

A graphic consisting of a large, irregular shape made of many small circles in various shades of blue and white. The circles are arranged to form a shape that resembles a spotlight or a speech bubble. The text "Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit" is centered within this shape.

Spotlight
Monitoring
Toolkit

1

GUIDE FOR

Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups



Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit

December 2020

Authors: Karin van den Belt and Neha Sood

Contributors: Members of the Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups

Designer: Chelsea Very Design (<https://chelseavery.com>)

Acknowledgements: Count Me In! Consortium (CMI!) gratefully acknowledges the many people whose contributions and ideas have shaped this *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit*. First and foremost, our deepest thanks to the members of the Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups who spent hours in face to face and virtual meetings with us and shared so generously of their knowledge, their analysis and heart. A special thank you to all members of CMI! and its Spotlight Working Group (including current and previous members), especially Ginney Liu, Kasia Staszewska, Lara Fergus, Nathalie Margi and Tariro Tandji who were tireless partners and advocates in the whole process of CMI!’s engagement with the Spotlight Initiative. To staff members of the Spotlight Secretariat, especially Zebib Kidane, thank you for reviewing the draft version of the Toolkit and for supporting its translation to Russian and Portuguese. Our deepest appreciation to CMI! consultants and authors of this Toolkit: Neha Sood (CMI! Spotlight Advocacy Consultant) and Karin van den Belt (CMI! PMEL Consultant) thank you for your feminist leadership in this process, for grounding the analysis, and for surfacing complex issues that otherwise might not have found their way to this Toolkit. Finally thank you to our editors, Rochelle Jones and Kasia Staszewska.

About Count Me In!

Count Me In! is a special joint initiative led by Mama Cash, including the sex workers-led Red Umbrella Fund (RUF), together with the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID), CREA, Just Associates (JASS), and Urgent Action Fund – Africa (representing its sister funds in the US and Latin America). The Dutch gender platform WO=MEN is a strategic partner for lobbying and advocacy. The initiative is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the period 2016-2020. Within its programming, CMI! is committed to advocating for the sustainable resourcing of women’s rights and feminist movements.

<https://www.mamacash.org/en/count-me-in-consortium>

**count
me IN!**

Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

www.creativecommons.org

This publication may be redistributed non-commercially in any media, unchanged and in its entirety, with credit given to Count Me In! Consortium, Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups and the authors.

About this Guide

This Guide is the opening document for the *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit*. Developed for the **Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups (CS-RGs)**, it aims to support CS-RGs' independent monitoring of the **Spotlight Initiative** (referred to henceforth as "Spotlight") in their respective contexts. **This Guide provides clear instructions on how to use the Toolkit.** The ultimate objective of the *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit* is to support members of the national, regional and global CS-RGs to develop their own monitoring reports, or Scorecards, to hold Spotlight accountable and advocate for change.

The *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit* is comprised of five documents:



GUIDE for
Civil Society
Reference
Groups



INDICATORS
for
Monitoring
Spotlight
Processes
and Systems



**SPOTLIGHT
MONITORING**
Plan Template



**DATA
COMPILATION**
and Analysis
Template



**ADVOCACY
SCORECARD**
Template

Except this Guide, all documents offer concrete tools for CS-RGs to support different phases of the Spotlight monitoring process. We invite you to study all the documents as they all build on each other and together constitute the whole. This Guide will give you step-by-step instructions on how to use the different parts of the *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit*.



About Spotlight Initiative

The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) by 2030. Launched in 2017 with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union, Spotlight represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality and women's empowerment as a precondition and driver for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Spotlight works with governments, civil society organizations, women's rights movements and local communities through its programs in 26 focus countries, alongside regional programs in Africa, the Caribbean, Central Asia, Latin America and the Pacific. More information: <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/>



About Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups (CS-RGs)

CS-RGs are an institutional mechanism that harnesses civil society expertise on violence against women and girls (VAWG) and strengthens Spotlight's effectiveness and accountability to women's and feminist movements at national, regional and global levels. Set up in response to activists' recommendations (see *Feminist Recommendations to Spotlight* in the Annex on page 9) and in line with the Spotlight principle of meaningful engagement with civil society, CS-RGs serve a triple function: to advise the Spotlight Initiative; to advocate and partner for the realization of its objectives; and to hold Spotlight accountable for its commitments.¹

¹ For more information see Spotlight Initiative Guidance Note '*Achieving meaningful engagement and partnership with the Civil Society Reference Groups*' available at: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xZyxGJLuUKxRXgNX7oxctR2c5-ASiDp7/view?usp=sharing>

Introduction

In 2017, the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) announced the [Spotlight Initiative](#) - a €500 million investment to eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG). The [Count Me In! Consortium \(CMI!\)](#) together with feminists in the CS-RGs stress that in order for Spotlight funding to benefit the lives of all women and girls, **intersectional feminist movements** must be central to the design, implementation, governance and monitoring of Spotlight.

Intersectional feminist movements include women, trans, gender diverse and other historically oppressed groups of activists and their communities, who face intensified marginalization, in particular due to their race, ethnicity, caste, religious beliefs, age, ability, sexual expression or gender identity. Intersectional feminist movements support and embrace, among others, the struggles and leadership of indigenous, environmental and land rights feminists; disability rights defenders; lesbian, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and other gender diverse activists; sex workers and informal, domestic, and low-wage workers' rights activists; migrant, displaced, refugee or stateless feminists and those affected by conflict or occupation, or deprived of their liberty.

Spotlight's ambition is to be a model of innovation. Yet doing things differently requires a *decolonizing approach*: from deconstructing colonial ideologies and systems of privilege, to challenging traditional power dynamics in *how* resources are being moved and *who* they are actually reaching.²

To ensure that a significant volume of Spotlight funding reaches intersectional feminist movements, CMI! drew upon a set of [18 Feminist Recommendations](#) (see Annex on page 9) that were developed with input from over 600 feminist activists, who shared their visions for defining and implementing Spotlight. The recommendations focused on: participation of intersectional feminist movements in Spotlight implementation; salient funding mechanisms; disbursement of funds and program implementation. Now, as the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified the shadow crisis of VAWG, full implementation of these recommendations is even more urgent.

This Toolkit aims to support members of the SC-RGs to hold Spotlight accountable to *whether* and *what extent* our *Feminist Recommendations* have been put into practice at different levels of Spotlight implementation.

² See the new report by AWID and Mama Cash: *Moving More Money to the Drivers of Change - How funders can resource feminist movements*, available at: <https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/new-report-moving-more-money-drivers-change-how-funders-can-resource-feminist>

Monitoring Spotlight

This Toolkit is a collaborative effort between CMI! and CS-RGs to support their independent monitoring of Spotlight's implementation. It extends beyond the lifespan of CMI! that completes its work by the end of 2020.

Drawing upon but not limiting ourselves to the *18 Feminist Recommendations*, we have collectively developed a set of 26 indicators that CS-RGs can use to monitor implementation of Spotlight at the country, regional and global levels. Indicators follow the logic of the *Feminist Recommendations* and correspond to their key areas:

- **Participation of civil society and intersectional feminist movements;**
- **Funding mechanisms; and**
- **Disbursement and implementation**

Central to the monitoring process are principles of accountability, participation, transparency and intersectionality, alongside the focus on activists' integrated protection.

Crucially, our indicators focus on monitoring how Spotlight processes and systems are functioning, rather than measuring actual program outcomes and impact on ending VAWG.

What is Integrated Protection?

Integrated protection refers to a holistic approach that goes beyond the physical safety of feminist activists and Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs). Integrated Protection has a gendered perspective: it takes into account the risks activists and WHRDs face from family/community/non-state actors; considers emotional wellbeing and digital security (e.g. harassment, hacking, etc.), and extends to the security of their families, organizations and movements. In the context of Spotlight, integrated protection implies a focus on prevention of risks as well as fostering an 'enabling environment' for activists, movements and WHRDs to continue their important work.

How to use the different parts of this Toolkit

Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit comprises five different documents: this Guide and four concrete tools to support different phases of the Spotlight Monitoring Process. These are:

-  **01 | Guide for Spotlight Civil Society Reference Groups**
-  **02 | Indicators for Monitoring Spotlight Processes and Systems**
-  **03 | Spotlight Monitoring Plan Template**
-  **04 | Data Compilation and Analysis Template**
-  **05 | Advocacy Scorecard Template**

A brief introduction to each of the tools, with short instructions on how to use them, is presented below.

01

Guide for Spotlight Civil Society Reference Group

The Guide is the opening document for the *Spotlight Monitoring Toolkit*, which was developed to support CS-RGs' independent monitoring of the Spotlight Initiative. **This Guide provides short background information about Spotlight and feminist movements' advocacy and engagement so far; clear instructions on how to use the Toolkit; and presents short introduction to each of the Toolkit's tools.**

02

Indicators for Monitoring Spotlight Processes and Systems

The document: *Indicators for Monitoring Spotlight Processes and Systems* introduces a **list of 26 indicators that CS-RGs can use to monitor Spotlight**. The list of indicators, developed in consultation with members of the CS-RGs, draws upon the list of *Feminist Recommendations* put forward by CMI! and feminist movements. The idea here is for this full list of indicators to serve as guidance and inspiration: **CS-RGs do not need to use all 26 indicators but select the ones that are most important and relevant to their contexts**. We recommend that CS-RGs select a minimum of six (6) and a maximum of 15 indicators at a time, so that the monitoring process is feasible and the resulting advocacy is focused and strategic.

03

Spotlight Monitoring Plan Template

The *Spotlight Monitoring Plan Template* will help with **planning for data collection and data collection methodology**. This template asks you to select relevant indicators; identify who can provide information to measure the indicators; and identify who could collect the information. This template also indicates the level(s) - national, regional and/or global - at which primary data for each indicator can be collected. Data collection can take place via key informant interviews and direct analysis of Spotlight reports and documentation. In the *Spotlight Monitoring Plan Template*, CS-RGs can identify their key informants - one key informant might be able to address several questions and provide data on several indicators. Interview questions - also suggested in the document - can be adapted to the specific role and position of the key informant as needed. Please also refer to the *Data Compilation and Analysis Template* (see below) before data collection begins, as it provides an explanation of how indicators are measured and a scale for valuing interviewee responses.

04

Data Compilation and Analysis Template

The *Data Compilation and Analysis Template* can be used to **support data collection and analysis in a uniform way**. The template is divided into four sections each in an Excel tab. The first three tabs represent the indicators for *Participation*, *Funding Mechanisms* and *Disbursement*, with quantitative and qualitative indicators grouped separately. For the quantitative indicators, each has a definition and method to calculate. Once you enter data under the 'Calculation' columns, graphs will appear automatically to the right which can then be copied into the final monitoring report. For the qualitative indicators, each indicator has a definition and value rating: from 1 to 4. You can select the most suitable value from the drop-down menu in the 'value' column. In the 'explanation' column you are requested to explain why you chose that value for that indicator. Once a value is selected, the graphs will appear automatically on the fourth tab labelled "qualitative graphs".

05

Scorecard Template

Now that data collection is completed, CS-RGs can develop **civil society monitoring reports**. This can be done in the form of a *Scorecard*, or another format of choice, which can then be used by CS-RGs and wider feminist movements for advocacy with Spotlight teams in their respective countries and regions. To illustrate how this can be done, CMI! developed a *Scorecard Template* with **instructions on how to insert the data and visuals from the *Data Compilation and Analysis Template*** used to collect and analyze the data at the earlier stages of the monitoring process.

Check our tutorial video to learn how to draft the Scorecard or any other form of report, using our *Data Compilation and Analysis Template*.

Annex: **Feminist Recommendations to the Spotlight Initiative**

Drawing from the meaningful input from over 600 feminist and women's rights advocates who shared their visions for defining and implementing the Spotlight €500 million investment, CMI! has developed the following ***Feminist Recommendations to the Spotlight Initiative***.



Participation

1. Fifty percent (50%) of Spotlight funding should reach constituency-led women's rights, girl's rights and feminist organizations and networks with **track records of taking rights-based action** to end violence against women and girls (VAWG).

2. Ensure that Spotlight's decision-making structures include meaningful participation from women's rights and feminist organizations with expertise in EVAWG.

Aim for at least 50% representation of women's rights and feminist movement leaders in decision making **at all stages**, from conceptualization to country program development to implementation.

3. Civil Society Reference groups at country, regional, and global levels should be **made up of a majority of constituency-led women's rights/feminist organizations and movements.**

4. Such reference groups should represent a diversity of constituencies, ensuring that there are young feminists, LBQTI individuals, women with disabilities, indigenous, religious, racial and ethnic minorities, migrant, domestic, informal and sex workers, and women living with HIV/AIDS.

5. Independent civil society organizations, particularly women's rights and feminist organizations and leaders, should **participate as full members of all governance bodies**, including the Global Governance Body, with a binding voice in decision making. Observer status is not meaningful participation.

6. Create coordination mechanisms for country, regional, and global reference groups (civil society) and decision-making teams (UNCTs, global governance body etc.). Namely, these levels should not work in isolation, but should adhere to the **same policies and guidelines** and have clear steps to integrate strategies, and mechanisms to **dialogue and influence one another.**



Funding Mechanisms

7. Fifty percent (50%) of total **funds should be channeled through existing mechanisms** (women's funds and the UNTF-EVAW).

8. Spotlight's calls for proposals and proposal assessment guidelines should expressly **prioritize groups that address an intersectional analysis of violence**, including based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, age, race, ethnicity, and economic oppression, among other dimensions.

9. Spotlight's funding decisions about specific proposals and overarching strategies should be made on the basis of appraisals and **assessments undertaken by individuals and groups with strong backgrounds in EVAWG** and include women's rights and feminist movement leaders working on VAWG, as well as women's funds.

10. The Spotlight Initiative should adhere to an **open, competitive grant making process** -- a key principle of responsible philanthropy -- based on transparency and valuing capacity and commitment. The Initiative's current guideline that all funds flow through UN organizations alone contradicts this principle, adds considerable administrative, overhead costs, and layers of bureaucracy, and reduces funds that should be directly invested in ending VAWG.

11. As the Spotlight Initiative seeks to mobilize new funds from other major donors, it is essential to ensure that this does not reduce the already-limited available resources for women's rights, girl's rights, and feminist movements. Spotlight **should encourage funders, including the EU, bilaterals, and private foundations, to also fund women's rights and feminist organizations**, groups and networks directly, thus deepening the ecosystem of resources available to end violence against women and girls.

12. While we understand that Spotlight will be mobilizing new major donors and that it is likely some of these will be joining the governance body, we strongly recommend that these **donors be held accountable to upholding an unambiguous commitment** to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), the rights of LGBTQI people, economic rights, and the right to development using an intersectional, rights-based approach as enshrined in the basic principles of universal rights and indivisible rights and consistent with the frameworks of CEDAW and the Beijing Declaration.



Disbursement & Implementation

13. Use and build on data and existing knowledge about ending VAWG.

Most importantly, Spotlight's programming should build on analysis of the ways in which structural bias and discrimination against women in economic, political, and social systems creates and compounds VAWG, both in so-called peace as well as conflict contexts.

14. Funds to be spent at country level should not be required to go through UN

Resident Coordinator offices and UN Country Teams. This holds women's rights and EVAWG strategies hostage to the variable capacities and political alliances of local UN country teams. Instead, funds should go to those with credible proposals and strong track records and knowledge related to EVAWG, based on a competitive and external grant review process. (See Recommendation #10.)

15. The Spotlight initiative will be working in countries where state parties may be hostile to and/or oppose human rights work and the work of women human rights defenders (WHRDs) to end violence against women and girls. These WHRDs are critical to creating lasting change and contributing to the effective impact of Spotlight. There must be **mechanisms in place to ensure:**

- **WHRDs' active participation** and decision making (see points 1 through 5);
- **integrated protection** that assures there are no reprisals or additional risk as a result of their participation; and
- **funding** for these WHRDs, their work, and their integrated protection.

16. Spotlight expressly should **adopt an integrated protection approach** (based on EU and UN guidelines and resolutions) to secure the safety of women human rights defenders, particularly in cases where there is potential for conflict with hostile governments, corporations or other non-state actors, in countries where Spotlight is working.

17. In addition, we are concerned that governments hostile to the rights of girls and women can and will seek to influence UN teams and their decision making on the participation of WHRDs and women's rights and feminist organizations in these countries. Spotlight should identify clear steps, including the **engagement of external review committees** (recommendation #10), coordination with existing women's funding mechanisms (#7), and **accountability mechanisms** (#18) **to support a competitive and open process, particularly in cases where states may attempt to interfere in or oppose direct funding for EVAWG.**

18. **Processes in every country should be monitored by women's rights and feminist organizations** to ensure that UNCTs and UN organizations are upholding these recommendations. Spotlight should support and provide guidelines for UNCTs to engage with monitoring efforts.