

# MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY REFERENCE GROUPS

## A COMPENDIUM OF PROMISING PRACTICES AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS FOR SPOTLIGHT TEAMS

The meaningful engagement of civil society and women's rights/feminist groups, including those representing women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, is a **key principle of Spotlight Initiative**. In line with this principle and based on early recommendations from feminist and women's rights activists, Civil Society National, Regional and Global Reference Groups (CS-RGs) have been established as **an institutional mechanism to facilitate systematic and meaningful civil society engagement** throughout the Spotlight Initiative Programme cycle.

Spotlight Initiative is expected to have a meaningful engagement and partnership with civil society that is **equal, inclusive, transparent and respectful**. The goal is to build **a deep collaboration with CS-RG members**, who will advise and guide the implementation of the programme by leveraging their unique expertise and experience in the field of EVAWG. To this end, a [Guidance Note on the Meaningful Engagement of CSRG](#) had been developed and shared with Spotlight teams.

The CS-RGs serve a triple function: to **advise** the Initiative, to **advocate** and partner for the realization of its objectives and to hold the Initiative **accountable** for its commitments.

The Civil Society Regional Forums and global surveys have underscored the challenges in meaningfully partnering with the Reference Groups for a wide range of internal and external factors. **This live document aims to address these challenges by providing illustrative examples of promising practices and by laying out innovative ideas that were shared by both SI Teams and CSRG themselves.** It will be regularly updated with examples that will provide inspiration and pathways for a deep and more sustainable partnership with the Reference Group members going forward.

Highlighted text is the latest updates.

<b>Challenges/Problem</b> <i>By themes</i>	<b>Promising practices</b> <i>Illustrative examples of what's working</i>	<b>Innovative ideas</b> <i>Shared by CSRG members, UNCT, Secretariat during the November 2021 Regional Forums, in recent surveys and ad hoc communication</i>
<b>Communication and coordination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The communication channels with other Reference Groups (national, regional and global) are <b>strong 30% (27.6%), modest 40% (34.6%) and weak 30% (37.8%)</b></li> <li>The communication with the National/Regional/Operational Steering Committees is <b>strong 46% (28.4%), modest 30.8% (40.2%) and weak 14.5% (31.4%)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In <b>Belize</b>, the team designed an SOP that defines the mechanisms for consultation and which makes clear provisions for the inclusion of CSRG members in key decision-making processes and technical meetings</li> <li>In an effort to enhance information sharing with the CSNRG in <b>Malawi</b>, the CSNRG was invited to nominate two individuals for membership in the SI core team which meets on a monthly basis. The two core team nominees are tasked with informing the other CSNRG of key developments and decision-making processes for their inputs and contributions. For instance, the members participated in the internal mid-term review and phase II planning process. Further, each CSNRG member was assigned a specific pillar based on their area of expertise and is invited to partake in quarterly pillar coordination meetings. These improved arrangements continue to strengthen the contribution of the CSNRG to the entire SI Programme cycle.</li> <li>In several programmes, coordinators send bi-monthly or monthly updates and status of implementation to their Reference Group members.</li> <li>Several CSRGs are connected via a WhatsApp group and by</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Improve access to information and transparency</b> by sharing timely and regular programme progress updates, this includes <b>timely translation of documents into local languages, leaving sufficient time for RG members to provide feedback.</b></li> <li>Ensure that members have the <b>adequate resources to communicate</b> with the Spotlight teams and their fellow members (data bundles for virtual calls for instance)</li> <li><b>Ensure that CSRGs are adequately supported by the Programme Coordination team. If needed and if budget allows, hire a civil society officer for additional support.</b></li> <li>Have <b>more frequent</b> regional workshops/meetings with other RG members to exchange learnings, best practices and challenges, <b>including civil society-only spaces.</b></li> <li>(Have two chairs to share the burden of work and ensure that the communication is then trickled to</li> </ul>

	<p>email to streamline communication, and have access to a shared Google folder for accessing relevant Spotlight documents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Latin American Regional CSRG</b>, established a coordination mechanism between the regional and national CSRGs in Latin America (Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico) that allowed members to exchange relevant information, experiences and lessons learned on the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, which fed into the Report "Civil Society Participation in the Spotlight Initiative in Latin America: a report based on feedback from the Civil Society Reference Groups of the Region", to be launched in 2022.</li> <li>• In <b>Vanuatu</b>, the group early decided to broaden the scope of the group and support programming across the EVAWG sector in the country, instead of being specifically linked to the Spotlight Initiative. This was particularly evident with one of the central CSOs working on EVAWG in Vanuatu, the Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) which is funded by two programmes – the Spotlight Initiative and Pacific Partnerships – for their work in different locations of the country. The VWC highlighted that it would be more meaningful for the CSRG members to provide recommendations and inputs on EVAWG work as a whole, rather than specific project or programme focus.</li> </ul>	<p>all other members)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Encourage rotation of CSRG members to ensure a dynamic group with diverse representation. The parameters for rotation should be jointly defined between the SI Team and CSRG members.)</li> <li>• All communications (and documents) must be done in all the main languages spoken by members of the CS-RG(s) in question. Interpreters for calls, and – at the very least – google or DeepL translations provided of emails and documents (e.g. when time constraints don't permit official translations)</li> <li>• <b>Have continuous conversations on sustainability at the CSRG and Steering Committee levels</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Roles and responsibilities of the CSRG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>74.4% (50.4%)</b> of the respondents reported that their role on the Group is clear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In <b>Jamaica</b>, the group has agreed to operate primarily through leadership by an Executive Committee for leadership, coordination and oversight purposes, and takes decisions by consensus. The Executive Committee has a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer as its formal roles. It convenes periodic meetings (approximately bi-monthly)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule a dedicated meeting to revisit the Terms of Reference and translate it into practical activities in the work plan with a clear distribution of tasks according to the availability and capacities of each member.</li> <li>• CSRG members and the Spotlight team collectively</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>84.6% (81.1%)</b> declared that they are able to provide meaningful feedback, inputs and suggestions to the Spotlight programme team</li> </ul>	<p>and leads on the drafting of documents and strategic approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In <b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>, the team developed a <a href="#">membership policy</a>. This policy is meant to ensure continuity of the group in the event of members' resignations or suspensions, to help further define the group's role and document mechanisms for engagement including compensation. The document has been used as a template for other groups in the region as well.</li> </ul>	<p>examine the level of involvement of members and establish an updated list of active members, every year. This renewal process may allow new members to join and contribute to ensuring that a greater diversity of voices are heard in the programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participate in calls organized by the Secretariat (regional and global). These calls will give members a chance to hear updates and news directly from the Secretariat, ask questions and connect with RG-members in other programmes.</li> <li>● Jointly draft an SOP that defines the mechanisms for consultation and makes clear provisions for the inclusion of CSRG members in key decision-making processes and technical meetings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Involvement in decision-making</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>59.8% (35.5%) report</b> strong support from the Spotlight Initiative Team to facilitate the functioning of the group has decreased by 18 percentage points since the last survey.</li> <li>● <b>47.9% (37.8%)</b> declared that the space the Reference Group offers the members and their community to be heard is large</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The CSRG in <b>Malawi</b> was asked to delegate one member with relevant expertise to join the six pillar working groups which meet on a quarterly basis. This ensured timely information sharing and increased transparency and improved the ability of CSOs for meaningful engagement in the work under this pillar. (meta-analysis of the MTA)</li> <li>○ In Spotlight Initiative's response to COVID-19 in <b>Timor-Leste</b>, the CSNRG provided leadership in the development of messaging for information and education communications (IEC) by reflecting on issues that they were seeing in communities and their networks. They have also provided strategic advice, for example, to inform whether Spotlight needed to respond following public criticism of VAWG service providers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Include CSRGs in <b>participatory processes and decision-making areas</b> for meaningful feedback and insight, e.g. development of AWP, Acceleration and COVID Plans and M&amp;E.</li> <li>● Ensure that the <b>CSRGs are connected with all relevant stakeholders (including the government) and have dedicated and institutionalized spaces to provide their feedback and inputs and can engage in strategic discussions. It is recommended that members and SI teams collectively agree upon a SOP which clearly states the different avenues and entry points for CSRGs' inputs.</b> These may include being involved in joint-pillar team meetings, core technical meetings, joint RUNO meetings.</li> <li>● Scheduling quarterly calls with the Resident Coordinator and the EU Delegation has also been</li> </ul>

- In **Belize**, meaningful engagement of the CSNRG is formalized through the [SOP](#) which makes provisions for inclusion of the CSNRG in periodic technical team meetings to engage in joint planning, provide inputs and coordinate monitoring activities, ensuring their engagement is institutionalized.
- To facilitate the continued strengthening of civil society organizations in **Jamaica**, pillar meetings will be set up with the CSRG to gather feedback on capacity strengthening requirements for CSOs, and to understand the context, gaps and challenges they face. Feedback will be incorporated into the implementation and design of the capacity building programmes.
- Consultation sessions were held with the CSRG members in **Mexico**, as well as with their networks of organizations and broad women's movements, on the diagnosis of regulatory frameworks at the federal level and in the states of Chihuahua, Mexico State and Guerrero. They were also asked to make technical contributions based on their field experience in the eradication of VAWG. The relevance of this consultation also lies in the fact that the vision of the members of the Reference Groups will be included in the law reform proposals to be developed by SI.
- In **Mexico**, the CSRG were deeply involved in the development of the Phase 2 annual work plan. The programme team organized a series of meetings with the CSRG and RUNOs with the impetus to generate corrective actions in the second phase. The CSRG members were able to influence the agenda and rightly represent femicide survivors in Mexico. The same was the case in several other programmes, for

suggested to raise emerging issues and joint problem-solve – especially in the context of emergencies

- Establish a clear flow of **accountability** between requests for feedback and actions to avoid tokenistic partnership
- Further efforts to **leave no one behind** and to genuinely engage marginalized groups in a respectful and meaningful way. This includes simplifying burdensome processes and requirements that excludes certain groups.

example **Kyrgyzstan**, where the CSRG shared a number of recommendations in the Phase II design related to integrating activities to increase awareness of duty bearers on the Istanbul Protocol.

- In **Argentina**, the CSRG members participated in the evaluation of calls for proposals and selection of programme partners.
- In **Uganda**, the CSRG selected a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, and a treasurer, who will be alternate representatives to the National Joint Steering Committee. The group's immediate focus was oversight of the programme's six-month Phase I carry-over workplan, monitoring pillar meetings for delivery, and engaging CSO IPs on delivery tracking.
- In **Nigeria**, the engagement with the government and the leadership of the SI programme has increased. The CSRG now has more opportunity to meet with the UN RC to ensure the group works more effectively towards achieving the needed milestones.
- In order to facilitate meaningful engagement, the **Caribbean Regional CSRG** was invited to influence and support several interventions as active participants or members of advisory, reference or steering committees that are driving implementation. For example, the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the CSRG are part of the SRHR Observatory; are members of the ESP CoP, and involved in the mapping of integrated VAW/VAC services under Pillar 3 that will contribute to the generation of policy dialogue on VAW/VAC intersections in the Caribbean Social Behavioural Change campaign and consultations on the Social Accountability Framework. Committee members have

	<p>also been invited to provide inputs on strategies, ToRs and shaping various activities.</p>	
<p><b>Remuneration and compensation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 36.5% reported having included compensation in their work plan budget</li> <li>● 30% have not included compensation in their budget yet</li> <li>● 28% did not know about the compensation of CSRG guidance note, while</li> <li>● 5.2% decided to not be compensated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most CSRGs now have a budgeted work plan to ensure that the activities are sufficiently resourced for an effective implementation.</li> <li>● To facilitate the use of virtual modalities during the COVID-19 lockdowns and beyond, several CSRGs have been provided with data bundles.</li> <li>● In November 2021, the <a href="#">Guidance Note on the Compensation of Reference Group members</a> was launched. It was developed following numerous consultations with CSRGs and UN teams, to ensure CSRG members are adequately compensated for their work and time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Regional or sub-regional alignment of the operationalization practices of compensation</b> should be sought after to ensure coherence between the different schemes. As such, it is highly recommended that coordinators from each region convene a meeting to make sure their compensation schemes are aligned.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Backlash from governmental stakeholders and threats to WHRDs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The role of Spotlight Country and Regional Teams in the scope of the <a href="#">SSIPA</a> is it to assist women’s human rights defenders (WHRDs) , who are affiliated with Spotlight Initiative in any capacity<sup>1</sup>, to find support and protection through relevant expert institutions and programmes. Spotlight Teams are also expected to integrate measures in the programme that prevent, protect and mitigate risks where WHRDs may be particularly vulnerable (e.g. in programme activity, event, meeting, etc.).</li> <li>● A promising practice was highlighted in <b>Timor-Leste</b> as the CSRG has significantly contributed to framing response to high profile sexual abuse cases where government responded poorly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Supporting RGs in creating spaces to engage with government institutions and stakeholders to discuss potential avenues for collaboration and joint-advocacy and foster trust-based partnership.</li> <li>● Developing a protocol that addresses the protection of human rights defenders as well as including a strategy of risk analysis and protection within the Spotlight framework.</li> <li>● Conducting regional meetings with technical units of UN agencies to discuss the widespread issue of torturing activists.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> This may be as implementing partners, grantees, vendors, reference group members, participants at events and meetings, programme beneficiary, etc.

### CSRG Workplans and activities

91.5% (81.7%) of the Reference Groups have submitted a budgeted work plan or are in the process of developing one.

- All Reference Groups should have a budgeted workplan to implement their activities and diverse areas of work.
- The group's work plan should be budgeted under Outcome 6.
- It has been identified that a good practice to reinforce the capacity of Spotlight programmes to deliver meaningfully and timely against the target of delivering 30-50% of programme funds via CSO, is to ensure a well resourced civil society engagement function . The Secretariat encourages programmes to consider staffing this function, to ensure adequate management of the CSO engagement and delivery across pillars, within pillar 6 and the meaningful engagement of the Civil Society National/Regional Reference Group. This may be done by assigning this function to a qualified individual either full time (recommended) or part-time (read more in the Secretariat's [Phase II Budget Guidance](#)).
- Alternatively, Spotlight teams can hire an external CSO to support with the coordination of the CSRG, as does the **Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme and the Jamaica programme.**
- **Activities:** In **Tajikistan**, the CSRG members actively participated in the development and adoption of the Civil Society Strategy of behavioral change, and in every quarterly meeting, the group reviews and discusses newly adopted legislation and strategic documents. In **Jamaica**, the CSRG participated in the planning and distribution of COVID Response-Hygiene packages for GBV survivors. The packages included methods for seeking help. In **Liberia**, the CSRG resolved issues in the Grand Gedeh County between community members and traditional leaders, which was



	<p>threatening women’s peace and security. Cordiality now exists in the communities.</p>	
<p><b>Independent monitoring and Participatory Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (PME)</b></p> <p>47% (25%) of CSRG have attempted to use the <a href="#">civil society monitoring toolkit for independent monitoring of Spotlight processes</a>.</p> <p>For those that have used the tool,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 64% suggest making the tools more user-friendly,</li> <li>- 65.7% require technical support from a monitoring expert at the global level</li> <li>- 62.9% require someone at the country/regional level to collect and analyze the data.</li> </ul> <p>Of the members who didn’t use the tools, 34.4% (36.7%) declare not being aware of them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The CSRG in <b>Zimbabwe</b> was the first reference group to independently monitor civil society’s active participation in the SI using the Civil Society Monitoring Scorecard (2019). A scorecard to support the CSRG in this exercise has been developed which uses data provided by the Zimbabwe coordination unit. A baseline has been established to aide in monitoring the SI in Zimbabwe. In 2021, following a successful monitoring visit, the group was able to report back to the National Steering Committee and provide technical support to implementing partners during the visit.</li> <li>● In <b>Malawi</b>, the SI team supported the CSRG members to conduct an independent monitoring visit to all SI districts to facilitate the development of the CSNRG’s shadow report. The shadow report will inform any programmatic adjustments in year 3 of the Programme.</li> <li>● In accordance with the "<a href="#">Global Guidance Note on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation</a>" and with the aim of engaging a wide range of local actors and community members in the various phases of monitoring and evaluation of the programme, the CSRG in <b>Niger</b> has developed a national strategy to lead Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (SMEs). In 2021, within this strategy, a pilot project on PME was successfully implemented. The CSRG organized field missions that allowed for exchanges with communities on the impact of the Program, collecting testimonies, life stories and good practices that were useful in formulating Phase II activities.</li> <li>● The NRG in <b>Belize</b> has, with the support of a technical</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure CSRG members are <b>aware of the independent Monitoring Toolkit and have the sufficient resources and data to carry this task fully</b> (this may include an external consultant to provide technical support with TORs that are co-designed by the SI Team and the CSRG)</li> <li>● <b>The Secretariat and the GRG to simplify the Toolkit and provide global support to those CSRGs that are developing scorecards</b></li> </ul>

consultant, developed a [PME Package](#). The package include (a) Guidance Document, (b) 2021 SI Report Card - Report, (c) 2021 SI Report Card - Data Entry Tool, (d) Template - CSNRG M&E Tool, (e) Template - SI Report Card - Data Entry Tool, (f) Template - SI Report Card. Please find the TOR for the technical consultant [here](#).

- **The M&E Guide** facilitates the CSNRG function to utilize and reference the different tools for Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME). This guide is a live document and speaks to the collaboration and coordination approach with the Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs), other key partners and various stakeholders for data collection. The guide also makes reference to the selection of a CSNRG M&E Focal Point responsible for liaising directly with RUNOs and any external parties as it pertains to M&E. This will support a fair distribution of workload for the Chair/Co-Chairs of the CSRG.

- In **Liberia**, the CSRG conducted a successful visit to the five spotlight Counties in Liberia, to monitor the progress made, challenges and recommendations. The CSRG was able to convene a successful strategic planning meeting with CSOs and participated in multistakeholder meetings with the Resident Coordinator, the EU, the Government and CSOs, CBOs etc.
- In **Nigeria**, the programme team is successfully implementing PME. A joint monitoring team now comprises of the EU/ Government of Nigeria and the Civil Society Reference group. The programme developed two

	<p>in-house tools (i) “the Joint Monitoring Visit Reporting tool” which has a corrective action plan component and the (ii) “Barometer Analysis Tracker” an analysis that shows the progress been made as per the performance indicator versus the target.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In <b>Argentina</b>, the CSRG developed a shadow report in early 2021 that included recommendations that were incorporated in the programme’s Phase 2 work plan. These recommendations include 1) Spotlight Initiative should increase its efforts to facilitate CSO dialogues with provincial and national governmental structures; and 2). strengthening the Spotlight Initiative's approach to intersectionalities by deepening the mechanisms for the real participation of its CSRG members.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Funding civil society organizations, in particular national and local women’s organizations</b></p> <p>As of December 2021, of the USD 144.5 million delivered to CSOs,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 78% went to national and grassroots organizations</li> <li>- 72% went to women’s organizations, and</li> <li>- 40% went to new partners</li> </ul> <p>Also, in terms of flexible/inclusive funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 22 million was invested in core</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The UN procedures and requirements for contracting partners are often too demanding for CSOs, particularly for grassroots and community-based organizations that are often not registered and have not previously worked in an international partnership. Organizations not based in the capital city face additional difficulties. In <b>Liberia</b>, these challenges were addressed by launching a joint platform for the recruitment of IPs. Interested CSOs were briefed on how to use the platform. While this was a promising approach for modeling the UNDS reform, it did not succeed in channeling resources to local and grassroots organizations. Contracts were awarded to international and national CSOs.</li> <li>● In the <b>Pacific Regional Programme</b>, in the spirit of the new</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Simplify and adapt calls for proposals</b> and revisit eligibility and reporting requirements from a perspective of listening and learning instead of focusing resources on teaching civil society the complex partnering processes of the UN <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Launch accessible joint partner selection processes (CFPs/EOIs) that are harmonized and streamlined across UN Agencies. Although this is already implemented in many Spotlight Initiative countries, this practice can be expanded further. Joint processes allow applicants to access UN funding through one proposal, which shortens the time and resources invested in proposal drafting and assessments. This is</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- institutional support and 12% of awards channel funds through a sub-granting or sub-contracting mechanism, which means grantees and implementing partners can further reach grassroots and local organizations

way of working with civil society, the application process was simplified, with the requirements limited to an Expression of Interest form and the organization's registration certificate. Other supporting documents were required only from shortlisted candidates. The process aimed to reduce access barriers to funding due to bureaucratic requirements, access to technology to apply online, in accessible language of funding calls/applications and so on.

- In several programmes, including **Timor Leste**, with the aim of providing more opportunities for national and local CSOs and to contribute to their capacity building, orientation sessions about call for proposals were organized, including sessions about application templates and applying in consortia. This resulted in most of the proposals being submitted by national or local CSOs, and consortia being established.
- In **Grenada and in Jamaica**, funding was made more inclusive and accessible to all groups by including the participation of civil society representatives in the design phase of the calls for proposals.
- In **Guyana**, in the context of the COVID-19 Response Plan, the programme used a joint call for proposals and a review process for all proposals received from CSOs.
- The **Malawi** SI Coordination team developed a contextualized [Grassroots Action Plan](#), with the aim to strengthen the capacities of existing grassroots partners to deliver results effectively in phase II, and to sustain results beyond Spotlight. The capacity building needs were identified by a Joint IP Assessment conducted in 2021 alongside district Gender Technical Working Groups. The assessment scores all IPs against a set of criteria, and flags

particular helpful for small organizations at the local levels. Please find a standard Joint EOI template [here](#), and EOI examples from Spotlight countries [here](#).

- Invest more intentionally in a portfolio of **small core grants** to direct institutional funding to national and local women's organizations **to build capacities and resilience** – without any programmatic requirements.
  - In the **Caribbean, Central Asia, and the Pacific**, several programmes pivoted toward a small grants programme that provides core institutional funding to CSOs. However, challenges still remain with complex proposal templates, the need for official registration and audits, resource-heavy assessments and short deadlines that may exclude small organizations from accessing funding. These programmes therefore need to be further expanded and much more simplified to be accessible.
- **Subgranting:** UN agencies, programmes and funds should consider larger partnerships with foundations and women's funds that operate locally and have a track record of granting small amounts to women's rights organizations and groups and can thus efficiently reach the most marginalized women and girls. E.g. as a standard, set aside a programmatic sum or percentage that is directly invested as civil society grants through intermediaries
- Read more in the [Grassroots Action Plan](#) (short

	<p>areas for improvement for each one- with the understanding that each RUNO will incorporate capacity building into their partnership agreements (formally or informally).</p>	<p>version) and in the <a href="#">Civil Society Funding Advocacy</a> paper.</p>
<p><b>Advocacy</b></p> <p>Respondents reported that one of the main opportunities with their engagement as Reference Group members is to <b>voice the needs of marginalized groups.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ In <b>Guyana</b>, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ the CSRG met with the Minister of Human Services to advocate for the national task force to become operational - this task force has responsibilities for the implementation of the Sexual Offences Act (SOA).</li> <li>■ The work plan includes advocacy and awareness activities that complement the activities under the varying pillars of the annual work plan. In this regard, the CSRG has held meetings with the Guyana Press Association and community leaders in one of the target regions to address concerns about media reporting specific to GBV incidences and prevention of violence within the community respectively</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ In 2019, the CSRG in <b>Zimbabwe</b> developed a manual on Movement Building and Advocacy, adding a new section on how CSOs can continue to lobby, advocate, and build movements on gender equality and women’s rights issues in times of natural disasters, conflicts, emergencies, and humanitarian crises. In 2021, the CSRG held a Zumba event as part of the “Shaking Off GBV” campaign. The campaign used the popular form of exercise as a medium to raise awareness on GBV. The event also focused on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Awareness raising campaigns to increase the visibility of the situation of women with disabilities</li> <li>● Making recommendations to include indigenous women’s voices and needs in the implementation of the programme</li> <li>● Lobbying governments and key decision-making or policy-making stakeholders on issues related to gender equality, eliminating GBV, ensuring adjudication of cases timely by persecuting's lawyers, women’s equal participation in spheres of power, gender budgeting, prohibition of FGM, etc.</li> <li>● Developing a small grants project for the strengthening of women's organizations in the context of COVID-19 (“Strengthening us to stop violence”)</li> <li>● Developing social media video campaigns to complement the national efforts for the 16 Days of Activism 2020, targeting traditionally left behind rights holders</li> <li>● Meeting with high-level decision making bodies to push for accountability and advocating for the timely operationalization of EVAWG policies.</li> </ul>

raising awareness on the Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) of young women and on the harmful impact of early marriages. The event was organized in partnership with the Zimpapers TV Network (ZTN) which live streamed it on social media. More than 8,500 viewed the event on Facebook and 145 viewed it on YouTube.

- In **Samoa**, the CSRG led the 16 Days of Healing Campaign which was a national activity that demonstrated the leading and critical role of CSOs and communities in EVAWG.
- The CSNRG in **Belize**
  - developed an Advocacy Strategy with a participatory and collective approach to pool resources and to forge a unified position among the CSNRG in its representation of civil society to foster enhanced RUNO-CSO collaboration and advocate for policy change with the Government of Belize. The Advocacy Strategy is linked to the CSNRG monitoring and evaluation plan. Find examples of an advocacy strategy from the Belize NRG [here](#) and the Global Reference Group [here](#).
    - In collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative team, the CSRG and other relevant CSOs, will develop a position paper to be presented at the National Steering Committee to seek the government's commitment to addressing gaps in legislation and enforcement of the Domestic Violence Act.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In <b>Honduras</b>, with the support of the Initiative, the CSRG has made visible the situation of women with disabilities and the levels of exclusion and invisible violence experienced by women with disabilities. The group produced communication pieces on gender-based violence accessible to the hearing impaired, the media is more aware of the impact of violence and the impact of the pandemic. The National Network of Women with Disabilities in Honduras was formed, and will have its first meeting with the CSRG soon.</li> <li>● In <b>Mali</b>, the Group co-organized the first International Day of Engaged Men (Journée Internationale des Hommes Engagés, JIHE) on March 20, 2021 at the University of Segou. This event was attended by more than 300 people from all regions of Mali. The day will be institutionalized and celebrated every March 7, 2021.</li> <li>● In <b>Mexico</b>, a working Group was formed by 4 members of the CSRG, 2 members of the Spotlight technical team, and 3 representatives of COLMEX to work creatively in the elaboration of 3 videos to make visible the contributions of the broad women's movement to eradicate VAWG and the challenges they face. The wealth of testimonies, as well as graphic materials were the result of this horizontal work space, and the women defenders were able to take ownership of these materials and use them to make their contributions visible.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Capacity Strengthening</b></p> <p>Many respondents highlighted their</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In 2019, the CSRG in <b>Zimbabwe</b> conducted a training on advocacy and movement building for CSRG members and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>CSRG members should have access to capacity building activities.</b> Training activities can be included in the work plan, e.g. technical training on</li> </ul>

appreciation for learning opportunities and needs-based capacity strengthening activities, and expressed a desire to increase these.

other CSOs working on gender equality and women's rights, GBV and SRHR. The CSRG focused on strengthening its own advocacy and lobbying capacity on GBV, SGBV and SRHR issues, and the training helped to map out strategies to expand the reach of SI as well as disseminate GBV, SGBV and SRHR messages to middle-class women and girls and women leaders within the private sector who are not specifically targeted in the programme.

- In **Belize**, the Spotlight Initiative in collaboration with the NRG, organized a human rights capacity building session for Women's Rights Groups and relevant CSOs as part of the group's advisor and advocacy role. Information on presentations: [Presentation Practical exercise COVID 19 under the gender lens.pdf](#); [HR Capacity building \(sessions 1, 2, 3\).pdf](#), and Case Studies prepared and delivered by the CSNRG Members: [Case Study\\_Indigenous persons.docx](#) ; [Case Study\\_Gender based violence.doc](#) ; [Case study Pamela Perez case.doc](#) ; [KH Case Study.docx](#)
- In **Jamaica**, the CSRG co-organized a high-level CSO Forum in 2021. The event was in collaboration with the RCO under the Jamaica Partnership Forum hosted in celebration of the 76th anniversary of the United Nations. The CSNRG led one of the three day event, aimed at increasing awareness on 'How to sustainably partner with Civil Society Organizations in Jamaica'. Highlights of the day included lessons learned and best practices insights from two Spotlight CSO implementing partners and a panel discussion with participants from the Government, the European Union, Men and Youth-Led CSOs.
- In **Belize**,
  - the CSRG's ICT capacity was strengthened through the establishment of 3 ICT hubs to support greater

EVAWG through partnerships with national or international organizations, workshops on design thinking, advocacy strengthening.

- Share a survey or organize a dedicated workshop to identify the needs of the CSRG in terms of capacity building (independent monitoring, advocacy strengthening etc.)



	<p>functionality of CSNRG members and also to enable the CSRG to support actions under Outcome 6 geared towards strengthening CSOs and women’s movement to advocate and design, implement, monitor and evaluate programmes on family violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the CSNRG presented four Case Studies at the Human Rights Capacity Building Session in mid-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 toward EVAWG.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Leaving No One Behind</b></p> <p>55.6% (41.7%) reported high adherence to the principles of leaving no one behind, transparency and inclusivity in the engagement of the Reference Group</p> <p>An average of 29.1% (37%) reported modest adherence of the above and an average of 15.4% (21.3%) reported low levels of adherence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In <b>Argentina</b>, one of the recommendations in the CSRG Shadow Report was to strengthen the Spotlight Initiative's approach to intersectionalities by deepening the mechanisms for the real participation of its CSRG members. Following this, the membership of the group was expanded to encourage greater representation of different intersectionalities within the group, and four new civil society representatives joined the group. These included representatives of women living with HIV/AIDS, Afro-descendant women, the academic community working on research on gender-based violence and finally one representative of the region of Jujuy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the CSRG includes diverse groups and civil society constitutions.</li> </ul>