several activities across the six thematic areas of the initiative. This was achieved through collaboration with stakeholders at every level in keeping with the tenets of the UN Reform and 'leaving no one behind.' Consequently, strategic partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) were formalized to implement community-driven programmes to increase knowledge and awareness of family violence, its impacts, and opportunities available for survivors, including referral services. Capacity building sessions were held with youths, community and faith-based leaders, parents, and teachers on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, life skills, and GBV related issues. Consultations with stakeholders on legislative analysis, and a readiness assessment for the GBV Essential Services Package were also convened to identify the gaps and recommend best practices in keeping with international standards.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Evidence-driven law enhancement, programmes and policies made possible through improved research and strengthening the national database on VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 5: Data):** Two comprehensive research reports were completed with recommendations for the strengthening of the existing legislation and policies on ending VAWG. These focused on new and emerging forms of violence and a legislative analysis of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences legislations. Based on this foundational work, a new Domestic Violence Bill 2021 was drafted, with a view to rendering further support to efforts to protect survivors. As a precursor to the development of the national database to further inform policies and provide evidenced-based analysis, one hundred and twenty-two (122) participants from across varying agencies and ministries including Ministries of Human Services and Social Security, Health, Education, Home Affairs/Guyana Police Force, Legal Affairs, Governance and Parliamentary Affairs, the Judiciary, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Regional Administrations, Amerindian Village Councils in the piloted regions and CSOs were trained in GBV data collection, analysis and use.
- ✓ **Strengthening Institutions and essential services to meet International standards. (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** A *Readiness Assessment* for strengthening the GBV Essential Services Package in Guyana (in line with international

standards) was undertaken to review existing services and to identify gaps in essential services delivery in Spotlight Initiative's target regions. A report, including data analysis and recommendations to address gaps at the central and decentralized levels within target regions, was provided. To enhance the essential services delivery in Region 6, two Child Advocacy Centres were operationalised to respond to the incidences of child sexual abuse, in partnership with the Child Care and Protection Agency under the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the CSO ChildLink Inc. A digital platform called **iMatter.gy** was developed to provide GBV survivors and persons at risk of GBV with an additional option for seeking support. This App serves as a central online portal for members of the public, providing current information on GBV essential services, laws and policies, information, and resources on various forms of GBV in Guyana, as well as linking to the national GBV Hotline service. In partnership with the University of Guyana, a specialized course on addressing family and gender-based violence was developed with the aim of providing students with an introductory course that raises awareness on GBV. The Spotlight Initiative also completed preliminary work on costing national plans of action on GBV, which are expected to provide a framework for strengthening institutions to adequately prevent and respond to GBV.

- ✓ **Broad-based social change for gender equality accelerated (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Community-based engagements are critical to realizing the transformative social change for gender equality. Hence several community-based activities continued across all the target communities including the development of toolkits, a manual for engaging faith-based and community leaders respectively, empowerment of youths through the Foundations Programme to prevent GBV by understanding the root causes; and the creation of a network of young people who will advocate for non-violent relationships. Over 2,000 persons were reached with information on GBV, health, education, referrals and the justice system via radio, TV, and community engagements with shopkeepers, faith-based organizations, youth and sports groups and members of the communities. Spotlight Initiative focused on building the capacities of CSOs through the development of accountability mechanisms, and the strengthening of their technical and operational capacities to improve the advocacy and prevention of VAWG.

## One Story of Impact: Promoting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion among the Sports Community

The Spotlight Initiative in Guyana recognises the importance of engaging important and culturally influential stakeholders to holistically address GBV. To promote an end to GBV in sport, the SI worked with the two premiere sports organisations in Guyana - the Guyana Cricket Board and the Guyana Football Federation - to adopt a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy. This policy included standards on dealing with sexual harassment, bullying, exploitation and abuse with steps for handling cases. Both sporting bodies outlined their zero-tolerance stance for any players or staff found to have committed GBV. With these two influential stakeholders taking a stand against GBV, they offer an important statement that carries cultural significance, particularly for men and boys. The Initiative also collaborated with the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and a local CSO to conduct sensitisation sessions with coaches, players, and executive members from the two sports entities. Discussions surrounded: understanding GBV, understanding masculinities and violence, and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy. Both organisations expressed their commitment to ensuring that the tenets of zero-tolerance, inclusion and equality are promoted within their organisations. In 2022, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy is expected to be officially adopted.

### In their own words...

"The Spotlight Initiative is tremendously community-driven and grassroots oriented. It has also increased the reach of persons looking to access GBV services. It has taken the resources into the communities and made it culturally suitable for people to access." – *Dmitri Nicholson, Executive Director, Youth Challenge Guyana*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Spotlight Initiative, in partnership with the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, created a GBV App that is now accessible to the public. This App allows anyone affected by violence to access information and the various agencies that can offer support or assistance. Users can also find the list of support services by region, information on any given GBV situation, laws pertaining to GBV and answers to frequently asked questions. Its design was informed by mapping GBV services in Guyana and supports the development of referral pathways for survivors. The app is easy to use and can be downloaded on any mobile phone and does not require internet connectivity to access information.

# HAITI 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 10,627,880	 USD 9,900,000	 USD 727,880	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other partners:** Ministry for Women's Status and Women's Rights; Planning and External Cooperation; Social Affairs and Labour; Public Health and Population; Education and Vocational Training; Justice and Public Security (National Police of Haiti, Brigade Protection of Minors); Interior and Territorial Communities, Citizen Protection Office, Civil Society Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations

## Context

The ongoing socio-political crisis in Haiti was further exacerbated in 2021 by the assassination of President Jovenel Moise. Haiti has also faced an upsurge of insecurity due to gang-related violence, particularly in the Port-au-Prince metropolitan area, where kidnappings and homicides increased by 180% and 17% respectively in relation to 2020. Further gang-related violence led to the internal displacement of 19,000 people in the capital. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains prevalent. An average of 75 cases a month of sexual VAWG linked to gang attacks and kidnapping have been reported. This situation affects the capacity of the Spotlight Initiative partners to reach out to communities in areas of the city under the control of armed groups. The country also remains vulnerable to natural hazards. The southern peninsula was hit by a 7.2 magnitude earthquake on August 14th, severely affecting two departments, Grand'Anse and the South, supported by the Spotlight Initiative. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be of concern, but its impact on the programme was overall limited thanks to the mitigation measures undertaken.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative and its key partners, including especially the European Union Delegation, continue pushing forward the national response to VAWG. In 2021, in the spirit of UN reform, Recipient United Nation Organizations and implementing partners of the Spotlight Initiative accelerated programme delivery, focusing on the development and the implementation of high impact strategies for prevention and response to VAWG. These include strengthening behavior change communication interventions through formal and non-formal education platforms, promoting positive masculinity through role modeling, and improving the system for providing legal assistance to survivors of violence. Further, a gap analysis of the national legal framework was conducted, laying the foundation for improving the protection of women and girls against violence. Several public institutions also improved their capacity in gender sensitive programming and budgeting with the aim of increasing government's ownership of the response to violence affecting women and girls in Haiti.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Laying the foundation for laws which better protect women and girls from violence (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** A gap analysis of various legal instruments, in relation to international norms on VAWG was conducted under the leadership of the Ministry for Women Conditions and Rights. These include laws against rape and interpersonal or family violence, the penal code and civil laws. This achievement contributes to laying the foundation for reform of the legislative framework to better protect women and girls against violence in Haiti. Further, 18 staff of the Office for the Protection of Citizens (the national human rights institution) were skilled in the surveillance of human rights violations, especially the rights of women and girls.
- ✓ **Survivors' access to referral services, legal support and shelter expanded (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 4: Services):** The total number of women and girls survivors of physical and sexual violence who received medical and psychosocial support from field-based Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) service partners doubled from 2,139 in 2020 to 4,691 in 2021. Shelter was provided to 208 survivors including 23 children. Capacity building activities trained 66 CSO staff in community case management (psychological and social support) of VAWG and in case referral. Seventy care providers (physicians, nurses, midwives, social workers, and psychologists) were also skilled in psychosocial support for survivors of physical and sexual violence. A needs assessment was conducted in 11 new health facilities in preparation for strengthening integration of gender based violence (GBV) care and treatment into existing services. To enhance legal assistance to survivors,



a guidance note based on good practices in Haiti was developed, and 20 women's rights organizations were skilled in provision of legal assistance.

- ✓ **Responding to VAWG through state implemented mechanisms (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 5: Data):** The public sector represents an important lever in the prevention of, and institutional and state response to, VAWG. In this respect, a needs assessment was conducted in four key government institutions in preparation for building their capacity in implementing gender sensitive programming and budgeting. Following this, a training plan and modules for public institutions were drafted. This intervention will contribute to increasing government ownership of the response. The coordination capacity of field offices of the Ministry for Women Conditions and Rights in five departments has been strengthened through the supply of equipment and material (solar kits, computers, and routers for internet connection). To improve monitoring and reporting on human rights, the Inter-ministerial Committee on Human Rights has been equipped with computer hardware to strengthen database management. The programme is also engaged in supporting the Haitian Civil Protection Agency for integration of gender-based violence in regional and municipalities' development plans.
- ✓ **Holistic approach to VAWG prevention through CSO-led interventions (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Through CSO partnerships, an additional 16,572 adolescents participated in VAWG prevention programmes in the four regions supported by the Spotlight Initiative, including through the implementation of the SASA (Start, Awareness, Support, Action) approach. The programme has been successful in supporting integration of a module on GBV and positive masculinity into the curriculum of the Department of Education Science of the Grand'Anse Public University, which graduates the majority of staff in the education system. A total of 101 students participated in the programme this year. Additionally, in accordance with the principle of leaving no one behind, to reach people with hearing impairment, particularly women and girls, 25 leaders from CSOs were trained in sign language for communicating on VAWG. Further, a total of 58,324 people – primarily women – were sensitized on prevention of VAWG through the community platform and 6,569 adults and young men were skilled as "champions" for promoting gender-sensitive social norms in their communities. Moreover, to increase their engagement and leadership, 60 women rights organizations were skilled in project design and management, as well as in advocacy. Sixty leaders from 20 women organizations skilled in public policy monitoring were able to assess the implementation of the national gender equality policy. The programme further supported forums in three departments, gathering 204 leaders of women rights organizations and representatives from public institutions to promote public and social accountability regarding prevention and response to VAWG.

## One Story of Impact: From domestic servant to student - supporting young Haitians to leave violence

Magda was only 11 when she lost her mother. Treated as a live-in servant by the family that was supposed to care for her, Magda was forced to work long hours cleaning the house and was often accused of not doing enough. When she failed to "meet standards," she was physically and verbally punished. GHESKIO, a Spotlight Initiative-supported organization, heard about Magda through their community outreach activities. They intervened on her behalf and facilitated her transfer to a safe home, provided her with counseling and helped her achieve a scholarship so that she could return to school after 8 years of servitude. Today, Magda goes to school, hoping to be a doctor one day. [Discover the full story of how the Spotlight Initiative impacted Magda's life for the better.](#)

### In her own words....

"I would like to thank the people who made it possible for me to receive this scholarship, because now I am going to school for the first time," says *Magda*. "Going to school will help me lift my family out of poverty and help me become a doctor one day."

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

To build resilience among women surviving violence, the programme is supporting the development of community level mutual aid fund initiatives to benefit vulnerable women, including survivors. In partnership with a local CSO, 12 mutual aid groups (MAGs) have been set up in three municipalities in the North-Eastern region. The project aims to improve the living conditions of vulnerable women and self-reliance among survivors of violence. The groups' members contribute to regular savings and benefit from small loans for income generating activities. There are 350 participants as of end 2021 and 60 survivors benefited from micro loans in 2021. Participants in the mutual aid groups are also sensitized on prevention of VAWG, and the groups further serve as a platform for mediation in cases of conflict between women and their partners.



# JAMAICA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 7,833,390	 USD 6,600,000	 USD 1,233,390	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF

**Other partners:** PAHO, UNESCO, UNAIDS, Ministries of Culture; Gender; Entertainment and Sport; Education, Youth, and Information; National Security; Justice; Health and Wellness; Finance; Labour and Social Security; Local Government and Rural Development Planning, Planning Institute of Jamaica, Statistical Institute of Jamaica, Non-governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Private Sector, Jamaica Household Workers Union, Jamaica Council of Churches

## Context

Jamaica is ranked 96 out of 189 countries in the United Nations 2019 Human Development Index. Despite Jamaica's improved scorecard of 0.754 in the Human Development Index, the country remains challenged by high rates of social inequality, evidenced by widespread poverty, unemployment, and substandard infrastructure. Additionally, gender-based violence, primarily affecting women and girls, remains a chronic problem. The World Bank Jamaica Country Gender Scorecard (2021) asserted that one in every four Jamaican women (25.2%) have experienced physical violence from a male partner whilst (47.3%) of ever partnered women have been subjected to controlling behaviours. There have been several interventions undertaken by the government and CSOs to address existing gender gaps, including improving women's access to quality employment and facilitating school to work transition. Furthermore, a cadre of civil society organizations (CSOs), including social interest groups and community-based organizations, have made concerted efforts to advocate for the rights of women and other vulnerable groups. However, they are challenged by cost constraints and human resource limitations.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

Under the shared vision of eliminating violence against women and girls (VAWG), the principles of interagency coordination and leaving no one behind, are key to advancing the goals of the Spotlight Initiative in Jamaica, which is supported by the European Union. The Spotlight Initiative contributes to the body of knowledge on effective strategies and approaches for the elimination of VAWG and is particularly focused on domestic violence and child abuse. The Spotlight Initiative's work in Jamaica provides the impetus for fostering the common vision and levels of coordination, involving varied ministries, agencies, and CSOs, that are needed to ensure that survivors of VAWG have access to quality services. The Spotlight Initiative in Jamaica is instrumental in providing financial and technical support to these organizations and supporting CSO-led national and subnational programmes that encourage changes in perceptions and attitudes that perpetuate gender-based violence (GBV).

## Key Results

- ✓ **Laws and policies improved for women and girl survivors (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** The Spotlight Initiative was a leading advocate for the adoption of key policy positions, strengthening the legislative environment for VAWG prevention in 2021. Spotlight Initiative recommendations were incorporated in the review of the Domestic Violence, the Sexual Offences, the Offences Against the Person, and the Childcare and Protection Acts. The Senate passed the Sexual Harassment Bill, with significant contributions from the Spotlight Initiative. Additionally, a women's parliamentary caucus is being established as a collaborative space for all women parliamentarians to network and engage in a productive dialogue on issues of women's rights and gender equality, and to impact the inclusiveness of the legislature and legislative process.
- ✓ **Strengthened capacity of seven CSOs to EVAWG through grant funding (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** These grants supported the expansion of CSOs technical capacity and their ability to scale-up existing initiatives aimed at ending VAWG, including advocacy, service delivery, programming, and creating safe spaces. The grant funding was also an effective medium for engaging vulnerable populations that reflect SI Jamaica's emphasis on inclusiveness, a key principle of leaving no one behind.

- ✓ **Challenging attitudes to shift harmful gender norms at the community level (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 3: Prevention):** CSOs are at the forefront of prevention strategies aimed at challenging and changing harmful social norms, attitudes and practices through community mobilization interventions, complemented by media campaigns and the engagement of VAWG Change Champions. Several community-based initiatives, including the Children First Theatre for Development, the Community Change Champions, the Fight for Peace and the Peace Management initiatives trained community members on GBV and community-led advocacy in response to family violence. The Spotlight Initiative also enabled the development of a parenting curriculum, equipping 659 parents with information on the drivers of GBV.
- ✓ **Improved access to quality essential services for all women and girls (Pillar 4: Services):** The Spotlight Initiative enabled increased access to affordable and quality essential services for survivors of VAWG. The establishment of 6 Domestic Violence Intervention Centres at selected police stations across the island served 619 clients. The centres provided counseling services or referrals to shelters and other service providers. The Spotlight Initiative also enhanced the capacity of 768 first-line health responders (656 females) in the health, police, justice and social sectors, on working with survivors, GBV laws in Jamaica, available social services and the referral pathway.
- ✓ **Generate and disseminate globally comparable data on the prevalence of VAWG (Pillar 5: Data):** *An Assessment of the Causes and Impacts of VAWG and Support Services in Jamaica* was completed, providing a qualitative analysis on experiences of violence of marginalized groups of women who may suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Key findings revealed women who did not view physical abuse as GBV, but rather normal behaviour within relationships. These sentiments were prevalent within inner-city communities, remote rural areas or among women with lower educational attainment. In recognition of the fact that violence imposes costs on individuals, as well as the country, the *National Study on the Economic Costs of Violence Against Women and Girls in Jamaica* was completed. The report establishes a comprehensive economic costing model for Jamaica, to estimate the cost of violence against women and girls. The costing model covers several important services such as healthcare, law enforcement, social services and specialized services and includes out-of-pocket personal costs incurred by VAWG survivors, cost of learning time lost at schools, and an estimation of income loss due to women being absent from paid work and household activities.

## One Story of Impact: Raising awareness through multiple communication channels

Spotlight Shorts Jamaica is a storytelling initiative that leverages the power of film to relate the stories of real-life survivors of GBV and reveals the social and cultural norms which drive this form of violence in Jamaica. The campaign produced a cadre of filmmakers, both male and female, with the capacity to use their medium of film to advocate on issues of GBV and gender equality. The four films (**Kindle: Story of a Woman on Fire; Boy, Girl and All the Rest; I was only Twelve; and Absolute Power**) capture the three areas of focus of SI Jamaica – Intimate Partner Violence, Sexual Abuse of the Girl Child and Vulnerable Groups. The four short films were screened nationally to members of the filmmaking community, The Spotlight Initiative communities, CSOs, the EU, the government and the UN. Over 1185 persons watched the live stream on Facebook and YouTube channels. A television discussion on the themes of the SI Shorts aired a few days after the national screening.

### In their own words...

"All the films brought home the stories in very relatable and impactful ways" and he described the film which looked at one vulnerable group as "thought-provoking and evoking a lot of empathy." He pointed to the need for wider dissemination of the films saying this would be "transformational." - *Head of the National Broadcasting Committee*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

An innovative practice in 2021 was the development and launch of the HOPE (Helping Our People Emerge) APP, to increase the legal literacy and awareness about availability and accessibility of services for survivors of GBV, among marginalized communities. The App was developed and validated in consultation with the intended users, including representatives of women living with HIV, transgender populations, women/girls with disabilities, LGBTQI+, sex workers, cohabitating teenage girls, pregnant women, and teenage mothers. The App has emerged as an innovative approach to reach marginalized communities, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when face-to-face activities are reduced, and the use of mobile phones, tablets and other Information and Communication Technology equipment has increased for school, socialization and work-related purposes. Its interactive interface has the potential to be a sustainable way to reach the wider public for training and skill-building activities.

# TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 4,515,210	 USD 3,700,000	 USD 815,210	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNFPA, UN Women, UNICEF, PAHO, UNDP

**Other partners:** Office of the Prime Minister Gender and Child Affairs Division, Regional Health Authorities, Trinidad & Tobago Police Service (TTPS), the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago, Tobago House of Assembly, Children’s Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, Tunapuna/Piarco Regional Corporation, Mayaro/Rio Claro Regional Corporation, national and grassroots organisations, Women’s rights organisations, Academic Institutions, National Trade Union Centre, Employers Consultative Association, Ministries of: Health, Planning and Development, Social Development and Family Services, Education, Digital Transformation and National Security, Office of the Attorney General and EU Delegation.

## Context

Trinidad and Tobago has an architecture of laws, policies, institutions, and groups with significant advocacy experience on ending violence against women and girls (VAWG). However, reports of gender-based violence (GBV) remain high and rose significantly during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Restrictions were further tightened during the Government imposed State of Emergency (April-November 2021), inhibiting in-person interactions and presenting risks for women, girls and vulnerable groups exposed to violence within the home. Additionally, during the first quarter of the year, the country was plunged into nationwide mourning due to the brutal kidnappings, sexual assault and murders of several young women while taking public transportation. Moreover, the National Strategic Action Plan on Gender-based and Sexual Violence, the comprehensive guiding framework for addressing GBV in the country, has not been approved by Cabinet to date. Government and civil society partners have a wealth of expertise and experience as responders and service providers, yet remain limited by capacity constraints and siloed approaches.

## Spotlight Initiative’s Response

The Spotlight Initiative in Trinidad and Tobago is building on the country’s legal and institutional framework and history of advocacy by working in three communities (Tunapuna/Piarco, Mayaro/Rio Claro, and Tobago) to adopt an approach for a comprehensive and integrated national strategy. The programme is also leveraging the UN’s technical expertise and experience on relevant human rights issues and development programming. Moreover, with the support of the European Union and leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and the Heads of implementing Agencies in line with UN Reform, the Spotlight Initiative quickly adapted its 2021 programming to address the COVID-19 related challenges of increased VAWG and lack of access to marginalised groups, making sure to leave no one behind. The Spotlight Initiative supported the continuation and strengthening of services for women and girls facing violence and coordinated to train service providers in remote service provision.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Tailored capacity building supports high quality services (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** Following extensive consultations with key national stakeholders, as well as survivors, the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service led by the Police Academy, launched gender-responsive policing training in 2021 with over 70 participants to date. The training used global best-practices in gender-responsive policing and victim and survivor-centred, trauma-informed approaches. This marked the start of a successful partnership with police institutions, including the Police Academy Gender-Based Violence Unit and the Victim and Witness Support Unit, to professionalise the police service and uphold the duty of care to those seeking support and services. It is envisioned that this training will be rolled out to the current cadre of 7,000+ officers, and incorporated into the curriculum for future recruits. Similarly, following the completion of the National Clinical and Policy Guidelines on intimate partner violence and sexual violence, the health sector committed to a comprehensive sensitization programme for front-line health care workers. With 25 personnel from the 5 Regional Health Authorities receiving a Train-the-Trainer package, these persons were then supported to train their colleagues on quality of care for GBV survivors, with 130+ beneficiaries to date. Furthermore, training to re-engineer the attitudes of key staff at the Judiciary and Law Association, which started in 2020, concluded with the

participation of 585 judges, judicial staff and members of the Law Association. This training will provide a more sensitive and gender-responsive environment for survivors in the Family and Children's Courts.

- ✓ **An integrated approach to data and knowledge management across government and state agencies for improved communication towards ending VAWG (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative continues to lay the foundation for a unified system to collect, manage, and analyse data on VAWG, including types of violence experienced and use of services. With special concern for girls, the Children's Authority was supported to update case management procedures, workflow processes, and a new data system to facilitate information sharing among Government Ministries and State agencies, non-governmental organisations, hospitals, police, and other child protection actors, thus limiting gaps in referral. To support a truly comprehensive strategy, in 2021, an assessment of the data systems in use by front line responders across the relevant sectors was completed. Additionally, evidence-based communications products using local data sources and WHO good practice guidance were disseminated to Regional Health Authorities throughout the target communities with civil society and government support, to strengthen care for survivors. The Spotlight team also continued the development of an electronic health information system (the first of its kind in the Americas) to strengthen documentation of sexual and intimate partner violence reported in health care settings, and the monitoring of quality of care provided and referrals made to other agencies by health-care providers.
- ✓ **Work with youth lays a foundation for normative change (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Through the Spotlight Initiative, the Ministry of Education received support to train 4,000 teachers in the use of online platforms, including the incorporation of a GBV module "FASO" (fun and safety online), potentially benefiting over 70,000 primary and secondary school students. Work on primary prevention programming with out-of-school youth relaunched, benefitting over 900 participants from Police Youth Clubs and 130 parents, caregivers and their children through the Collaborative HIV and AIDS Mental Health Project (CHAMP), which has been adapted to specifically address family violence. In 2021, men and boys in leadership positions were targeted to tackle gender stereotypes, create healthy relationships and navigate conflict. Additionally, In 2021, an instrumental study on social and cultural norms contributing to violence against children was completed, and a widespread communication campaign was launched in collaboration with the Children's Authority.

## One Story of Impact: Reaching across the negotiating aisle

Spotlight Initiative strengthened engagement with the private sector in 2021 through partnerships with the Employers' Consultative Association (ECA) and the National Trade Union Centre (NATUC). Both ECA and NATUC undertook the development of workplace policies on GBV, recognising that GBV has important implications for the workplace that need attention from employers and business leaders. While traditional Human Resource policies have a singular focus, these innovative draft model workplace policies address several core issues, including family violence and GBV in the workplace, particularly sexual harassment. It also provides best practice approaches for establishing a complaints mechanism system to report alleged violations. To bolster these achievements, both organisations undertook the development of a joint workplace policy on GBV, which will be completed in 2022. As a result of the Spotlight Initiative's support, these two organisations, typically on opposing ends of the negotiating spectrum for the private sector, have mutually recognised that GBV must be prioritised and efforts collaborated.

### In her own words...


"This training increased my consciousness about how I create an environment of confidentiality and give clients hope as they navigate their options." – *Vickey Valley, Medical Social Worker*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative supports the meaningful engagement of civil society, ensuring local and grassroots organisations can bring to bear their on-the-ground experience to tackle violence through advocacy and enhanced service provision for survivors. In 2021, several organisations were trained and supported to develop human rights literacy outreach campaigns for their respective communities, with the goal of empowering communities to address issues related to VAWG. An umbrella modality approach was employed whereby an established CSO was contracted as the key implementing partner to coordinate and support the execution of activities by multiple smaller CSOs, many of whom demonstrated weaker project management and administration skills. With this system, these grassroots organisations can focus on core activities related to effective implementation, while receiving technical and administrative support, thus allowing for optimisation of resources. Further, this allows for networking and collaboration amongst CSOs of varying capacities, which facilitate knowledge exchange and synergies.



# Caribbean Regional Programme 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 11,360,711	 USD 9,552,830	 USD 1,807,881	Jul 2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF

**Other partners:** ILO, PAHO, ECLAC, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean Examinations Council, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency, Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers, Governments, non-governmental organisations, regional trade unions, employers' federation

## Context

CARICOM Member States have dedicated domestic violence legislation that also advances child protection. Many States have drafted national action plans and strategies to address Gender-Based Violence (GBV), in which ending family or Domestic Violence is prioritized. While these laws have improved some women's access to justice, recent prevalence surveys<sup>1</sup> on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) suggest that a significant number of women experience intimate partner violence and do not access justice. The studies demonstrate the link between VAWG and Family Violence. Alongside and feeding into system inadequacies, patriarchy and gender inequality persist, contributing to high levels of VAWG. In 2021, contracted economies, job losses and extended periods of COVID-19 induced lockdowns, which resulted in the closure of schools, essential services, and businesses, deepening economic insecurity, stress, and uncertainty. These circumstances increased the risk of VAWG and family violence within the home. In several countries in the region, media reports of domestic violence increased substantially. In addition, natural disasters like the La Soufriere volcano eruption in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Hurricane Elsa that directly affected the region but mostly Barbados, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia, as well as earthquakes in Haiti were a constant threat to human security.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

With the support of the European Union and complemented by the Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes in six Caribbean countries,<sup>2</sup> the Regional Programme, in line with UN Reform, works in partnership with leading regional institutions to increase policy coordination and functional cooperation across the region to address family violence. The programme works to set regional standards for essential services delivery and for monitoring the implementation of regional and national family violence laws and policies, advance best practice models for prevention, and ensure the engagement of women's organisations in regional accountability frameworks. It also works to address specific regional institutional bottlenecks that impede or limit the reach of technical support to respond to and prevent family violence in CARICOM member states. In particular, the Regional Programme supports CARICOM and the OECS as the two inter-governmental organisations leading functional cooperation in the region. The Spotlight initiative provides technical expertise and resources to ensure that the COVID-19 response is shaped by women's involvement in community and national decision-making, to ensure the accessibility of services to prevent and protect against family violence. In 2021, many of the interventions took off in earnest and implementation is underway.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Strengthening regional standards and coordination for prevention of and response to family violence & VAWG (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 3: Prevention):** For the first time in the Caribbean, *guidelines on the integration of VAWG/family violence in Disaster Risk Reduction and Management* including COVID-19 response were developed. This is a significant achievement in positioning gender, VAWG and family violence in the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency's work. The guidelines, which will be finalised and officially endorsed by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency early in 2022; will support the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy and promote awareness of definitions, tools, databases, key publications and reports available on GBV in the Caribbean. A manual on *Gender Responsive Budgeting* has been drafted, following an extensive desk review and internal consultations on the regional approach to gender responsive budgeting and gaps within GBV policies and programming. Data collection is in progress from key government and regional institutions in Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, the CARICOM Secretariat, OECS Secretariat and the Caribbean Development Bank. An Essential Services Package Community of Practice was created as a new regional inter-agency and multi-sectoral cooperation

<sup>1</sup> [Caribbean Women Count](#)

<sup>2</sup> These countries are Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

mechanism. The community of practice promotes exchange, cooperation and learning among regional institutions representing health, social services, justice and policing, and education sectors under the framework of the essential services package. There's an additional focus on the Minimum Standards for GBV in emergencies programming, to ensure a humanitarian-development nexus approach.

- ✓ **Institutions of socialization (schools, media and cultural influencers) mobilised and equipped to implement and monitor prevention programmes (Pillar 3: Prevention):** The region is better equipped to formulate policies and programmes on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) within the Health and Family Life Education curriculum in schools as a result of a *Formative Assessment of CSE in the Caribbean* completed in 2021. Regional standards for monitoring and evaluation guidelines and tools used to assess the impact of CSE, through Health and Family Life Education, have also been developed. These standards will ensure that data collection and analysis are executed in a standardised way across the region. Further, the international guidance on out-of-school CSE was adapted to the Caribbean context and a Caribbean Toolkit for CSOs developed to implement out of school CSE reaching the most vulnerable and marginalised youth, ensuring no one is left behind. A *Social and Behaviour Change Communication strategy* has been drafted and assets for a communication campaign to address VAWG in the Caribbean have been developed using a participatory design, production and implementation approach. The campaign addresses stereotypes and VAWG drivers in collaboration with Caribbean media, advertising communities, traditional and non-traditional influencers, and the private sector.
- ✓ **Notable progress towards strengthened standardized data collection and improved analysis for evidence-based policy development (Pillar 5: Data):** There is progress towards building a better understanding of child marriage and early unions in the Caribbean. The Institute for Gender and Development Studies University of the West Indies, St Augustine, is leading this work with support from an Advisory group. The methodology and interview guidelines were developed, CSO researchers trained, and data collection is underway. Further, the Spotlight Initiative is increasing regional capacity of to address the economic costs of GBV and sexual harassment in targeted sectors. Five young researchers, competitively selected, are accompanying and understudying a lead researcher who is conducting a regional study on the economic costs of sexual harassment in the workplace. This is contributing to building a talent pipeline in the region.
- ✓ **Women's rights CSOs working to prevent family violence and VAWG, are better resourced to improve their business capacity (Pillar 6: Women's movements and Civil Society):** Nine CSOs across the sub-region were selected through a competitive process to receive small grants to build the business capacity of emerging women's rights organisations that provide family violence/VAWG services or conduct family violence advocacy work. The small grants were advertised across the region in August 2021, and a series of virtual town-halls were held to guide applicants on the application process. Materials for capacity building of CSOs that include individual mentoring and business coaching were completed, which will be delivered through a formal and comprehensive 6-month training, to support sustainability of women's rights organisations.

## One Story of Impact: The Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health

The Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health was launched in collaboration with the Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation. The launch was attended by 157 from around the region, including government, civil society, rights holders and development partners. The Observatory is a platform designed to support the improvement of quality analysis, through the collection of disaggregated and comparable data on sexual and reproductive health in the region, to better inform laws, policies and programmes, and thereby supporting more enabling environments for sexual and reproductive health for all communities, and the underserved in particular.

### In their own words...

"The Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and Reproductive Health has provided a fresh opportunity for a regional transformative response, through strengthening the work and amplifying advocacy efforts of CSOs and partners as they address barriers and gaps in legislation, policy and programmes on ending GBV and family violence. The deliberate link between sexual and reproductive health, GBV and family violence coupled with the focus on reversing the denial of human rights and access to services for vulnerable women, girls and key populations, makes the establishment of the Observatory a game changer for our region." – *Rev. Patricia Sheerattan-Bisnauth, Chief Executive Officer, Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation (CFPA)*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The introduction of standards for the education sector within the essential services package by the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme is a promising practice. Operational research and engagement of actors to determine the content and proposed rollout for such standards are underway. When completed, the Caribbean will be the first region to introduce the education sector to the essential services package. The Spotlight Initiative is working with education actors to ensure that the sector and school systems promote gender equality and non-violence through teaching practices and curriculum.

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 17,088,442	 USD 15,680,000	 USD 1,408,442	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN WOMEN, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF

**Other partners:** OHCHR, Ministries of Community Development, Youth and Religion; Health; Education; Justice and Attorney General; Royal PNG Constabulary (RPNGC); National Statistics Office; National Office for Child and Family Services (OCFS); Social Workers Association of PNG, International and National Non-Governmental Organizations, Faith Based Organizations, Women Rights Organizations, Private Sector companies, National Research Institute

## Context

Papua New Guinea (PNG) consists of 600 islands, divided into 22 provinces and 89 districts. Eighty-five percent of the population lives in rural areas, many of whom have limited access to essential services. Through funding from the national budget, each region has its own development plan and violence against women and girls (VAWG) taskforce. As such, providing essential services to address violence against women and girls, in line with global standards, across the individually resourced areas, presents logistical challenges. PNG ranks 159 out of 189 countries on gender equality. The 2020 UNDP Human Development Report ranked PNG 161 out of 162 on the gender inequality index. At least 60% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetimes. Only 33% of those abused sought help, and only 13% of them reached out to the police, medical services, or social services. Moreover, a survey of those brought to care for sexual abuse found that 50% were children, and 1 in 6 were under the age of 5. In a recent survey by the Papua New Guinea Counsellors Association, states that 50% of PNG women have been raped in their homes. More recent research with young people documents that they expect violence in their relationships. Under the COVID-19 lockdown, calls to a national referral hotline on VAWG increased by 300%, suggesting the situation may be much worse than prior to the pandemic.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

Launched by the UN Deputy Secretary-General and Deputy Prime Minister on International Women's Day 2020, the Spotlight Initiative in PNG covers all four regions of the country, with activities in eleven provinces. The programme was made possible through coordinated engagement by the Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) and the support of the European Union, who were instrumental in securing the government's overall support for the programme. It has since garnered significant visibility and mobilized sustained, politically influential support for a "whole of government" response in addressing the significant levels of VAWG in the country. The programme provided significant technical support to enhance advocacy efforts to strengthen legislation and funding for key interventions protecting women and girls from VAWG and harmful practices. In the spirit of UN Reform, RUNOs collaborated to leverage partnerships to improve essential services, including case management for survivors of VAWG, and to generate reliable and comparable data on VAWG for the use of advocacy, planning and awareness raising. The programme also launched both national and geographically targeted campaigns aimed at prevention and breaking the cycle of violence that leads to VAWG. Finally, the Spotlight team supported the Civil Society Reference Group to develop workplans to better engage with national and grassroots partners, including feminist and women's rights organizations, and to implement the principle of "leaving no one behind."

## Key Results

- ✓ **High-level advocacy for legislative change and essential service delivery resulted in national funding for mechanisms to end Gender Based Violence (GBV) (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** The Spotlight Initiative PNG supported the development of the Special Parliamentary Committee on GBV, which included MPs and Governors, to lead the country's first public inquiry into GBV. This inquiry called leading government bodies and civil society actors to testify on the challenges in preventing and responding to GBV, particularly practices such as sorcery accusation related violence and compensation. This was the first occasion at which the police and justice sector had to answer for inaction and the impunity with which men have instigated violence across the country. Civil society representatives voiced their experiences directly to policy makers, and 71 recommendations were tabled in Parliament. The visibility from this inquiry progressed legislative amendments to

strengthen protections for women and girls and opened avenues for advocacy that secured budget to fund and operationalize the National GBV Secretariat.

- ✓ **Parents in the Highlands region are educated in positive parenting programs to break cycles of violence (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Positive parenting programmes implemented by two Spotlight Initiative partners reached over 1500 parents with children aged 3-10 across five Highlands' provinces. The programmes successfully reached faith-based and secular audiences to conduct inclusive training programmes. The Spotlight Initiative enabled capacity building that increased the partners' reach from urban centers to remote villages and into neighboring provinces. The programmes modelled non-violent discipline and healthy relationships and demonstrated the long-term impacts of child abuse, while challenging harmful cultural norms on parenting. Beneficiary response indicated increasing demand for this programme at the village level, indicating a growing trend against GBV and increasing awareness of the long-term impacts of child abuse. Additionally, intensive national media campaigns shared messaging on healthy relationships and gender-equitable norms to 2.7 million Papua New Guineans.
- ✓ **Case management systems deliver survivor-centred response and strengthen provision on data across sectors (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** The Spotlight Initiative continues to build partnerships to strengthen GBV data management. In the area of child protection and social services, Spotlight supported the OCFS to launch the Primero- protection management system in May 2021. Spotlight has continued to work with the Government to roll out the system in the National Capital District (NCD), where the backlog of cases collected manually were transferred into the on-line system, thereby providing accurate data on cases of violence reported to social services. Spotlight launched a best-practice data management system in partnership with the RPNGC FSVU. This system provides improved case management from incident reporting through to legal proceedings. In addition to internal information sharing on the progress of Primero and the FSVU database, Spotlight Initiative held a workshop with partners in the NCD Commission to review ComCare, currently used by their GBV Secretariat.

### One Story of Impact:

Femili PNG, Spotlight Initiative partner, has been implementing tailored trainings aimed at ensuring relevant government authorities, especially at sub-national levels, have the capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services for survivors of violence, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. A total of 166 community leaders (41 females, 125 males) improved their understanding of family and sexual violence (FSV), its consequences and related laws and referral pathways; and 74 police officers, village court officials and magistrates (30 females, 44 males) have improved capacities to deliver better services to survivors of FSV through specialist training on understanding what FSV is, application of laws, trauma-informed care and case management of survivors. A monitoring mission was implemented in Mendi, SHP, Wabag and Enga Province in December and received very positive feedback from those who were trained, who continue to provide support for GBV survivors. The following is a quote from one of the participants who was interviewed during the monitoring visit.

#### In her own words...

"As a Civil Society Reference Group co-chair and human rights defender, I would really like to acknowledge the Spotlight Initiative over these two years. They created a platform where we can go and lobby and we can advocate at that level. We are able to get into that space to talk about our issues down at the grassroots level and in the regions around the country." - *Mary Kini, Highlands Women's Human Rights Defenders Network*

### Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Throughout 2021, the Initiative supported a range of innovative and good practices, including the two detailed here. Papua New Guinea's Committee on GBV made PNG the first country in the Pacific to hold a specific inquiry to examine GBV and produce a report which was discussed in Parliament. The approach was innovative for its transparency: it was live-streamed and all documents and submissions were published on the [Committee webpage](#). Similarly, a good practice adopted by Spotlight Initiative PNG, making use of easily accessible communication tools, was creating a WhatsApp group for all CSOs contracted through Spotlight Initiative and the Women, Peace and Humanitarian Fund, to share information. WhatsApp is a good platform for CSOs and key government officials to share progress on their work, provide each other technical support, share training tools, and collaborate on resources if they are located nearby.



# Samoa 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 3,497,740	 USD 2,900,000	 USD 597,740	 2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF

**Other partners:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ministry of Women Community and Social Development, Ministry of Education Sports and Culture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Samoa Bureau of Statistics, National University of Samoa and the University of the South Pacific, Ministry of Justice Courts and Administration, Law Reform Commission, Ministry of Police and the Office of the Ombudsman, Civil Society National Reference Group, Samoa National Council of Women, Samoa Faafafine and Faatama Association, Apelu Sports, Samoa Association of Sports and National Olympics, Brown Woke Girl, Teen Challenge, Faataua le Ola, Nuanua o le Alofa, Clarence Sebastian, Samoa Umbrella of NGO's, Samoa Victim Support Group,

## Context

Recent data on domestic/intimate partner violence from the 2021 demographic and health survey revealed that 32% or 1 in 3 Samoan women experienced physical, sexual and emotional intimate partner violence. During COVID - 19 restrictions in 2020, response services confirmed a 7% peak in domestic/intimate partner violence cases consistent with trends in times of climate disasters and crisis. Samoa as a signatory state to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Convention on the Rights of the Child and Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, demonstrated political will to eliminate violence against women and girls (EVAWG) by prioritising the review of 6 family violence laws; reaffirming commitment to improve the achievement of human rights for all and successfully implementing transformative interventions to prevent and respond to VAWG. The implementation of the Spotlight Initiative in 2020/2021 was challenging. Barely recovering from the shattering consequences of the measles epidemic in late 2019, the country plunged directly into the COVID19 pandemic and has struggled with the adverse socio-economic impacts due to border restrictions and State of Emergencies activated by the Government since 22 March 2020. The 2021 general elections inducted a new ruling party and new government for Samoa. The long and arduous post-election processes led to delays in national budget approval (September 2021) and launching of the new national plan, "Pathway for the Development of Samoa" (February 2022). After the results of the November 2021 by-elections there are currently six female MPs in Parliament, or 11.3% of the total fifty-three members, of which three are members of the Government (one as Prime Minister and two as Cabinet Ministers: the first female Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Minister of Justice).

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative, with the support of the European Union, supported the review of laws and policies that reinforce all efforts and services to address violence against women and girls (VAWG). The Spotlight Initiative continued to support the Samoa Victim Support Group Helpline to respond to women and children, as well as supporting the development of the Gender Based Violence (GBV) Standard Operating Procedures that enhances GBV clinical response. The Spotlight Initiative supported key advocacy campaigns including the My Village, My Pride, the Spotlight Torch of Hope, to mobilise engagement of the communities to play their part in national efforts in EVAWG.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Integrating domestic and intimate partner violence commitments into the Law and Justice Sector Plan 2021-2025 (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar: 2 Institutions):** The Spotlight Initiative supported the Law and Justice Sector in their new five-year plan (2021 – 2025), which integrates domestic and intimate partner violence, committing all government ministries and institutions under this Sector to work collectively to strengthen their linkages for improved prevention and response services.. The Law and Justice Sector also developed a guide, giving staff and duty bearers clear directions on best approaches and processes to respond to survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence.

- ✓ **Village leaders and women drive changes in social norms to end VAWG (Pillar 3: Prevention):** In partnership with the National Human Rights Institution and the Office of the Ombudsman, the Spotlight Initiative enabled the development and implementation of Village Family Safety Plans, Village Bylaws, and Village Family Safety Committees. This activity has led to a number of traditional leaders and village women becoming advocates and champions of gender equality and EVAWG. The Spotlight Initiative in partnership with the Ministry of Women Community and Social Development has developed a National Prevention Framework which incorporates triggers and solutions for VAWG, gathered by the lived experiences and perspectives of village communities and the government.
- ✓ **Improved health services for women and girl victims of violence (Pillar 4: Services):** The Spotlight Initiative, through the provision of specific resources and capacity development opportunities, strengthened non-governmental service providers to deliver response services as efficiently as possible. The Spotlight Initiative, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, developed sexual and gender based violence standard operating procedures to enhance GBV clinical response including Clinical Management of Rape, building the capacity of nurses and health workers on procedures and protocols during instances of rape and violence; training of senior health workers on survivor-centred clinical response and referral pathways for additional services to victims of violence.
- ✓ **Quality GBV data informs national policies and decision-making (Pillar 5: Data):** A GBV Admin Data group, a multisectoral mechanism, was established to capture GBV prevalence data from different sectors, with the aim to inform policies and national decision making. The group works towards standardised data collection templates and approaches. The group shared their experiences on data collection, gender standards applicable to each agency, and how to account for religion, ethnicity, education and employment. Child protection was significantly addressed when collecting information.
- ✓ **CSOs take the lead to end violence against women and girls (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The role of civil society and women's movements under the guidance of the CSO National Reference Group has been tremendous. The Spotlight Initiative supported CSOs on effective advocacy movements through performing arts and cultural performances around the country to raise awareness that it's everyone's responsibility to end violence against women and girls. Some of these successful advocacy campaigns include the 16 Days of Healing and the multimedia campaign on child protection.

### One Story of Impact: Male Champions of Change help Prevent GBV in Traditional Rural Samoan Villages

Saimasi Suataga Aso is a Male Champion from the village of Nuusuatia, Safata, a deeply traditional rural village with a proud history of Samoa's culture, home to 465 residents. Saimasi is a Community Trainer with the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organizations under the Spotlight Initiative. He has undertaken trainings to help him understand GBV, women's rights, psycho-social support and psychological first aid to address violence. Armed with his new-found knowledge, Saimasi testifies through the Samoan proverb, "E afua mai mauga manuia o nuú" – a metaphorical description of the fact that good leaders bring forth blessings and prosperity to a village." Saimasi, is now breaking harmful cultural norms. "I used to treat family violence as a private matter like how my father used to treat it. But I've learnt and now understand that violence against women or any other form of violence is everyone's business. I have a responsibility as I am connected to the issue." Nuusuatia village is not only addressing VAWG, but also empowering women by giving them a voice in the village council. Traditionally, the village council consists of male chiefs only. "Bringing women into the decision-making forum is an empowerment milestone for our women. And as a result, after 35 years, the village council has instigated the goal of building a women's centre," said Saimasi

#### In their own words...

"Nuusuatia never discussed domestic violence openly before. That has changed, violence against women and girls is now on the agenda of the village council meetings. Since violence against women has become an issue of discussion, the village council implemented a Village Safety Committee to look into intimate partner violence and all violence against women and girls. The committee has intervened in 10 cases of disputes between couples, which could have escalated. The council has been convinced, and now they have reinforced a village rule – No more hitting of women and children," – *Saimasi, Community Trainer, Nuusuatia*

### Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

A promising practice is the pilot initiative, in partnership with the National Human Rights Institution, establishing Village Family Safety Committees. The programme uses a culturally responsive centred approach to empower village leaders and members to proactively be the vanguards of change in the prevention of domestic violence in their villages. An initial evaluation showed the approach is working to reduce violence at the village level. With less than one-year of implementation, 50% (3 out of 6) villages report that GBV has decreased.

# TIMOR-LESTE 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 10,838,785	 USD 9,900,000	 USD 938,785	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women

**Other Partners:** Ministries of Health, Education Youth and Sport, Social Solidarity and Inclusion, and Justice; Secretaries of State for Youth and Sport, Equality and Inclusion, and Vocational Training and Employment; Chamber of Commerce and Industry TL, National Police, National Parliament, Scouts Timor-Leste, Alumni Association of the Youth Parliament (APFTL), National Press Council. Belun, Community Based Rehabilitation Network, FORUM KOMUNIKASAUN BA FETO TIMOR LORO SA'E (FOKUPERS), Alola Foundation, Plan International, Catholic Relief Services, Ba Futuru, Justice System Monitoring Programme, World Vision, Coalition for Diversity and Action (CODIVA), Asistencia Legal ba Feto no Labarik Feto, Rede Feto, Asia Justice and Rights (AJAR).

## Context

While Timor-Leste has in place certain progressive laws and policies, the country faces major challenges in building the institutions and capacity necessary to sustain equitable and inclusive development. Among the starkest indicators of this is violence against women and girls (VAWG). The culture of impunity and silence is a significant impediment to change, with up to 59% of women surveyed reporting that they have experienced physical violence in the context of Intimate Partner Violence. In the subnational municipality with the lowest rates of Intimate Partner Violence (Baucau city, 25% of women reporting Intimate Partner Violence), 65% of women say a husband is justified in hitting his wife. In the municipality with the best access to services for survivors (the capital, Dili), over 60% of women survivors never sought help or told anyone about the violence they faced. Conditions are assumed to have worsened under the state of emergency triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic and the April floods, as areas already marginalised are further isolated from limited services and support.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) was designed to integrate a multi-sectoral, multi-level and inclusive approach to address VAWG through a concerted strategy based on the Leaving No One Behind principle and UN Reform agenda. With the European Union's support, the Spotlight Initiative pilots' different interventions in three distinct municipalities: Ermera, Bobonaro and Viqueque. In Timor-Leste, Spotlight Initiative supports a gender-transformative approach, complementing other VAWG programmes in the country. It provides practical examples to the government on how to localise implementation of the development investments needed to end VAWG and to eliminate inequalities within the country. 2021 saw the start of the evaluation and revision of the current National Action Plan – Gender Based Violence), with the Spotlight Initiative actively contributing to a technical group to advise and support the Secretariat of State for Equality and Inclusion in the review process. Furthermore, the Programme continued to work with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and government partners to share risk communication messages related to COVID-19, including information on managing stress, prevention of violence and information on services. These themes were incorporated into training for healthcare workers, multi-sectoral coordination meetings led by the Ministry of Health, preparation for partners to go to communities, and during Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Data training.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Applying a gender lens to legal and policy frameworks (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions):** Based on evidence generated by the Spotlight Initiative supported 2020 Gender Justice Baseline, which assessed policy and legislation from a gender lens, the programme developed a policy advisory to inform Parliamentarians in 2021. The Spotlight Initiative supported SEII in convening the senior level Inter-Ministerial Meeting to oversee the implementation of the national action plan (NAP) the completion of the NAP 2020 report, assessments on NAP's national and sub-national mechanisms, all of which will contribute to the evaluation and development of a new NAP, and enhanced understanding and support for the NAP GBV, Gender Responsive Budgeting and planning. SI ensured the inclusion of civil society voices in budgeting both at the national and municipality level. As a result of advocacy from Spotlight partners and others, 12.18% of the 2022 State Budget

was allocated to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion. Furthermore, Eliminating Violence and Harassment, including GBV, in the World of Work was advanced through support for the promotion and ratification of ILO Convention No. 190 and its Recommendation No. 206.

- ✓ **Informed planning through building service providers' data capacity and survivors' trust in services (Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data):** Service providers require information, policy, and infrastructure to meet the needs of survivors. To improve services, the Spotlight Initiative activities ranged from sharing information with service users to training for service providers and evidence-based plans to expand points of service to improve access for survivors. For example, 1) The Ministry of Health was supported to lead health sector response coordination meetings to ensure better referral and comprehensive services; 2) To enable survivors to rebuild their lives, the programme supported training on financial and business skills and 3) 5,081 community members participated in events (2,162 females; 2919 males; 7% youth; 5% people with disabilities) which provided information on available services for victims of VAWG. Along with this, Spotlight Initiative has prioritised outreach and enabling access for the rights-holders most often excluded, aligning with the Leave No One Behind principle. Driven by the need for quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on violence, an analysis of the demographic health survey and key prevalence data resulted in two knowledge products utilised in training. The analysis will also contribute to the development of the upcoming demographic health survey, through technical support to the General Directorate of Statistics through SI and other UN relationships, thus enabling the demographic health survey to provide a more complete picture of VAWG and its impact.
- ✓ **Broad-based work on transforming norms and building CSO networks, supports sustainable change across sectors (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Effective prevention requires a common understanding of prevention, common messages and clarity on the human, financial and time resources needed to be effective. To identify these key factors, Spotlight Initiative supported an assessment and key learnings led to identifying priority areas, including efficiency in using existing resources, ensuring prevention is inclusive and intersectional and the existence of a strong monitoring framework that relies on measurable indicators that show both progress towards change and impact. The Spotlight Initiative further supported CSOs in institutional strengthening, learning and building their practice on EVAWG. The work with a diverse mix of CSOs (e.g., youth networks, labour unions, academia) is expected to inform efforts to mainstream VAWG work into other sector programmes, expanding reach, especially in rural areas with fewer services.

## One Story of Impact: Support to CSO for enhancing access to justice

A woman with disabilities who experienced sexual violence recounted that she and her family agreed to solve the problem through traditional ways after they were approached by the family of the defendant offering US\$20 as compensation. However, after her case was referred to Spotlight Initiative partner, the Justice System Monitoring Programme, she decided to bring her case to the court. The programme explained to her the nature of the case and the benefits of using the formal justice system.

### In her own words...

"Women's contribution in the family is huge, and all men should respect them. They do most of the work at home, work outside in public and private sectors, and are very vulnerable to violence and harassment at home and the workplace. If women experience violence and harassment at home or work, it will affect their productivity. I acknowledge and appreciate Spotlight Initiative's efforts in raising public awareness to end violence and harassment in Timor-Leste." - *Her Excellency Maria José da Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus, Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative developed edutainment films for television to help raise awareness on positive gender norms and respectful relationships, drive community engagement, and spur discussions that would help bring about community-led or nationally acceptable ways of preventing VAWG. To assess if the films were helping change perceptions, a chatbot was developed, built on the heavily used WhatsApp platform. The novel nature of the Chatbot is that it is being used to track perceptions/ changes in perceptions in almost real-time as a tool for participatory monitoring and evaluation. The findings would help identify triggers that can be replicated, or fixed, to drive positive behaviour change.



# VANUATU 2021 Country Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 2,785,042	 USD 2,475,000	 USD 310,042	2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organisations:** UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM

**Other partners:** UN Women, Department of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination; Prime Minister's Office; Ministry of Justice & Community Services; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education & Training; Department of Women's Affairs; National Disaster Management Office; Ministry of Youth & Sport; Vanuatu National Statistics Office; Department of Labour & Employment Services; Judiciary – Office of Public Prosecutions; ActionAid, SISTA, Vatu Mauri, ACTIV, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, ISRAAID, Silae Vanua, Vanuatu Internet Governance Forum; Vanuatu Family Health Association; Wan Smol Bag; Vanuatu Council of Churches; National Youth Council; IPPF, World Vision; Nossal Institute/University of Melbourne.

## Context

In 2021, Vanuatu was affected by a series of calamities including tropical cyclone Harold, volcanic ashfall, acid rains, flooding, and COVID-19. These factors had a compounding impact on livelihood, including increased food prices, food shortages and lack of work, exacerbating existing inequalities and disproportionately impacting women, girls, and at-risk communities. School closures and the return of many ni-Vanuatu (Indigenous population) to rural areas, also increased women's domestic duties and unpaid labour, while damage to key infrastructures led to limited access to healthcare services and disruption in supplies. Internal changes, such as abolishing the Ministry of Justice & Community Services and restructuring other services, impacted Programme implementation.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

Despite the challenges faced by the entire ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) ecosystem, the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the European Union, has been catalytic in mobilising UN agencies, national government partners and civil society organisations (CSOs) to combine diverse, complementary mandates, expertise, and technical contributions for effective, comprehensive, and coherent support to EVAWG in the country, under the principle of UN Reform. The Programme supported implementation across humanitarian and development nexus, strengthening institutional capacity, and developing multi-stakeholder essential services and standard operating procedures, including for the Clinical Management of Rape, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies. The Programme also adapted for natural disasters' response, migration and COVID-19. Grants to local and grassroots organisations yielded political engagement, stronger advocacy, and increased resilience, further strengthened by the renewed engagement of the EVAWG Civil Society Reference Group and the Steering Committee, now encompassing several donors, government, UN, and CSOs.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Integration of VAWG services into disaster response (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** To respond to the increase in violence and vulnerability of women and girls during natural disasters, a gender-based violence in emergencies (GBViE) standard operating procedure for evacuation centres was developed, which in coordination with the National Disaster Management Office will become a part of the National Evacuation Centre's Management Guidelines. To ensure a shared ownership of the standard operating procedure, extensive consultations were coordinated by the Department of Women's Affairs, the National Disaster Management Office, and Vanuatu Women's Centre, which created valuable forums for dialogue across sectors and government institutions, including those traditionally considered to have separate focuses such as disaster management and gender based violence (GBV) response.
- ✓ **Strengthening access to justice & health services (Pillar 2: Institutions and Pillar 4: Services):** The Initiative strengthened the Victim Support Office in the Office of the Public Prosecutor through the secondment of two forensic experts and psychiatrists to provide services to survivors of sexual and gender based violence, as well as working to strengthen evidence gathering for the criminal prosecution of cases. The Office of the Public Prosecutor is also undergoing refurbishment to ensure safe, confidential

spaces for adult and children victims' access to forensic medical clinicians and counsellors on site. Nation-wide consultations on the Victim Charter informed a law to legislate provisions ensuring victims' access to justice. A strategic partnership with the Ministry of Health established a core group of clinicians (obstetricians/gynaecologists, psychiatrists, emergency doctors, paediatricians, public health experts, nurses, and midwifery managers) to support the development of the GBV Health standard operating procedure and ensure health facilities become "service ready" to respond to GBV and improve the clinical management of rape. Training of trainers for 22 clinicians, police officers, CSOs and technical staff from the Ministry of Women and the Vanuatu Women's Centre was conducted to ensure the sustainable roll-out of training in the provinces.

- ✓ **Promoting respectful relationships and challenging harmful gender norms (Pillar 3: Prevention and Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Pre and post migration training for labour migrants and their intimate partners have developed concrete strategies, tools and skills to anticipate the changes incited by labour migration and maintain healthy, gender-transformative relationships before, during, and after the overseas work period, ultimately resulting in a reduction of violence. Three months post training, 70% of participants indicated that they'd seen a significant positive change in their relationship with their partner, 68% have seen a significant positive change in their relationship with their children, and some shared examples of how they personally reduced their use of violence. Commitment to practise positive parenting skills in communities resulted in increased reporting of cases of violence committed against children and communities' confidence in the system to respond. As a result, several community by-laws were developed by the chiefs and community members outlawing corporal punishment in homes and encouraging parents and caregivers to use positive discipline instead.
- ✓ **Engaging adolescents to promote gender equitable and violence free norms (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Strong sustained advocacy efforts have achieved significant momentum in acceptance and development of comprehensive sexuality education and family life education (CSE/FLE) integration for in-and-out of school programmes. Led by the Department of Education, mechanisms to operationalise and deliver CSE/FLE were strengthened by the establishment of a multi-stakeholder CSE/FLE committee, development of an in-school CSE/FLE curriculum for years 7-12 and associated teacher guides, as well as training 25 master teachers to roll the curriculum out in all six provinces. For out of school CSE/FLE, five out of seven modules were developed and 18 trainers trained in the National Youth Council and youth CSOs. The curricula roll out commences in 2022.
- ✓ **Strengthening VAWG data capacity (Pillar 5: Data):** The Programme successfully attained the political commitment of the Directors from the Department of Women's Affairs and National Statistical Office to lead and coordinate the national mechanism for managing administrative data collection, analysis, sharing and use. Twenty-three GBV frontline professionals were trained to monitor VAWG response and measure the effectiveness of the referral system. Additionally, 8 experts were enrolled in the KnowVAWdata Initiative, a series of workshops to strengthen national capacity to measure VAWG through prevalence studies.
- ✓ **Increasing civil society's capacity to advocate and influence (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** Financial and technical support was provided to 8 local women's rights organisations, which delivered national and community level advocacy campaigns. Campaigns engaged 18 prominent male champions of change, highlighting men's role in preventing GBV, promoting positive and healthy behaviours in men; launched the Mat Mo Pig film to showcase survivors' challenges in accessing justice and prosecuting perpetrators, organised a national dialogue with traditional male leaders to strengthen referral systems for survivors, and conducted 12 traditional ceremonies creating "watchdog groups" to provide safety nets for women and girls. Women-led CSOs were funded to increase women's economic power, agency and leadership through income generating initiatives and small loans.

## One Story of Impact: Rod Blong Jenis

A video advocacy campaign featured 18 prominent male leaders and champions - including the Vanuatu Prime Minister - emphasised the role of ni-Vanuatu men in changing harmful norms and stopping violence, individually and collectively. The video series was shown on national television and across several venues and platforms and had tens of thousands of views.

### In their own words...

"We must take a stand as a country to break the generational cycle of domestic violence and abuse. Women are equal to men and have the right to live a life without fear and grow up in a family and live in a society that respects and upholds their dignity. And this starts with us men and boys." - *Hon Bob Loughman Weibur, Prime Minister of Vanuatu*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The social impacts of labour mobility and the strain it puts on couples and families, can lead to violence and is widely recognised as a problem in Vanuatu. Famili I Redi is a programme being institutionalised as a government-led pre-departure training for labour migrants and their intimate partners. Preliminary analysis indicates lasting impact, with 70% indicating their relationship with their partner had significantly improved, 75% understanding significantly more about the different forms of violence and 70% indicating they had used the stress management strategies to support constructive decision-making and help reduce the risk of violence.

# PACIFIC REGIONAL PROGRAMME 2021 Regional Programme Results

Total Budget Phase I	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 7,835,932	 USD 7,077,830	 USD 758,102	July 2020 - 2023

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, IOM

**Other partners:** The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), The Pacific Community (SPC); National Legislatures, Ministries of Women, Health, Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tonga, RMI (Republic of Marshall Islands) Ministry of Health and Human Services, RMI Ministry of Culture and Internal Affairs, University of Melbourne, Nossal Institute, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, and over 50 international, national, local, and grassroots civil society organizations (CSOs).

## Context

In 2021, the regional Pacific Spotlight Initiative continued implementation in a very complex environment, grappling with the compounding impacts of natural disasters from previous years and additional challenges. These include social and political unrest, fractured regionalism, rising food insecurity and increasingly severe and frequent natural disasters. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened all risk factors for violence against women and girls (VAWG), including unemployment and increased poverty, which further exacerbates gender inequality and patriarchal social norms.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

With support from the European Union Delegation, the Spotlight Initiative recorded a number of significant results in 2021 and made important strides in: strengthening women's movements through new partnerships with grassroots women's rights organizations; gaining political momentum in development and roll out of comprehensive sexuality education that is based on international best practices; and the regional mobilization of diverse stakeholders to roll out multi-sectoral standardized data systems for gender-based violence (GBV) data collection. The Spotlight Initiative actively participated in the Pacific Humanitarian Protection Cluster to coordinate humanitarian preparedness, response and recovery including coordination on GBV, psychosocial support, and gender and social inclusion mainstreaming. In 2021 the Programme supported several emergency responses, including the response to political unrest in the Solomon Islands, by providing technical support to national protection coordination mechanisms.

## Key Results

- ✓ **Increasing Pacific governments' leadership and effectiveness to implement domestic violence legislation (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** In partnership with the Pacific Community, the Spotlight Initiative supported the 14th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, and subsequent 7th Meeting of Pacific Ministers for Women, which produced concrete action points requiring cooperation across all sectors of Pacific societies to end VAWG and resolved that governments and their partners need to act urgently. A specific recommendation to ratify the ILO Convention C.190 on sexual harassment in the workplace was successfully negotiated by Women's Ministers in the outcome document. The Initiative also supported the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Working Group on Domestic Violence Legislation, which convened 15 Pacific countries. The outcomes document recognized the impact of COVID-19 on resourcing, availability, access, delivery, and efficiency of coordinated multi-sectoral domestic violence essential services, which heightened the challenge of implementing domestic violence legislation.
- ✓ **Strengthening women's machineries to influence national resourcing for ending VAWG (EVAWG) (Pillar 2: Institutions):** Studies conducted in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), the Solomon Islands, and Fiji, gathered evidence on the economic impact of domestic violence. It highlighted direct and indirect costs of VAWG, and resources needed to make services available and accessible to individuals and their families. The findings of this study, set to be finalized in 2022, will inform governments' decisions on investments to address VAWG and inform CSOs' advocacy efforts for additional allocation of investments on gender issues. Alongside these costing studies, the Spotlight Initiative strengthened government entities and CSOs' capacity to understand the impact of VAWG on national economies, analyze needs and priorities of survivors, and integrate gender into financial tools. Both countries developed multisectoral action plans with specific recommendations and actions to strengthen gender mainstreaming in key policy tools and utilize the findings of the costing research and budget analysis for advocacy. Finally, to increase national budget allocations related to EVAWG, the Initiative engaged with Parliaments

of Fiji, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu to enable Parliamentarians to hold gender informed debates, discussions and develop gender responsive budget analysis, aligning with broader regional objectives and goals led by the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific agencies and other key stakeholders.

- ✓ **Transforming gender inequitable social norms and behaviors through engagement of adolescents and faith-based organizations (Pillar 3: Prevention):** The Pacific is witnessing a changing landscape in comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), with growing political interest and national commitment. The Spotlight Initiative set the stage for a political tone that identifies with and values CSE to transform the lives of young people, with key decision makers and duty bearers supporting quality design and implementation of CSE needed to change existing gender inequalities and reduce VAWG. In partnership with the Ministries of Education, CSE tools for in and out of school curricula were developed in Fiji, Kiribati, RMI, FSM, Solomon Islands, and Tonga, combined with training for master teachers in preparation for the nation-wide rollouts in 2022. Further the inclusion of faith-based leaders as advocates for ending violence against children led to the development of the Safe Church Policy. The policy details minimum commitments for Pacific churches to institutionalize safe spaces for children, together with a Pacific faith-based ending violence against children toolkit for church leaders that will develop and implement prevention strategies and activities within churches and church communities. Church leaders also integrated ending violence against children into media campaigns targeting Christian populations, resulting in a significant change in stakeholders' spiritual role in ending violence against children.
- ✓ **Strengthened comprehensive GBV data collection (Pillar 5: Data):** The establishment of a Regional Reference Group on GBV Administrative Data as a core technical group pooled knowledge and is guiding the roll out of GBV Administrative Data systems in the Pacific countries. The programme contributed to a regional thought partnership on the components of a national multi-sectoral GBV administrative data system and ensured data analysis processes integrate VAWG into related prevalence modules and surveys in Kiribati, Tonga, and Tuvalu. The Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey with Demographic Health Components (MICS/DHS) data collection and training tools were reviewed to develop templates for the ethical components of the population-based survey for prevalence. These tools will be included in the KnowVAWdata Hub available to Pacific countries when implementing a MICS/DHS with a domestic violence component.
- ✓ **Leaving no one behind through small grants (Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society):** The programme invested heavily in women's movement-building in the region by supporting diverse CSOs, including women-led and feminist organizations at the grassroots level. It directly partnered with over 50 national, local and grassroots women's rights organizations across 14 countries, solidifying new unique partnerships with those based closest to the communities. Small grants supported a wide range of activities including support to the LGBTQI+ community, vocational and financial training to women and survivors of GBV, awareness raising in menstrual hygiene solutions to reduce harassment of girls at school and awareness raising for gender-responsive disaster risk response. The programme partnered with DIVA (Diverse Voices and Action) for Equality and launched the regional intersectional advocacy capacity-building, networking, and thought partnership hub for feminist, grassroots, and women's rights organizations.

## One Story of Impact: The National Rugby League Tonga leads Voices Against Violence

Through the small grants mechanism, resources were allocated to strengthen the capacity of grassroots organizations in Tonga, such as the National Rugby League – Tonga. The National Rugby League - Tonga's Voices Against Violence programme uses sport as a vehicle to address gender inequalities and raise awareness among young people about the impact of gender violence, making the National Rugby League - Tonga an important advocate for the prevention of GBV among youth.

### In their own words...

"This programme is important in empowering women so that they know their rights and they can do anything, and their voices need to be heard. It will help in stopping violence in our country. This programme helped me a lot. We've learned important things about violence." - Amanaki, 14-year-old participant at the NRL Tonga Voices Against Violence workshop

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative's small grants mechanisms channeled funds to grassroots, frontline CSOs addressing the social and economic impacts of COVID-19. It targeted organizations with little or no access to EAWG funding. Its simplified application process enabled CSOs with an intersectional focus to reach the most marginalized communities and diversify and enrich civil society movements. In total, 18 smaller CSOs across 10 countries were supported for work in the areas of COVID-19 advocacy for women and girls, GBV service delivery for rural and maritime communities, securing the safety of people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity/LGBTQI+, and feminist climate justice.



# UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women

2021 GRANTS to CIVIL SOCIETY in AFRICA and LATIN AMERICA Results

Total Budget	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 26,297,170	 USD 26,297,170	 N/A	Jul 2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** UN Women (UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women)

**Other partners:** Civil Society Organizations and Women's Rights Organizations

## Context

The Spotlight Initiative, with the support of the European Union, has partnered with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) – a global, multilateral, demand-driven grant-making mechanism that supports efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls (VAWG). Capitalizing on its unique funding mechanism and grant monitoring systems, the UN Trust Fund directly supports women's rights organizations and the human rights-based work of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The UN Trust Fund's Calls for Proposals and grant-making have focused on sub-Saharan Africa (including single-country and three multi-country projects) and Latin America (Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico). It funded an initial 35 projects in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, which completed their second year of implementation and are now approaching their final year. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative repurposed USD 9.1 million to support institutional strengthening with institutional funding for 44 existing grantees in sub-Saharan Africa (24 existing Spotlight Initiative grantees and 20 additional UN Trust Fund grantees). Of this amount, USD \$500,000 was allocated to create a practitioner-based online hub called SHINE, to enhance knowledge exchange on the intersection of crisis response, organizational strengthening and ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG). In 2019 and 2020, the UN Trust Fund cumulatively awarded USD 24 million in direct grants to 55 CSOs in 25 countries in Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. Of these, 35 grants were awarded in 2019. In 2021, with the ongoing support of the Spotlight Initiative, this network of CSOs/WROs continued to provide comprehensive programmes to prevent and respond to VAWG.

- 52 of 55 grantees are women-led and/or women's rights organizations, and 93% of the overall funding was invested in these women's organizations;
- 70% of funding went to national and grassroots women's rights and women-led organizations;
- Of the initial cohort of 35 grants, 33 organizations were new partners for the Trust Fund.

## Key Results

- ✓ **In total, 37,761,857 people were reached by UN Trust Fund grantees (all 55) funded under the Spotlight Initiative in 2021, of which a minimum of 21,748,096 were women and girls.** In further detail, 193,869 women and girls were directly empowered to exercise agency for change in their own lives through grantee's interventions such as the provision of specialist support services, prevention initiatives, as well as through the opportunities to co-design project strategies to end violence against women and girls, including efforts to improve effectiveness of legislation, policies and national action plans. Grantees of the UN Trust Fund, under the Spotlight Initiative, specifically reach women and girls experiencing intersecting forms of violence and oppression with the objective of leaving no one behind. In 2021, grantees overall changed the lives of 9,935 women and girls with disabilities, 32,790 Indigenous women and girls and 340 lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and girls. Some notable examples include, in Liberia, the United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers changed the lives of 2,826 people including 77 women living with disabilities. Women and girls were empowered to report cases of abuse to authorities due to project activities and their self-confidence increased. In Argentina, the Centro de Intercambio y Servicios para el Cono Sur Argentina reached 533 women political activists/human rights defenders and 55 lesbian, bisexual and transgender women. Women and girls stated that they now saw the recognition of their voices and experiences of violence in workshops held with public officials, which worked to design more inclusive and safe cities.
- ✓ **In 2021, grantees work was marked by programmatic and operational adaptations to rapidly changing contexts due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other coinciding crises.** A key lesson learned by the UN Trust Fund throughout the year, and

in particular in relation to the influx of Spotlight Initiative funding, is that flexibility for adaptations needs to be planned and internationally textured into programmatic and operational approaches. Grantees have reported that the infusion of resources for response is strengthening their organizational resilience and crisis response abilities. Grantees reached 59,917 rights holders/beneficiaries with food, hygiene supplies, sanitation and other emergency parcels in order to reach those who were most marginalized and at risk. For example, in Cameroon, sixty project staff and partners of the African Indigenous Women Organisation Central African Network were trained to improve their knowledge/skills on how to integrate COVID-19 responses into interventions to end VAWG. In total, 1608 staff reported improved knowledge and skills of how to integrate COVID-19 response into interventions to end VAWG, as a response and adaptation to the pandemic. In addition, 601 women and girls were provided hygiene kits and basic foodstuff to mitigate against the hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ✓ **Funded organizations supported CSOs/WROs in the coordination and the development of platforms for joint advocacy and policy agenda setting.** Alliances for Africa in Nigeria supported the setting up of the Imo State Committee on Ending Violence against Women and Girls, a network of CSOs, women's rights organisations, and other key stakeholders, including traditional leaders and government ministries. This is the first such network in Imo State. The committee's advocacy efforts led to the comprehensive Violence against Persons (Prohibition) bill being reviewed and then passed by the Imo State House of Assembly.
- ✓ **CSOs/WROs strengthened their organizational resilience to crisis, including through investment in operational preparedness, self-care and collective care.** One example of this is in Zimbabwe, where Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT) provided staff training on Disaster Preparedness, Emergency and Humanitarian response within the context of ending VAWG, including safety considerations and how to conduct activities virtually. A total of 21 FACT staff, including management, working on various projects attended the training. A post workshop evaluation showed an increase in knowledge and confidence levels on disaster risk reduction.

## One Story of Impact: Strengthened inclusive feminist movements

Grantees worked to create more inclusive women's movements that reflect the wide diversity of women's lived experiences through the inclusion of groups representing marginalized women and girls. This has resulted in lessons on cross-movement building towards greater inclusivity of women's movements. For example, in Guatemala, the Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas TZUNUNIJAJIXTZUNUN, reached 256 women, including 52 Indigenous women. A total of 164 women leaders were empowered to act on the prevention and eradication of violence due to participating in the project's training processes.

### In her own words...

"The topics we are learning about help us understand everything we have lived through, the violence, what women face in the community." - *Indigenous woman participant with Movimiento de Mujeres Indígenas TZUNUNIJAJIXTZUNUN*

## Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, knowledge exchange had to move to online spaces. The UN Trust Fund, therefore, created "SHINE", an online platform to share knowledge digitally, in multiple languages, among practitioners in the movement to end violence against women and girls. SHINE represents a good and innovative practice in preventing and responding to violence against women through the provision of an interactive space to exchange knowledge among practitioners, for greater impact on ending VAWG through co-creation, collaboration and amplification of knowledge. The platform is available [here](#).

# Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

GRANTS to CIVIL SOCIETY in AFRICA, CARIBBEAN, ASIA, PACIFIC 2021 Programme Results

Total Budget	EU Contribution	UN Agency Contributions	Duration
 USD 13,075,472	 USD 13,075,472	 N/A	 Jul 2019 - 2022

**Recipient UN organizations:** Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

**Other partners:** UN Women Country Offices, Civil Society Organizations

## Context

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is a global human rights violations, with the recurrence of conflicts and humanitarian crises further exposing women and girls to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and harmful practices. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) is a global, pooled funding mechanism that aims to re-energize action and stimulate a significant increase in financing for women's participation, leadership, and rights in humanitarian response and peace and security settings. The WPHF supports interventions to enhance the capacity of local women-led and women's rights organizations (WRO) to prevent conflict and VAWG, respond to crises and emergencies, and seize key peacebuilding opportunities. Focused on strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs) and building women's movements, the partnership targets local, grassroots, and community-based women's organizations (CBOs) with grants ranging from USD 2,500 to 200,000. In 2021, the WPHF-Spotlight Initiative partnership countries continued to face the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and a deteriorating security and/or humanitarian situations and political violence, worsening the situation of women and girls.

## Spotlight Initiative's Response

The partnership between the WPHF and the Spotlight Initiative (SI), supported by the European Union, facilitates the channeling of funding to CSOs, in particular WROs, working on eliminating VAWG in conflict-affected and humanitarian settings. The programme covers seven Spotlight Initiative countries in Africa (Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Uganda, Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan, and Haiti), as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this context, WPHF-Spotlight Initiative ensured that the principle of Do No Harm remains central to the programme's approach and delivery. Flexibility to adapt to changing contexts was key to ensuring safe and smooth implementation, including for CSOs to adapt their project activities and budget, due to the pandemic restrictions and inflation of prices, but also to prevent and respond to the increasing rise in VAWG.

## Key Results

- ✓ **During the reporting period, 74 WPHF-SI partners across all countries, reached 126,223 direct beneficiaries, of which 92,128 (73.0%) were women and girls.** Of these, 74.8% were women above the age of 18 and 25.2% were girls and young women below the age of 18. Among all projects in 2021, different age and population groups were reached, including survivors of SGBV. Overall, 20% of grantee projects work with women who are forcibly displaced, 41% with women and people living with disabilities, 27% with child or single mothers and widows, 4.1% with other groups at risk, and 8% with indigenous and ethnic minorities. An estimated 2,537,378 indirect beneficiaries were also reached. Almost half of the partners are receiving funding for the first time through the UN (47%), showing the ability of WPHF to reach local and grassroots organizations that had not been previously supported by the UN.
- ✓ **As a result of WPHF-SI partners' initiatives, transformative changes emerged in Africa.** In 2021, 816 CSOs, CBOs, and women's groups actively collaborated in planning, monitoring, information sharing, and reporting cases of SGBV in their communities. For example in Africa, a grantee supported female sex workers in their human rights advocacy, including access to public health services. As a result, the health-seeking behaviour among the female sex workers increased by nearly 28% from 2020, with nearly 1,000 female sex workers accessing HIV/AIDS testing, family planning services, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. In the same period, an increase in reporting violence cases to the police was also witnessed. WPHF-SI partners also initiated steps to establish or increase the use of social accountability mechanisms to plan, monitor and

engage in prevention and policy interventions for ending VAWG. Overall, 68 different community, district or regional mechanisms drawing on different modalities have been used by CSOs. In the DRC for example, Moyo Foundation successfully developed and strengthened a consultation framework with 50 delegated members from the provincial government, public administration, civil society, police and army to resolve issues of gender, peace and protection. Since its creation, these consultation frameworks have already managed and referred to the competent authorities 70 cases of GBV on minors and 35 cases of domestic violence. Movements formed in 2020 such as the Women Peace Brigades have continued expanding their reach: the Women Peace Brigades in Liberia reached and built the capacity of over 5,000 young women and girls in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Montserrado. In the DRC, following the WPHF-SI raising awareness through discussions on SGBV with village leaders, traditional chiefs now intervene in cases of SGBV and speak out for peace and an end to SGBV.

- ✓ **Through institutional funding, 8 CSOs in Haiti and PNG have strengthened their institutional capacity contributing to building women's movements and networks.** During the reporting period, new adaptive strategies, tools and systems were adopted for the continuity of CSOs' operations. Institutional funding has supported grantees with 221 staff/volunteers retained during the reporting period through remuneration and stipends. The grantees have improved their financial literacy skills and strengthened their operational and technical capacity through staff training. The grantee MOFEDGA in Haiti was affected by the earthquake in August 2021 and was able to adapt to the crisis by partly transitioning to remote work, as well as sustain itself by retaining its staff and equipping them with new technology to ensure the continuation of work. This flexible funding contributed to rebuilding part of the destroyed premises (electricity with solar panels, windows, computer equipment), allowing the organization to more efficiently and quickly respond to women and girls' urgent needs on the ground.

## One Story of Impact: Communities working together to end harmful traditional practices against women and girls

Women Peace Brigades are a group of female volunteers trained by the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa to create awareness of, monitor, and report any form of violence against women and girls, as well as to resolve conflicts. Lorpu Flomo (57) is a Peace Desk Officer for Zorzor District. She is disabled and always reminds people of who she is: "I am a person with disability, and I am the proud Head of the Zorzor Women Peace Brigades." Ms. Flomo has transformed the once struggling group into a viable, reliable, and well-organized Women Peace Brigade. The group started with only ten Women Peace Brigades members, but it has grown to over 250 active members across 3 communities in Zorzor District. The Foundation originally trained 150 Women Peace Brigade members but through the initiatives from Women Peace Brigade members such as Ms. Flomo, membership continues to grow. Under Ms. Flomo's leadership, Women Peace Brigades members mobilized to ensure cases of violence against women are brought to justice, even if the case goes beyond their local courts in Zorzor. The members walk hand-in-hand with survivors to ensure that justice is served. "Survivors will no longer walk alone on the difficult path of seeking justice," Ms. Flomo says.

### In her own words...

"I always thought that leadership is only meant for men because, in my community, men are always the leaders. But now, I have learned that leadership is not a position, that I am also a leader. I can stand and speak for the interest of women who have been abused and denied their rights." - *Dorcas Musa, Women Peace Brigade member and SGBV advocate in Bulablin, Nigeria*

## Innovation and Promising or Good Practices

In Haiti, the organization Association 4 Chemins (A4C) uses theatre and dance as a reintegration strategy for former female inmates to strengthen their social reintegration and to lead awareness raising on violence against women. The grantee mobilized different stakeholders to ensure women's voices are at the center of the initiative. The grantee formed a partnership with choreographers and writers, who worked together with the female inmates and prepared them for performance sessions both in prison and in public. The training sessions focused on voice, stretching exercises, choral consensus, action, reaction, and body articulation. Thirty of the women beneficiaries performed in two shows during the nine months of implementation of the project. After these shows, each woman received, as payment for their performance, an equivalent of USD 304. The theater plays are bringing the public and the inmates together and also support the inmates in gaining self-confidence, by helping them overcome trauma and generate an income.