



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

Global

Annual Narrative Progress Report

01 January 2021 – 31 December 2021

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations



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Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Administrative Agent
AIBD	Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development
AJI	Alliance of Independent Journalists
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWID	Association of Women's Rights in Development
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CCA	United Nations Common Country Analysis
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CMI	Count Me In! Consortium
COSI	Community of the Spotlight Initiative
COTLA	Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSNRG	Civil Society National Reference Group
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSRRG	Civil Society Regional Reference Group
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
C4D	Communication for Development
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DG-INTPA	EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General
DSVRT	Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team
DVIC	Domestic Violence Intervention Centre
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ECMIA	Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas
EOI	Expression of Interest
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
ESP	Essential Services Package
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union (EU) Delegation
EVAWG	Eliminating Violence against Women and Girls
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization

FCI	Foundation for Community Initiatives
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GESD	Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence Programme
GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
GRG	Global Civil Society Reference Group
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLPC	High-Level Political Compact
HP	Harmful Practice
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IMS	Information Management System
INAM	Instituto Nacional de la Mujer (National Institute for Women)
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual and Intersexual
LGBTI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Intersexual and other sexual identities
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual and Queer
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersexual
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexual and other sexual identities
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MTA	Mid-Term Assessment
NAP	National Action Plan
NICE	National Initiative for Civic Education
NGBWG	Network against Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSC	Operational Steering Committee
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RUNOs	Recipient United Nations Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMART	Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
TYC	Trinidad Youth Council
UN	United Nations
UN RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UN Trust Fund	United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP-PALOP	UNDP team from the Portuguese-speaking African countries
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIC	United Nations Information Centres
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
VFSC	Village Family Safety Committee
VSLA	Village Saving and Lending Association
WFP	World Food Programme
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WPCTF	Women Protection Centre Trust Fund
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Foreword

by United Nations Deputy Secretary-General

As the world grapples with numerous crises simultaneously – from an ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts, most recently the war in Ukraine, to the unfolding climate emergency, collectively deepening poverty and inequality, and food and energy insecurity – we see women and girls pay the highest price for this turmoil. As predictable as it is devastating, already pandemic levels of gender-based violence has escalated even further alongside these crises, with rising levels of all forms of violence including intimate partner violence, rape, harassment, disappearances and femicide.

In many spaces, women's rights have been attacked and rolled back. This challenging context makes the results of the Spotlight Initiative, a ground-breaking partnership between the United Nations and the European Union, even more impressive; its work, even more urgent. Together, we have supported governments, civil society, women's rights advocates and communities to push back against a dangerous tide of misogyny and recognize and protect the most fundamental right a woman or girl has – her right to a life free from violence.

In 2021 alone, the Spotlight Initiative ensured that over 630,000 women and girls experiencing violence were able to access the services they needed. It helped strengthen nearly 200 laws to end violence against women and girls or advance gender equality across 41 countries. With the Initiative's support, the number of gender-based violence convictions more than doubled from 2020 to 2021, bringing justice to numerous women and girls. Nearly 130 million people were reached through Spotlight Initiative violence prevention campaigns, while over 1.3 million men and boys took part in community interventions that promote positive masculinity, respectful family relationships and non-violent conflict resolution. As further evidence of the transformative and sustainable results needed, more than 1,000 local and grassroots women's rights organizations reported having greater influence and an improved ability to work on eliminating violence against women and girls.

Nearly 130 million people were reached through Spotlight Initiative violence prevention campaigns, while over 1.3 million men and boys took part in community interventions that promote positive masculinity, respectful family relationships and non-violent conflict resolution

Behind each of these impressive results is a woman or girl whose life has been saved or transformed. Not only do survivors have better and more accessible services, but many more now have a say in the political processes that define their lives and communities. Diverse women and girls are now counted in official statistics, leading to better policies that are tailored to their specific needs.

As this global annual report captures, Spotlight Initiative has contributed not only to ending violence against women and girls, but also to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals more broadly. Women's ability to live a life free of violence, participate in education, political, social and economic life, thrive and contribute, is a pre condition to the attainment of every other goal. To achieve the sustainable development goals, women and girls must be at the heart of our solutions.

The Initiative's impact counts in large part on its meaningful partnership with civil society organizations and its commitment to "leaving no one behind". The Initiative prioritizes the most vulnerable groups and communities, and has awarded USD 144.5 million to civil society organizations to help reach those hardest to reach. Seventy two per cent of these resources went to women's rights and women-led organizations. Seventy-eight per cent was invested in national, local or grassroots organizations, the frontline organizations that are best placed to develop local solutions.

From its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has been historic in size, scope and ambition. It is the first large scale initiative of its kind to systematically address both the drivers of gender-based violence and its consequences, aiming to prevent violence before it happens. A 2021 study commissioned by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and referenced in this annual report confirms that investing in this holistic, rights-based approach has the potential to reduce violence 70–90 per cent more effectively than more siloed approaches. With five years of proven results, I implore all actors, including donors, to rally behind this model approach to ending violence against women and girls. Today, we are at a crossroads. We have the blueprint to ensure that women and girls can enjoy a life free of violence, oppression and marginalization. I urge each of us to come together and use it.



United Nations Deputy
Secretary-General,
Amina Mohammed
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Foreword

by European Union Commissioner for International Partnerships

The COVID pandemic, events in Afghanistan and Russia's vicious attack on Ukraine have shaken the pillars of our values-based order, demonstrating how quickly years of progress can vanish. They have also shown how disproportionately vulnerable women and girls are to the brutal impact of crises, wars and conflicts. They have shown how imperative it is to advance in our work towards a gender-equal world, and to fight for the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Today more than ever, I am proud of the solid achievements of the Spotlight Initiative across its six pillars, 26 countries, and five regions. The Spotlight Initiative has worked with more than 2.5 million young people to promote gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours. It has provided more than 1.6 million women and girls with gender-based violence services. It has contributed in 43 countries to strengthen their National Action Plans to eliminate violence against women and girls, and to pass or strengthen a total of 198 laws and policies. In the space of one year only, 2020 to 2021, the number of convictions for gender-based violence more than doubled. Since the start of the initiative, national budgets devoted to addressing violence against women and girls have seen an astounding eight-fold increase.

The key to these results has been the inclusive approach of the Spotlight Initiative. It brings on board non-traditional actors, and adapts to the context in each country. Its engagement with grassroots women's and civil society organisations has been of paramount importance. These organisations are the true heroes of the story, irreplaceable in their ability to reach the most vulnerable and marginalised. In this report, you will be able to read about their many innovations, such as mobile clinics, virtual victims friendly court, or virtual referral and response services during the pandemic period.

The Spotlight Initiative has worked with more than 2.5 million young people to promote gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours. It has provided more than 1.6 million women and girls with gender-based violence services.

Thanks to its participatory, human rights -based, gender-transformative whole-of-society approach, multi-stakeholder methodology, and comprehensive theory of change, the Spotlight Initiative really is transforming the lives of women and girls around the world.

Building on these victories, the European Union will continue to support the Spotlight Initiative on the ground and globally in building its knowledge base, in exchanging evidence based best practice, and in strengthening global advocacy, including with civil society actors. This will be integral to all our efforts and commitments under the Generation Equality

Forum and its Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence.

Join us! We all have a collective responsibility to ensure that women and girls are safe and feel safe. Broadening the scope of the Spotlight Initiative and multiplying its impacts is an effective multilateral way of taking on the commitment, taking action, and achieving our shared goal.

We had given ourselves until 2030 to end violence against women and achieve gender equality. It is still possible. The time to act is now.



European Union Commissioner for International Partnerships, **Jutta Urpilainen**
©Courtesy of the EU Commissioner

Executive Summary

1.1 Global Context: Working to End Violence against Women and Girls

The context for gender equality and women and girls living free from violence has deteriorated since the COVID-19 pandemic. As **numerous studies have shown**, rates of violence against women and girls have increased around the world.¹ Many of the former options for shelter, care and justice have become less accessible given associated lockdowns and restrictions. Concurrently, progress toward achieving women's human rights has continued to be threatened from right-wing, fundamentalist, and authoritarian movements.² Data suggests that a generation of gains in labour force participation may be lost, along with significant regression on other measures of equality, including in policy frameworks on gender equality, in education and sexual and reproductive health and rights, and in the amount of democratic or civic space in which women's human rights defenders have to operate (as detailed in a recent study on "**Backlash in Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Rights**"). Women and girls also carry a disproportionately higher unpaid care workload, further exacerbated by COVID-19. Climate change and increasing climate-related disasters and conflicts have deepened the vulnerability of women and girls to violence, as well.

To counter this backlash and the increased rates of violence and reversals of progress, women human rights defenders – including land and water defenders and labour organizers, feminist and social justice activists, progressive politicians and journalists –

have mobilized diverse movements demanding rights and justice globally. These communities have organized and demanded climate justice, labour rights, racial justice, women's reproductive rights and trans rights. They have also called for economic justice, additional social protections and vaccine justice in the face of COVID-19. Spotlight Initiative has embraced and supported this momentum, amplifying its commitment to centring civil society organizations and supporting women's and feminist organizations and movements to end violence against women and girls. Work mobilized through the Spotlight Initiative is as critical as ever: violence against women and girls continues to be a pervasive and egregious human rights violation that must be addressed.

1.2 The Spotlight Initiative Model and Funding

In order to effectively deploy resources and stimulate action to end violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative is governed at the global level by the Governing Body, followed by the Operational Steering Committee (OSC) and Global Civil Society Reference Group.³ The Global Secretariat plays a critical, cross-functional role in harmonizing Spotlight Initiative programmes, providing technical assistance, and support to communications, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management. More details on governance mechanisms can be found in **Chapter 3**.

The Spotlight Initiative recognizes that long-term social transformation cannot happen without forging diverse and deep partnerships across United Nations

¹ World Bank Blogs (January 5, 2022) "[Global crisis of violence against women and girls: tackling it with new, better data use](#)".

² [The World's Women 2020: Trends and Statistics](#)

³ At the programme level, **National and Regional Steering Committees** provide implementation oversight and coordination of the country and regional programmes (respectively). **Civil Society Reference Groups** at national or regional level enable the systematic engagement of civil society within the programme level governance structure.

agencies, with government at all levels, and with civil society, including particularly with feminist and women's rights organizations and movements. The Initiative also partners with the media, academia, the private sector and religious institutions, among other stakeholders, advancing a whole of society approach to ending violence against women and girls. More details on partnerships and the special role of civil society in the Spotlight Initiative can be found in [Chapters 4 and 5](#).

In line with a diverse partnership model, Spotlight Initiative advances the principles UN Reform and implements them using a unique model of integrated programming.⁴ The Initiative's inter-agency work has helped programme teams leverage existing coordination mechanisms to better engage civil society and has leveraged United Nations agencies' technical expertise to enhance programming in 2021. This commitment to "a new way of working" jointly and towards "One UN" has resulted in global impact, with programmes collectively contributing to key results for women and girls. Taken together, advancing the principles of UN Reform has further accelerated delivery and reinforced the achievement of transformative results.

By the end of 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmed USD 477,828,188 through 26 country programmes across five regions; six regional programmes (including the "Safe and Fair" programme in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)); and two civil society grant-giving programmes (partnering with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) for programmes in Africa and Latin America, and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) for programmes in Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea).

Cumulatively, Spotlight Initiative programmes allocated USD 179 million⁵ or 49 per cent of activity funds to civil society organizations (CSOs), achieving the Initiative's commitment to delivering 30–50

per cent of programme funds through civil society organizations. All five regions in which the Initiative works exceeded the minimum target of 30 per cent, with Central Asia⁶ leading at 60 per cent.

In all regions, the high and increasing implementation rate of funding through civil society organizations demonstrates Spotlight Initiative's strong commitment and sends a compelling signal to other donors on the importance of investing in autonomous women's movements and in national, local and grassroots civil society organizations as essential partners to eliminate violence against women and girls.⁷

1.3 Key Achievements in 2021

The Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change underscores the importance of a robustly resourced, rights-based, comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls – one that addresses the root causes of violence against women and girls, and posits that over time this approach will contribute to ending violence. Programmes work comprehensively across six Pillars: targeting inequitable laws and policies (Pillar 1); strengthening institutions (Pillar 2); challenging harmful social norms, attitudes, and behaviours (Pillar 3); strengthening services, access to justice and referral systems (Pillar 4); and strengthening data and tracking systems to make violence against women and girls visible (Pillar 5). Support to civil society and movement building (Pillar 6) is a particularly critical dimension of the Initiative's approach and, as noted, the Initiative is deeply committed to supporting and investing in progressive movements to advance women's rights and end violence against women and girls.

4 It has brought the United Nations system together to eliminate violence against women and girls (VAWG) by leveraging the newly empowered role of the UN Resident Coordinators (RCs); harmonizing coordination across Country Teams; capitalizing on resources and capacities; streamlining operational processes; collectively establishing and strengthening partnerships; and setting clear accountability lines.

5 This includes USD 36.7 million allocated to CSOs by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

6 For the purpose of this analysis, Afghanistan is included in the Central Asia region.

7 See the regional allocation table further down in this chapter.



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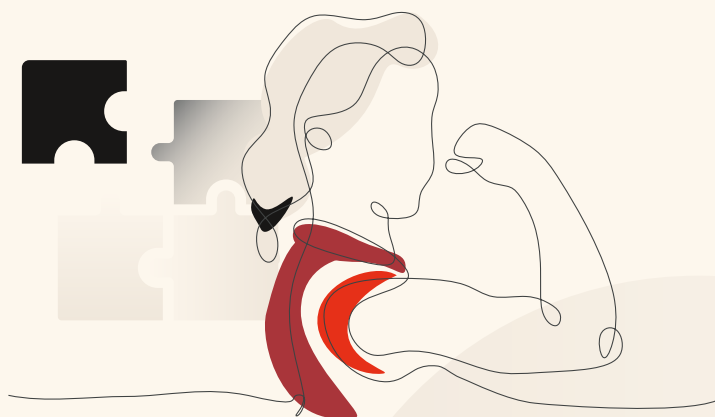
As the largest global investment to end violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative is proving that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in gender equality can foster transformative impact in the lives of women and girls. During 2021, the Initiative helped develop or strengthen 198 laws in 41 countries to end violence against women and girls or advance gender equality, with nearly 7,000 parliamentarians better able to design laws and policies to end violence against women and girls.⁸ Institutional capacity was further strengthened through the development of national action plans to end violence against women and girls in 43 countries and nearly four thousand parliamentarians, government officials and women's rights advocates were trained to ensure gender was adequately budgeted for in national and local policies, programmes and plans. Additionally, the Initiative's strategic approach prevents violence by addressing the systems and beliefs that perpetuate it. Nearly 130 million people were reached through campaigns focused on ending violence against women and girls, and over 1.3 million men and boys attended community programmes and gender transformative activities to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, and address violent masculinities.

The availability of quality services is critical, particularly during protracted crises. During 2021, Spotlight Initiative's support facilitated access to quality, multisectoral services for over 630,000 women and girls, with more than 1.6 million reached since the start of the Initiative. Quality disaggregated data help drive targeted policies and interventions and ensure that the rights of marginalised groups are upheld. Over 75% of countries in which Spotlight programmes supported efforts now have publicly available data on intimate partner violence.

Finally, evidence unequivocally demonstrates that support to progressive movement building and core funding to feminist, women's rights and grassroots organizations is essential to ending violence against women and girls, and Spotlight Initiative has, since its launch, supported civil society organizations in their efforts to end violence against women and girls. The Initiative has allocated USD 179 million to civil society (49 per cent of its activity funding) and awarded USD 144.5 million since its launch. Of this, 72 per cent was invested directly in women's rights and women-led organizations and 78 per cent in national, grassroots and local organizations, strengthening a diversity of

⁸ Since the beginning of the Spotlight Initiative, 6,909 parliamentarians across 12 programmes have strengthened capacities to support the design of laws and policies to end violence against women and girls.

2021 Spotlight Initiative Global Annual Report Results



43

countries strengthened their **National Action Plans** to eliminate violence against women and girls

198

laws and policies were signed or strengthened across **41 countries**

Nearly **130 million people**

were reached through campaigns in at least **29 languages**

8x

increase in national budgets to address violence against women and girls since the start of the initiative

Over **1.6 million women and girls**

accessed gender-based violence **services** since the Initiative began

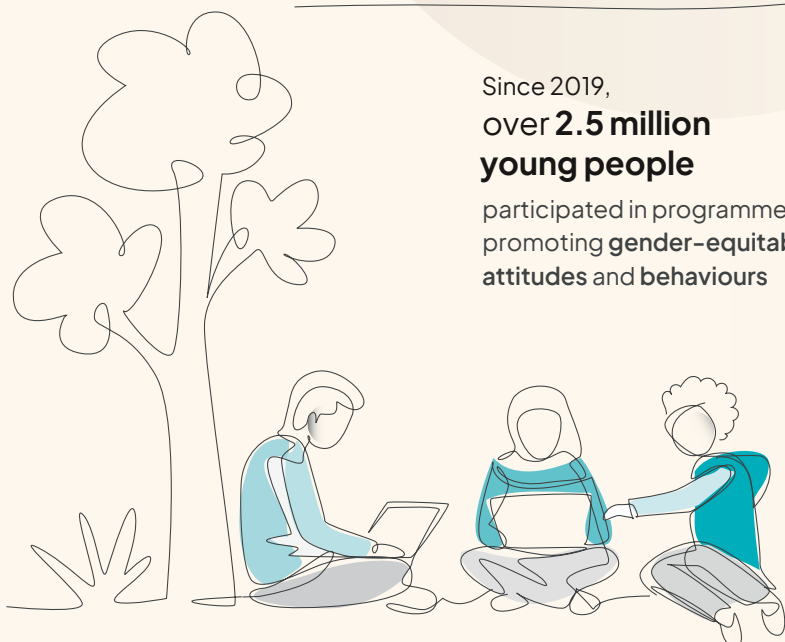
Over **1,000 local and grassroots women's rights organizations**

reported having greater influence and agency

The number of **convictions of perpetrators**

of GBV more than doubled compared to 2020. There were nearly **5,000 convictions** in 2021

USD 179 million allocated to **civil society organizations** so far (49% of activity funds)



Since 2019, over **2.5 million young people** participated in programmes promoting **gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours**

Over **1.3 million men and boys** were educated on:

Non-violent conflict resolution



Positive masculinity



Respectful family relationships and parenting

organizations and movements to catalyse change from the ground up.

1.4 Lessons Learned and Good and Innovative Practices

The Spotlight Initiative has cultivated a wealth of knowledge, which has fed into and further strengthened the Initiative's programming. Several key lessons are detailed below. The full list of lessons learned, including those in management and coordination, appear in [Chapter 8](#).

- **Ensuring national partners are engaged in continuous dialogue with government ministries supports an inclusive and participatory approach and, critically, builds collective ownership to address violence against women and girls.** High-level political commitment by government to the elimination of violence against women

and girls significantly increases the impact and sustainability of the Spotlight Initiative programmes, as well.

- **Engaging in participatory dialogue and systematic community mobilization prior to the implementation of programmes can be useful for garnering community-level support and addressing misconceptions or doubts about efforts to end violence against women and girls.** Religious and traditional leaders and youth continue to be change-makers with a widespread impact who can affect social norms and policy change in their communities and across networks.
- **It is critical to ensure those leading community dialogues on ending violence against women and girls understand the evidence-based drivers of violence against women and girls** (as even self-defined gender advocates can possess unconscious or conscious biases that may come through in their trainings).



©Spotlight Initiative in Papua New Guinea

- **One-stop centres, integrated health centres, women and girls spaces and mobile women centres, are conducive to providing quality essential services efficiently.** An emphasis on providing mental health and psychosocial support for survivors of violence exhibiting emotional distress and needing emotional support is critical. This support can be provided by building the capacity of individuals who can moderate different sensitive discussions.
- **Women’s rights activists, women’s rights organizations and women human rights defenders are at the forefront of responding to complex systemic challenges that can expose them to violence and put them at risk.** It is of paramount importance to make support services accessible for these actors too, including strategies for safety and security, as well as emotional support and stress management at the personal level.

The following innovative and good practices are highlighted as they provide strong examples of how the Initiative has been successful in operations, knowledge sharing and coordinated management aligned with UN Reform in 2021. The full list of innovative, promising and good practices is presented in [Chapter 9](#).

- **Leveraging the role of the UN Resident Coordinator and the advantages of inter-agency coordination to advance stronger partnerships and programmes.** In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes continued to pursue and build innovative partnerships through a “one UN interface” led by UN Resident Coordinators on behalf of all agencies within UN Country Teams in Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago and the Safe and Fair programme. For example, the Safe and Fair programme has engaged Resident Coordinators in several programme countries to utilize their advice, leadership, and political advocacy as well as to ensure coherence with the UN Cooperation Framework, in order to advance more cohesive and transformative results:
- **Utilizing joint operational tools and processes to share costs, facilitate coordination across agencies, and achieve greater efficiency.** In 2021,

Spotlight Initiative programmes in the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, Ecuador, Guyana, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda adopted innovative and promising operational practices that ultimately enabled teams to benefit from economies of scale and share administrative costs. For example, in Nigeria, the Spotlight Initiative contributes to the UN Common Premises, which allows the agencies to benefit from not only a shared location but also information, communication and technology (ICT) cost-recovery payments, logistical support, and conference facilities. In Liberia, the agencies agreed to joint procurement processes and developed generic Terms of Reference for common use.

- **Building communities of practice and fostering innovative exchanges to disseminate knowledge for better informed and more effective programming.** Spotlight Initiative programmes have contributed to a new model of knowledge exchange and built innovative communities of practice in the Africa Regional Programme and the Latin America Regional Programme and in Kyrgyzstan and Zimbabwe. For example, the Latin America Regional Programme has coordinated with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) to generate evidence on the intersections between violence against women and violence against children (including particularly girls) in order to inform public policy recommendations and pilot care service for child and girl survivors of violence.
- **Embracing the United Nations–European Union (UN–EU) partnership to maintain high-quality programming and advocacy and make progress in securing sustainability and funding for efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.** In 2021, UN Country Teams and European Union Delegations (EU Delegations) identified innovative methods to collectively strengthen the quality of programming and leverage governance mechanisms to further hone the strategic vision and objectives of programmes in Nigeria, Malawi and Uganda. In Malawi, the Spotlight Initiative has focused advocacy at the policy level, collectively raising awareness of violence against women and girls at community, district and national levels while disseminating good practices and lessons learned

to inform policy action. In particular, the United Nations and the European Union have leveraged their participation in high-level events with government partners to secure significant media coverage for the Initiative and widely communicate key messages around ending violence against women and girls across the country in order to influence policy change together.

1.5 Way Forward

As the Initiative reflects on lessons learned and pivots accordingly, in 2022 and beyond it will continue to find innovative ways to increase core support to grassroots civil society organizations (including by streamlining procurement processes that exclude certain groups from becoming partners), and will further prioritize the meaningful engagement of marginalized groups, leveraging their expertise and leadership, including through participatory monitoring and evaluation. The Initiative will also ensure the sustainability of the European Union's initial investments, by championing UN Reform principles and encouraging robust, multi-level resource mobilization.

The Initiative has broken many barriers in the way the United Nations traditionally operates and works with civil society organizations, other United Nations agencies, government, media, academia, the private sector, and other partners, which is what

is required to achieve zero violence. Looking ahead, the Spotlight Initiative will prioritize sustaining and expanding the European Union's initial investment in order to build on and amplify this proven model, which has the potential to reduce violence 70–90 per cent more effectively than single-pillar or siloed approaches and, concurrently, accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (the Dalberg study overview in [Chapter 10](#) has more details on this). These efforts are as critical as ever, as progress on women's rights and ending violence against women and girls continues to be threatened. Moving forward, the Initiative will build on its achievements in adapting to the pandemic, fostering transformative change to end violence against women and girls and advancing the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

In 2021, the Secretariat laid the groundwork for a "Spotlight Initiative 2.0", to potentially add new programmes to the Spotlight Initiative portfolio and make available key resources for other programmes that want to independently follow the Spotlight Initiative model. Several Spotlight Initiative programmes proactively advocated for national contributions to fund future efforts that would build on the Initiative's progress in eliminating violence against women and girls in 2021. More information on these efforts may be found in [Chapter 10](#). In 2022 and beyond, it is expected that other Spotlight Initiative programmes will drive similar contributions at the national level.

Report Structure and Scope

This publication is a report of Spotlight Initiative's work over the past calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December 2021. It highlights the transformative results it has achieved, alongside its innovative practices, lessons learned and unique way of working.

The report opens with an executive summary, capturing the Spotlight Initiative's work and achievements during 2021 towards eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

Chapter 3 highlights the Spotlight Initiative's fund structure, governance mechanisms and unique founding principles as a Sustainable Development Goal model fund. It shows how the Spotlight Initiative represents a new way of working in the United Nations system in line with UN Reform. **Chapter 4** details core partnerships and their centrality to achieving the Fund's bold objectives, while **Chapter 5** dives deeply into Spotlight Initiative's critical partnership with, and robust resourcing of, civil society, including women's rights and feminist organizations and movements, and local and grassroots groups.

Chapter 6 presents the Initiative's results across the 34 Spotlight Initiative programmes. In addition, Chapter 6 details the varied contexts in which the programmes were implemented in 2021 and shares the key challenges that the programmes overcame in pursuit of transformative results. Adaptations to programme interventions are also shared, including those that emerged as a result of the flexible response of Spotlight Initiative programmes to the COVID-19 crisis.

The report then moves to cover the communications and visibility work of the Spotlight Initiative in **Chapter 7**, while **Chapter 8** details knowledge management, evaluation and lessons learned, and **Chapter 9** deals with innovative, promising and good practices.

Finally, **Chapter 10** presents the way forward for the Spotlight Initiative as more programmes enter the second phase of programming in 2022, and as the Fund shifts to focusing on the sustainability and the expansion of the Spotlight Initiative. The report ends with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office 2021 Consolidated Annual Financial Report, in conformity with the requirements specified in the contract with the European Union.

The Fund's Founding Principles, Governance and Structure

The Spotlight Initiative is an innovative model of multilateralism and multi-stakeholder partnerships, a flagship programme of the United Nations Secretary-General, and a demonstration fund for the UN Development System (UNDS) Reform and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This global initiative received generous seed support from the European Union, representing a significant financial investment in the goal of ending all forms of violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative is led from the highest political levels both in the United Nations and the European Union. This chapter presents an overview of the Spotlight Initiative's founding principles, governance, structure and funding allocations for 2021.

3.1 Founding Principles: A Sustainable Development Goal and United Nations Reform Demonstration Fund

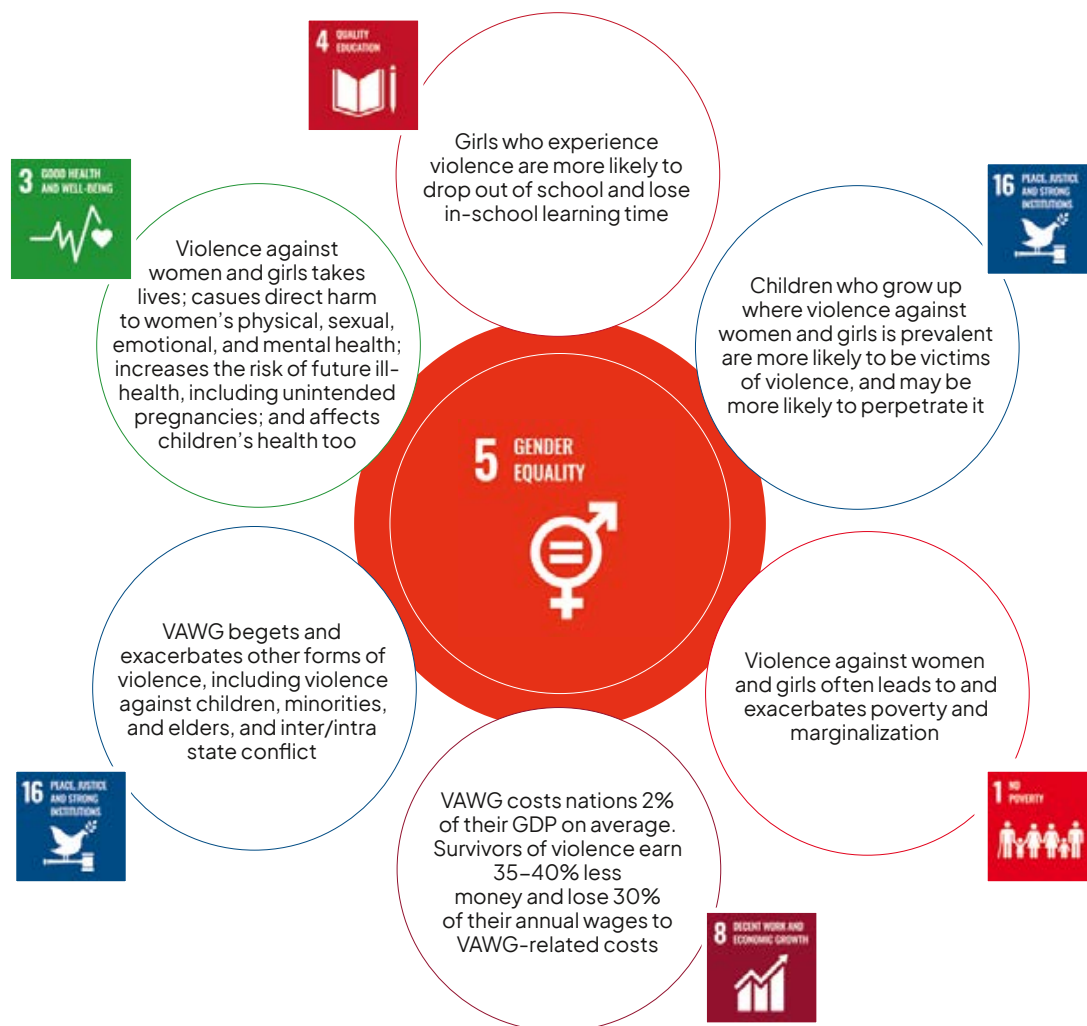
3.1.1 The Spotlight Initiative as a Sustainable Development Goal Model Fund

Globally coordinated from the Executive Office of the United Nations Secretary-General (EOSG) and under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General, Spotlight Initiative brings together a range of partners and stakeholders to mobilize coordinated efforts and accelerate catalytic investments in the elimination of violence against women and girls and the realization of women's rights.

The success of the Spotlight Initiative contributes to achieving not only SDG 5 and SDG 16, but also all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For example, by seeking to address and prevent violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative is supporting efforts to end poverty, as violence often leads to and exacerbates poverty and marginalization (SDG 1). Moreover, the Initiative works towards a world where women and girls live free from threats to their security in cities (SDG 11) and at work (SDG 8), where they can safely and equally access key resources such as water and energy (SDG 6 and SDG 7) and where they can live a healthy life (SDG 3) and be educated (SDG 4) to become productive and active citizens.

Violence Against Women and Girls

A Barrier to Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals



This, in turn, contributes to promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8). Furthermore, by advancing a new model of multilateralism that calls on the United Nations and European Union to work together to advocate for the worldwide elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative contributes to stronger global partnerships for sustainable development (SDG 17).

An illustrative overview of the cross-cutting linkages between addressing violence against women and girls and making progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals is shared above.

3.1.2 The Spotlight Initiative as a United Nations Reform Demonstration Fund

The UN Development System Reform calls for bold changes to the United Nations system in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda). Spotlight Initiative operates as a flagship programme of the reforms, showing how a more integrated and coordinated approach – which leverages the comparative advantage of agencies under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator – can more effectively support countries in the implementation of the Sustainable



“We are ambitious for our new-generation, repositioned UN Country Teams. Our reform efforts are delivering a new way of working that will make UN development programming more coherent, more accountable and more effective than ever. Ending violence against women and girls is everyone’s business and precisely needs this all-of-system response. Resident Coordinators can be counted-on to provide the leadership required at the country level to end this scourge.”

– Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General for Development Coordination, Development Coordination Office (DCO)

Development Goals. In 2021, the Secretariat continued to work closely with the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) to further this effort. The Spotlight Initiative is increasingly reflected in country-level United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF), enabling programmes to take a leadership role within national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Spotlight Initiative programmes are also increasingly applying UN Reform tools, including the Business Operations Strategy, to identify new and innovative ways to increase operational and programmatic efficiency across United Nations agencies. More details on the Initiative’s inter-agency partnerships and collaboration in the spirit of UN Reform are shared in [Chapter 4](#).

Through a new generation of UN Country Teams, agencies leverage a “one UN” approach to programme management and implementation in order to maximize the effectiveness of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls and achieve sustainable development. UN Resident Coordinators exercise leadership and oversight over the Initiative’s programmes, leading UN Country Teams towards an integrated working model that ensures coordination, coherence and accountability in implementation. As part of their impartial, independent and empowered role, UN Resident Coordinators also advance a “one UN interface”, through which they lead coordination with key stakeholders and partners on behalf of Spotlight Initiative programmes. These partners include government leaders and high-level representatives,

European Union Heads of Delegation, Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups, traditional and religious leaders, the donor community, and private sector leaders. For more examples of implementation under UN Reform leading to strengthened programming for results, see [Chapter 4](#) on partnerships, [Chapter 6](#) on results, and [Chapter 9](#) on innovative, promising and good practices.

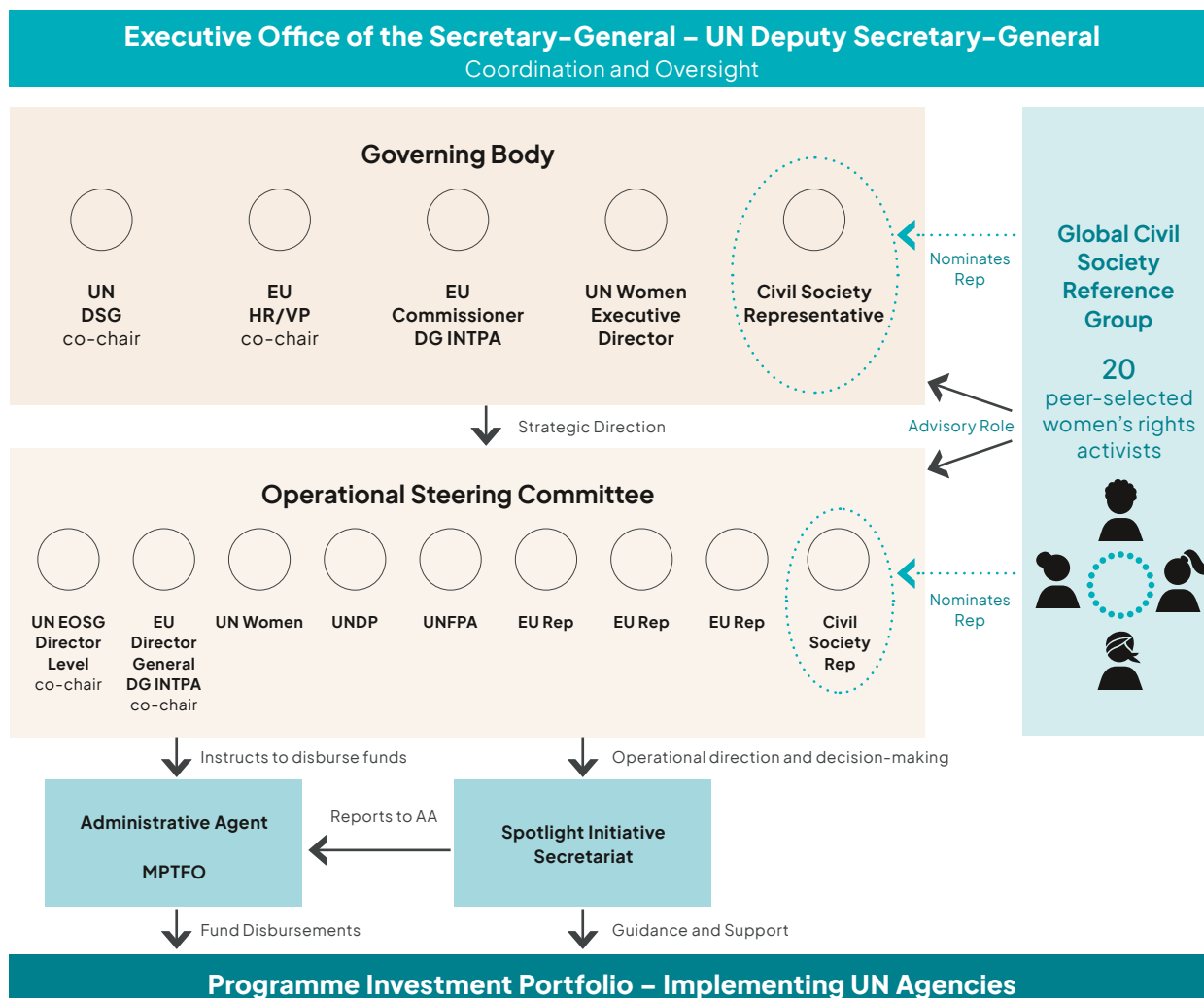
3.2 Governance

The Spotlight Initiative Fund relies on a multi-tiered and multisector governance structure to make decisions and steer the Fund to reach its objective of ending violence against women and girls.

3.2.1 Global Governance Structure

As seen in the visual below, there are two tiers of governance at the global level: the Governing Body, which is the highest tier, followed by the Operational Steering Committee (OSC). The Executive Office of the Secretary-General manages and coordinates the Spotlight Initiative, while the Administrative Agent (AA) administers the Fund, and the Fund’s Secretariat manages the regional investments through the programme portfolio. This structure supports decision-making, quality assurance and oversight. Notably, civil society, including feminist and women’s rights organizations, maintains meaningful participation and membership across all of Spotlight Initiative’s decision-making bodies,

Global-Level Governance Structure



including at the highest level: one representative from the Global Civil Society Reference Group (CSGRG) serves on the Operational Steering Committee, and one sits on the Governing Body. **Chapter 5** has more information on civil society's specific role in governance, while **Chapter 1** of the Spotlight Initiative **Operations Manual Compendium** has more detail on the governance of the Fund more generally.

3.2.2 Programme Level Governance Structure

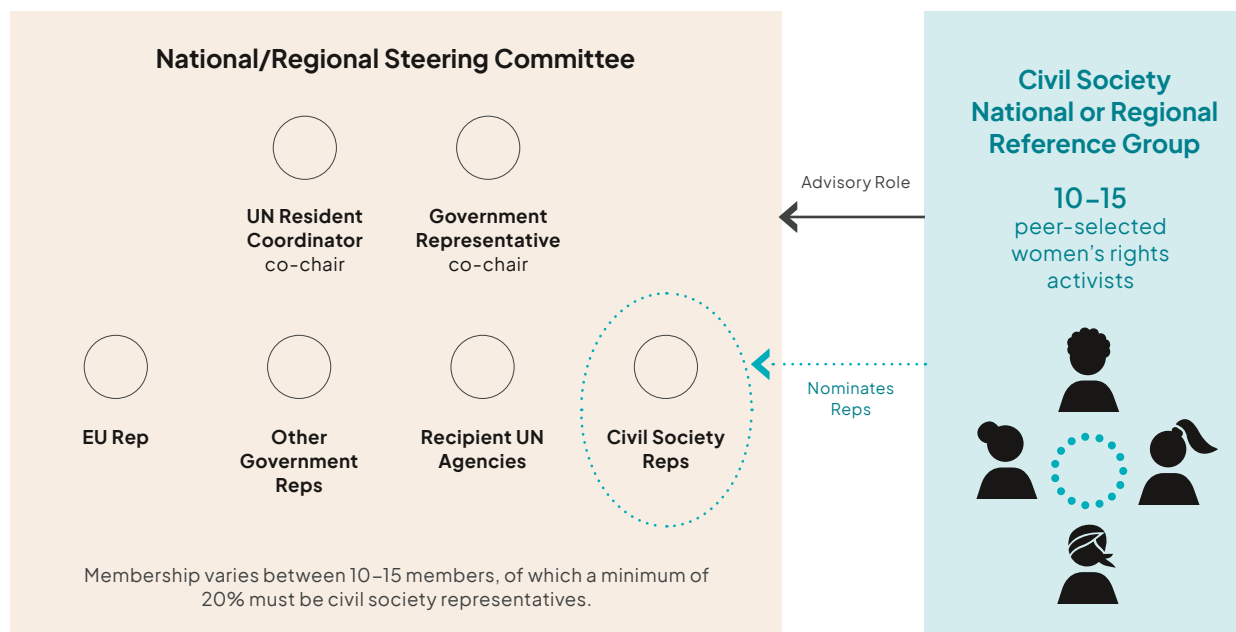
At the programme level, **National and Regional Steering Committees** provide implementation oversight and coordination of the country and regional programmes (respectively). National Steering Committees are context-specific and aligned with

the priorities and dynamics of each country. Notably, in 2021, National and Regional Steering Committees took on an essential role in reviewing and endorsing annual workplans, narrative progress reports and Phase II documents. **Civil Society Reference Groups** at national or regional levels enable the systematic engagement of civil society within programme-level governance structure. The visual below provides a brief overview of the programme-level governance structures. **Chapter 5** has more details on the specific contributions of Civil Society Reference Groups – and civil society more broadly.

3.2.3 Administrative Agent

As Spotlight Initiative is set up as a pooled multi-partner fund, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) is the Administrative Agent of the Spotlight

Programme–Level Governance Structure



Initiative, using a “pass-through” arrangement.⁹ In this role, it provides the Secretary-General and Recipient United Nations Organizations (RUNOs) with fund administration and other support services, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the Secretary-General and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

3.2.4 The Global Secretariat

The **Global Secretariat** of the Spotlight Initiative Fund plays a critical, cross-functional role in ensuring effective and sound Fund and programme management and implementation that maximizes the European Union’s investment and achieves transformational results. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat is composed of two units – the Management Unit and the Technical Unit. They work closely to cover the broad range of responsibilities and complement each other’s areas of expertise. The Management Unit of the Secretariat fulfils core management functions, as well as reporting and

coordination, while the Technical Unit ensures the technical quality and coherence of all Spotlight Initiative programmes. The key functions of the Secretariat are listed in the below box. **Chapter 7** to **Chapter 10** has more information on the Secretariat’s work in 2021.

Global Secretariat Functions

- Oversee programme quality
- Manage regional investment plans and programme cycles, including budgeting
- Drive evidence use and knowledge generation
- Issue prescriptive guidance and implementation support
- Provide technical assistance and capacity development
- Manage contractual and operational risk

⁹ A pooled fund is a mechanism used to receive contributions from multiple financial partners and allocate such resources to multiple implementing entities to support specific national, regional or global development priorities. These open-ended funds operate as *pass-through mechanisms* and as such do not require all participating organizations to comply with the operating procedures of a lead agency. Instead, pooled funds offer a flexible mechanism that enables participating organizations to handle implementation according to their own operating procedures for procurement and financial management. By avoiding any duplication of operating procedures, pass-through mechanisms minimize implementation delays and transaction costs.

- Advise on programme design and contextualization Maintain regular portfolio analysis and oversee the development of portfolio management tools
- Lead monitoring and evaluation
- Act as Secretariat of the governing bodies
- Drive communications, visibility and public information
- Undertake fund investment and resources management
- Promote cross-regional cooperation
- Facilitate inter-agency coordination
- Ensure meaningful engagement of civil society
- Manage donor relations and partnership-building
- Mobilize resources
- Report on the Spotlight Initiative's results

3.3 Fund Structure and Funding Allocation

As mandated by the Governance Structure of the Spotlight Initiative, the Secretariat coordinates the implementation by United Nations agencies of the Fund's programme portfolio. This portfolio consists of 34 Spotlight Initiative programmes: 26 country programmes; five regional programmes along with the Safe and Fair programme in ASEAN; and two Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes (partnering with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) for programmes in Africa and Latin America, and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) for programmes in Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea).

Taken together, Spotlight Initiative's portfolio is far-reaching, contributing to a total of 122 countries worldwide. Through the Initiative's five regional programmes and Safe and Fair, via work with regional institutions, networks, policies and conventions, Spotlight reaches beyond the 26 countries covered

by its country programmes and the 30 countries covered by the Initiative's two Civil Society Grant Giving Programmes in partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, amplifying its global reach and impact.¹⁰

Most Spotlight Initiative programmes have followed one of two project cycles, with the Africa and Latin America country programmes beginning implementation in January 2019 and the Asia, Caribbean, and Pacific country programmes beginning in January 2020. All regional programmes (except for the Pacific Regional Programme), Afghanistan and Ecuador were approved off-cycle. Moreover, Spotlight Initiative programme funding and implementation are divided into two phases. In 2021, all country programmes in Africa and Latin America (except for Ecuador, which began later) transitioned to Phase II, while programmes in Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific focused on accelerating implementation to complete Phase I and move into Phase II in 2022.

As of 31 December 2021, the Spotlight Initiative had programmed USD 477,828,188.¹¹ In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative programme portfolio increased by USD 80,761,716, as the Operational Steering Committee approved additional allocations for Phase II for the **Latin America Regional Programme** and for **Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**. All other Spotlight Initiative programmes remained in Phase I implementation for 2021. The remaining Spotlight Initiative funds will be allocated to programmes in Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific as they transition to Phase II in 2022.

From its inception to the end of 2021, Spotlight Initiative has disbursed USD 386,537,466 to programmes, of which USD 91,474,929 was disbursed in 2021. The largest amount of funding disbursed in 2021 was allocated to the Africa region, followed by the Pacific region. Allocations by country or regional programme and other financial information may be found in **Chapter 11**, the 2021 Annual Financial Report.

¹⁰ The regional programmes reach 122 countries in total: of these, 26 are also covered by our country programmes; 7 are reached through the Initiative's partnership with WPHF; and 23 are reached through the partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

¹¹ Of the EUR 500 million commitment by the European Union to the Spotlight Initiative, approximately EUR 35 million remained under direct European Commission management for civil society grant-making programmes. The overall programmed amount of USD 477,828,188 includes USD 5,400,000 allocation to the programme in Guatemala which had been discontinued and is pending financial and administrative closure, and excludes any direct global management and administrative costs.

122
countries reached by 34
Spotlight Initiative
programmes

26

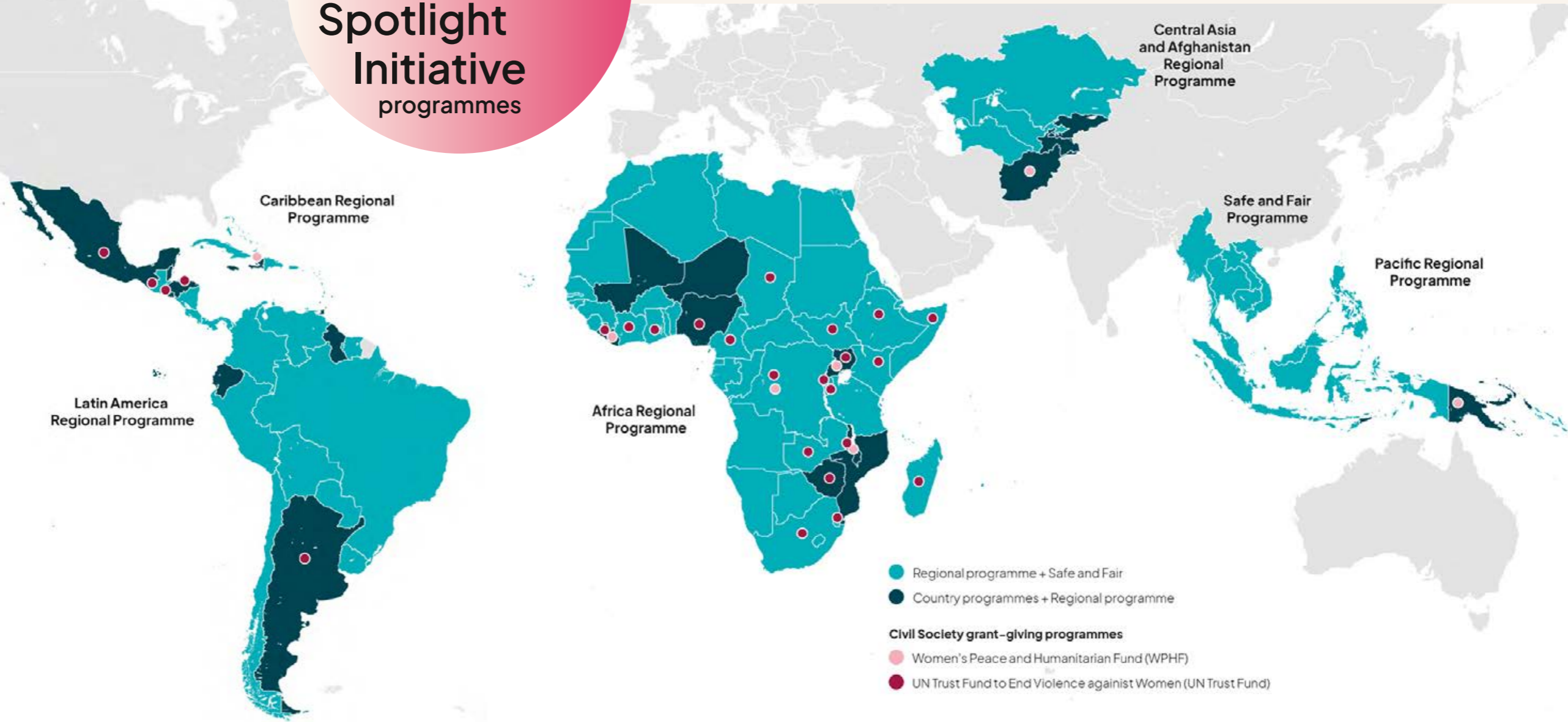
Countries reached through Spotlight's twenty six country programmes

30

Countries reached through Spotlight's two civil society grant giving programmes

66

the number of additional countries reached through Spotlight's five regional programmes + Safe and Fair



Africa

Liberia ^{II}	\$22,634,286	Zimbabwe ^{II}	\$30,000,000
Malawi ^{II}	\$28,571,429	Africa RP	\$25,620,000
Mali ^{II}	\$25,714,286	UN Trust Fund – Africa ^{II}	\$20,636,792
Mozambique ^{II}	\$28,571,429	WPHF – Africa ^{II}	\$7,075,472
Niger ^{II}	\$24,285,715		
Nigeria ^{II}	\$35,714,286		
Uganda ^{II}	\$31,428,571		

Asia

Safe and Fair	\$29,370,587
Afghanistan	\$16,500,000
Kyrgyzstan	\$4,700,000
Tajikistan	\$4,900,000
Central Asia and Afghanistan RP	\$4,248,584
WPHF – Afghanistan ^{II}	\$2,000,000

Pacific

Papua New Guinea	\$15,680,000
Samoa	\$2,900,000
Timor-Leste	\$9,900,000
Vanuatu	\$2,475,000
Pacific RP	\$7,077,830
WPHF – Papua New Guinea ^{II}	\$2,000,000

Caribbean

Belize	\$2,475,000
Grenada	\$1,650,000
Guyana	\$3,700,000
Haiti	\$9,900,000
Jamaica	\$6,600,000
Trinidad and Tobago	\$3,700,000
Caribbean RP	\$9,552,830
WPHF Haiti ^{II}	\$2,000,000

Latin America

Argentina ^{II}	\$7,714,286
Ecuador	\$2,900,000
El Salvador ^{II}	\$10,285,714
Honduras ^{II}	\$10,285,714
Mexico ^{II}	\$9,000,000
Latin America RP ^{II}	\$5,000,000
UN Trust Fund – Latin America ^{II}	\$5,660,378

^{II} Phase I and Phase II budget included. All other programmes include only Phase I and will be considered for an additional Phase II allocation in 2022.

Engaging in Partnerships to End Violence Against Women and Girls

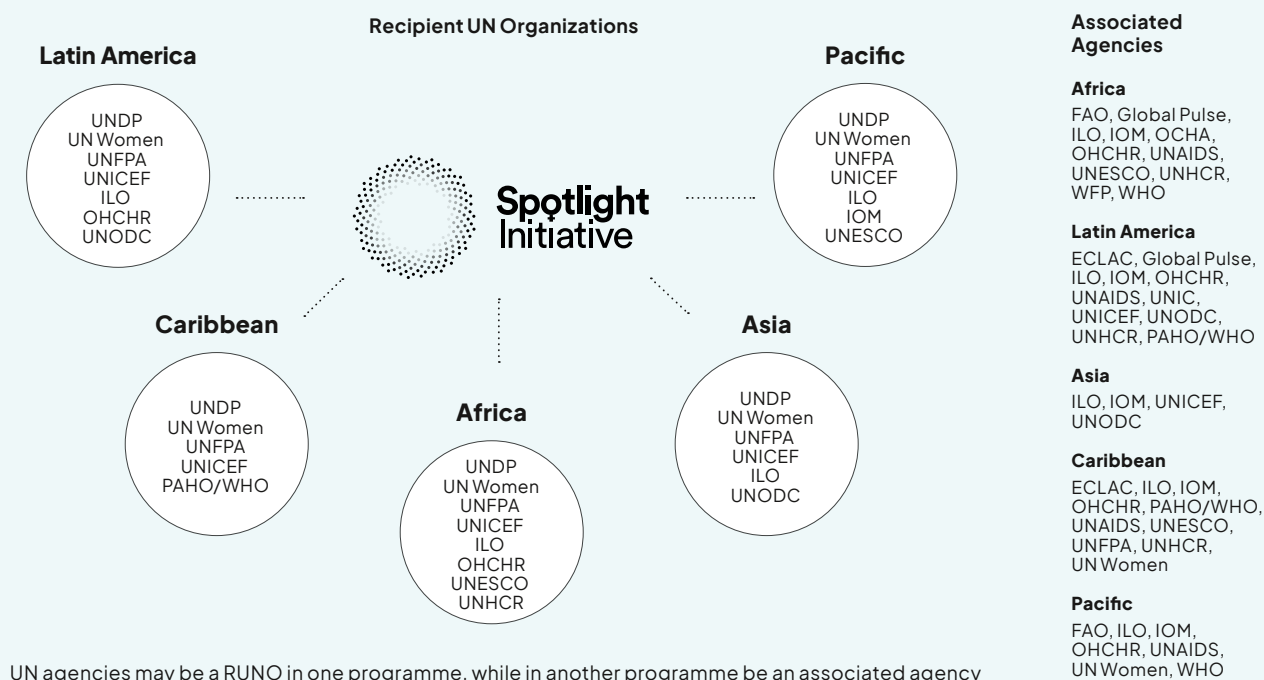
This chapter presents the impact of the Spotlight Initiative's way of working between the United Nations and the European Union, across United Nations agencies and in meaningful collaboration with diverse programme partners, including governments, institutions, youth, media, academia, the private sector, religious actors and non-traditional partners. Diverse partnerships enable Spotlight Initiative to reach its ambitious goal of ending all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030 and fully implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. [Chapter 5](#) has more information on the Spotlight Initiative's critical partnership with civil society, particularly local and grassroots organizations and women's rights and feminist organizations.

4.1 Inter-Agency United Nations Collaboration and Partnership

Spotlight Initiative takes a whole-of-system approach to eliminating violence against women and girls, engaging a wide range of United Nations agencies, and leverages the collective expertise and institutional knowledge of the Spotlight Initiative's three core agencies – UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP – working closely with UNICEF, as well as the other Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs) that operationalize and implement Spotlight Initiative programmes. In 2021, Spotlight Initiative continued to engage the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) and 11 Spotlight Initiative Recipient UN Organizations: UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Spotlight Initiative further engages the United Nations system through partnership with 13 United Nations agencies and entities that serve as “associated agencies” to Spotlight Initiative programmes, offering expertise and support on particular thematic components of programming. These agencies are: the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Pulse, International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

11 Recipient UN Organizations and 13 associated agencies



Affairs (OCHA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Information Centres (UNIC), UN Women, World Food Programme (WFP), and Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).¹² At the programme level, the UN Resident Coordinator is responsible for exercising leadership over the selection of United Nations agencies to ensure that agencies are the right fit for the programme's context, focus and goals, and that the existing expertise and capacities in the country or region are leveraged effectively.

¹² Of the 13 associated agencies, 6 also act as Recipient UN Organizations in other Spotlight Initiative programmes.

Inter-agency collaboration highlights in 2021

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative continued to mobilize the United Nations system in the spirit of UN Reform in order to pursue technical and operational solutions to implementation bottlenecks, accelerate delivery and catalyse results.

Headquarters

At headquarters-level, the coordination between the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and United Nations agency focal points¹³ has modelled the new way of working as “one UN” and put into practice core principles of cross-agency coordination. Throughout 2021, the agency focal points continued to exchange experiences, knowledge, challenges and good practices based on their support to, and work with, programmes on a regular basis. This headquarters-level inter-agency coordination enabled a more comprehensive view of implementation progress across Spotlight Initiative programmes, which improved strategic oversight and informed tailored guidance and programme support. Overall, the coordination with and through agency focal points is a valuable support to translate broader Spotlight Initiative requirements into actual operational solutions for programmes. In 2021, this engagement was particularly instrumental in coordinating the managerial and operational requirements for programmes transitioning into Phase II in Latin America and Africa. Agency focal points supported programme teams with quality assurance reviews of their Phase II proposal documents, and the Secretariat regularly engaged the focal points to

help disseminate Phase II information and guidance to their respective country offices. Overall, the coordination with agency focal points is a valuable support to translate broader Spotlight Initiative requirements into actual operational solutions for programmes. Additionally, the agency focal points also came together to provide support on specific topics such as the review and provision of technical inputs on guidance related to cyberviolence against women and girls, mental health and psychosocial support, and women’s economic rights, which will, in turn, support teams in adapting programming to be even more responsive, comprehensive and transformative within their respective contexts.

In addition, in 2021, the Secretariat set up a knowledge management coordination mechanism and further utilized the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI), a global community of practice and virtual knowledge management platform with linkages to other relevant knowledge platforms. This has provided another space for inter-agency collaboration and knowledge exchange in support of more effective programming. [Chapter 8](#) shares more information on the Community of the Spotlight Initiative.

Programme level

Global-level coordination practices have catalysed greater cooperation across the United Nations system by strengthening inter-agency partnerships at the programme level as well. In 2021, programmes reported on the positive outcomes of transitioning to the new way of working, under the umbrella of UN Reform and gradually – but increasingly – achieving deeper inter-agency collaboration.

Under the Spotlight Initiative, United Nations agencies are working together to shape the Initiative’s role within national United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) and ensure that the Initiative is taking the lead in driving country-level action and cohesion towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

¹³ Agency focal points are headquarters-level representatives of each Recipient UN Organization, covering both technical and managerial matters.

In many countries, including **Liberia, Nigeria, Timor-Leste** and **Uganda**, Spotlight Initiative is reflected in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, which provides an opportunity for agencies to influence national workplans, budgets, and standard operating procedures as well as COVID-19 response efforts. In **Honduras**, the Spotlight Initiative team collectively provided technical inputs to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework to ensure the inclusion of a specific outcome on violence against women and girls and mainstreamed actions to end violence against women and girls across other outcomes. In other teams, such as in the **Pacific Regional Programme, Tajikistan**, and **Vanuatu**, agencies are coordinating to comprehensively align programming with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework or lobbying for the Spotlight Initiative to be included in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework as it is developed, in order to ensure synergy both within programmes and with the United Nations system in-country.

In 2021, many Spotlight Initiative programmes implemented the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) and other inter-agency reform tools as part of the new way of working under UN Reform. Created in 2012, the Business Operations Strategy is a results-based framework that aims to simplify and harmonize common United Nations operations processes. These tools help equip teams to achieve greater operational and implementation efficiency which, in turn, supports more effective programming. More details, including programme-specific examples, may be found in [Chapter 9](#).

Across programmes, teams continued to utilize inter-agency mechanisms and structures like inter-agency technical working groups and common information-sharing platforms to identify areas to work together and to prevent duplication across agencies, resulting in more efficient programme management and more coherent and effective programme interventions. Moreover, many programmes, including the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, the Safe and Fair programme** and those in **Afghanistan, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Samoa, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste** and **Uganda**, have engaged

or participated in United Nations inter-agency groups, such as gender theme groups, protection clusters, and gender-based violence sub-clusters that are part of their UN Country Team coordination setup. This involvement has enabled Spotlight Initiative to leverage existing mechanisms to further promote coordinated planning and programming related to violence against women and girls across the United Nations system; gain technical support to strengthen programme interventions based on lessons learned from other initiatives; and elevate the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative.

In **Tajikistan**, aligned with UN Reform, the programme's progress with inter-agency collaboration and transformative programming has had a significant knock-on effect, influencing the broader United Nations system to adopt key Spotlight Initiative principles: in 2021, the team reported that Spotlight Initiative's "new way of working" and progress in the country influenced the design and implementation of other joint programmes. Notably, a Joint Programme within the Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund adopted several Spotlight Initiative approaches, including instituting a Civil Society Reference Group, inter-agency task forces, and a new, more joined up way of working across agencies. This example is illustrative of the ripple effect that Spotlight Initiative is having on the United Nations system.

Finally, the contributions of "associated agencies" – agencies that do not receive funding from a Spotlight Initiative programme but contribute technical support and expertise to help ensure the transformative impact of the programme – remained indicative of the ways in which the Initiative is both a product and a driver of inter-agency coordination. In **Papua New Guinea**, for instance, UNAIDS has been a critical partner in the programme's efforts to leave no one behind, working with the Recipient UN Organizations to ensure that marginalized communities are reached under activities on expanding access to services and that efforts to advance the women's movement are inclusive of all women and girls.

More information on innovative practices related to inter-agency coordination within Spotlight Initiative programmes may be found in [Chapter 9](#).

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

With the Spotlight Initiative, the European Union has made an unparalleled investment in eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls and promoting multi-stakeholder governance and collaborative action. The United Nations–European Union partnership also advances the values of human rights and multilateral cooperation, which are at the heart of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The European Union serves as a key member of the Spotlight Initiative Governing Body and Operational Steering Committee where decisions are made on programming and financial allocations. As for collaboration, the European Union has worked closely with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to shape and monitor the strategic direction of the Initiative through the European Union Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG-INTPA).

In 2021, the Secretariat and Directorate-General for International Partnerships maintained weekly exchanges to share information and coordinate on guidance and advice for United Nations and European Union teams. Transparent conversations on bottlenecks and challenges have supported effective joint problem-solving and modelled a new way of working in partnership between the organizations. These regular exchanges are both resultant and indicative of the strong partnership between the United Nations and the European Union, which has allowed the Initiative to leverage the comparative advantages of the United Nations and European Union, maximizing the transformative impact of this partnership on ending violence against women and girls.

At the programme level, through its delegations, the European Union continued to regularly communicate and engage with United Nations teams throughout 2021. This cooperation has enabled the European Union to influence the strategic direction of Spotlight Initiative programmes, while mobilizing the European Union system and other stakeholders to support the achievement of programme goals.



Launch of Spotlight Ecuador Initiative. From left to right: Rocío Rosero – GNRSC; Charles-Michel Geurts – Ambassador of the European Union in Ecuador; Cecilia Chacón – Secretary of Human Rights, Lena Savelli – Resident Coordinator UN Ecuador. ©Johanna Alarcon/UN women

EU Delegations remain key members of programme-level steering committees and continue to provide close support to United Nations teams. In **Guyana, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria** and **Uganda**, the EU Delegations took part in joint monitoring visits along with United Nations teams to collectively engage with government and civil society partners and target populations. In terms of leadership, European Union Heads of Delegation and Heads of Cooperation have coordinated closely with UN Resident Coordinators in jointly securing high-level political buy-in and intervening to help teams mitigate challenges where needed. In **Tajikistan**, for example, the EU Ambassador and UN Resident Coordinator worked hand-in-hand to lobby the Executive Office of the President to put Spotlight Initiative on the agenda for a high-level government meeting in May 2021. As a result, a Presidential decree was issued to endorse the Spotlight Initiative programme, following negotiation with the Government. Additionally, for major programme decisions, including strategic Phase II priorities, United Nations teams consulted with the EU Delegations from the planning phase. In **Malawi**, for instance, the EU Delegation's recommendations for Phase II helped strengthen the programme's visibility strategy as well as capacity-building efforts for implementing partners at the district level. Following strategic conversations with the EU Delegation, the team created a central directory of knowledge products in order to disseminate information that is useful to the broader community working to end violence against women and girls, which was not previously shared systematically. This directory was disseminated widely, including through the Gender and Human Rights Donor Group that the European Union was co-chairing at the time. Additionally, the EU Delegation's feedback on implementing partner capacity led the team to conduct a joint implementing partner assessment, which then informed the development of a grassroots action plan. In this way, the EU Delegation leveraged its technical expertise and existing networks to support and strengthen the Spotlight Initiative programme.

Across programmes, the United Nations and European Union also work together on strategic planning, partnerships (with a particular emphasis on mobilizing non-traditional partners and advocating with national governments), monitoring, communications and visibility. In several programmes, including the **Caribbean Regional Programme** and

those in **Afghanistan, Argentina, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Timor-Leste, Uganda** and **Zimbabwe**, the EU Delegation has: been an active member of technical committees, working groups and coordination mechanisms that plan and coordinate programme interventions; collaborated on communications and visibility for the Spotlight Initiative as well as the issue of violence against women and girls more broadly; and jointly advanced partnership-building. In 2021, EU Delegations continued to support United Nations teams in advancing programme interventions that effectively responded to the COVID-19 context. In **Niger**, the EU Delegation and United Nations team successfully undertook a joint mission to a programme region where they disseminated COVID-19 prevention materials to implementing partners while visiting a multifunctional centre for survivors of violence against women and girls.

Importantly, the partnership with the European Union has enabled the Spotlight Initiative to better identify synergies with existing European Union initiatives in the programme country or region. As a result, programmes are better equipped to prevent duplication of efforts and build from and leverage existing work and networks, especially with local communities that have previously engaged with UN-EU programming; subsequently improving the reception of Spotlight Initiative programmes. In **Samoa**, for instance, the EU Delegation has coordinated with the United Nations team on funding civil society organizations, with a focus on aligning Spotlight Initiative activities with those of the European Union-funded, government-run Civil Society Support Programme, especially where there are implementing partners in common. EU Delegations have also leveraged their position in existing gender and development groups to elevate the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative and use lessons learned from the programme to improve broader national efforts on eliminating violence against women and girls. For example, in **Liberia**, the EU Delegation, as the chair of a donor coordination group on gender and human rights, used its platform to promote good practices and lessons learned by the Spotlight Initiative in overcoming bottlenecks in the national response to violence against women and girls.

The foundational UN-EU partnership of the Spotlight Initiative is an illustrative example for broader multilateralism and international development. More information on the United Nations and European Union’s partnership can be found throughout the global annual report, including in the collaboration on communications and visibility, which is detailed in [Chapter 7](#).

4.3 Partnering Meaningfully: Engagement with Other Stakeholders

In order to achieve more comprehensive and cross-cutting public outreach on the elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative invests in diverse partnerships at global, regional and country levels. In particular, the Initiative focuses on meaningfully engaging civil society actors, feminist groups, international development actors, faith-based organizations, academia, influencers, private sector actors, politicians and leaders in order to reach more impactful results.

4.3.1 Global-Level Partnerships: Forged by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat

The Initiative partnered with key global actors to raise the visibility of, heighten awareness on, and amplify resourcing to end violence against women and girls. Additional information on these partnerships can be found in [Chapter 7](#).

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

In line with its global commitment to support multilateral efforts to achieve gender equality, the European Union – through its delegation to the UN in New York – created the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls. The 93-member group encourages the coordination of Member States on efforts to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence. The Group of Friends has been meeting regularly since it formed in 2020 in response to the [UN Secretary-General’s calls for action](#) to address rising levels of violence against



©Spotlight Initiative in Papua New Guinea



“We are so grateful for the Group of Friends’ commitments in December 2020 to recognize and collaborate on eradicating all forms of violence... The mechanisms [to address violence] are there – we need to use them. We must also go beyond talking and agreements. The Spotlight Initiative is a perfect example of how you bring action and see results.

– Houry Geudelekian, Chair at the NGO Committee on the Status of Women

women and girls during the pandemic. Chaired by the European Union and led by a steering committee that includes members from Argentina, the European Union, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, New Zealand and Turkey, the Group of Friends is a dynamic forum for sharing lessons learned, promoting advocacy efforts, mobilizing resources, improving cooperation and supporting the work of its members’ ongoing initiatives. It is aligned with the [Generation Equality Forum’s Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence](#) and convenes over 100 Member States and observers, together with United Nations agencies, to coordinate action and advocacy on the elimination of violence against women and girls.

In 2021, the Group of Friends convened five times. In January 2021, the members of the Group of Friends discussed priorities for the upcoming session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65), and in March 2021, the Secretariat coordinated with the European Union to host a high-level side event of the Group of Friends at CSW65. During this event, the Groups of Friends sought to: take stock of ongoing efforts to integrate the prevention of, and redress of, violence against women and girls into COVID-19 responses at the national and local levels; highlight areas to further enhance cooperation and build partnerships to eliminate violence against women and girls; and mobilize action and resources to support initiatives to end violence against women and girls, such as the Spotlight initiative. Building from these discussions, in June 2021, the Group of Friends met to discuss the theme of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Action Week to free the world of work from violence and harassment.

The fourth Group of Friends meeting took place on the margins of the September 2021 UN General Assembly. During this session, the Group of Friends brought the voices and experiences of women and girls in conflict to the forefront of the international arena by taking stock of their situation and of the ongoing efforts to ensure their full, equal and meaningful participation in peace and security efforts, in line with the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Participants also highlighted ongoing needs and areas for further work and cooperation, and mobilized action and resources through the personal commitments of world leaders. December 2021 marked the Group of Friends’ one-year anniversary event, the first in-person meeting since the group’s formation. It focused on violence against women and girls and women’s economic rights. “We are so grateful for the Group of Friends’ commitments in December 2020 to recognize and collaborate on eradicating all forms of violence... The mechanisms [to address violence] are there – we need to use them. We must also go beyond talking and agreements. The Spotlight Initiative is a perfect example of how you bring action and see results,” said Houry Geudelekian, Chair at the NGO Committee on the Status of Women.

Over the past two years, the Group of Friends has provided a space to coordinate action and share information on the elimination of violence against women and girls, as well as playing an instrumental role in keeping violence against women and girls on international agendas.

Generation Equality Forum

Spotlight Initiative partnered in diverse ways with the Generation Equality Forum. In July 2021, at a [high-level event](#) on the final day of the Generation Equality Forum in Paris, UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative, Cecilia Suarez and Siya Kolisi, took part in a discussion on male accountability in ending violence against women and girls. Diipa Khosla, an influencer who has worked closely with the Initiative, also took part. Each advocate helped to raise the profile of violence against women and girls and share a message of gender equality with their large and diverse audiences.

Spotlight Initiative worked closely with UN Women's communications team to share how the Initiative is responding to the recommendations of [the Generation Equality Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence \(GBV\)](#). This information was outlined in an [article on the Initiative's website](#), which was published and cross-promoted by UN Women on its own website and social media platforms. The EU co-leads the Generation Equality Action Coalition on GBV and positions the Initiative in various discussions as a model.

In addition to the Generation Equality discussions, Cecilia Suárez also sat on the jury of the Generation Equality International Film Festival to highlight young filmmakers raising awareness on gender equality. Ms. Suárez promoted the event to her 150,000 Twitter followers.

United Nations Foundation and the WithHer Fund

In 2021, a partnership with the UN Foundation led to the creation of the WithHer Fund, a new funding vehicle that provides resources directly to grassroots women's organizations around the world fighting violence against women and girls in their local communities. "The WithHer Fund's explicit mission to direct resources to smaller, local grassroots groups deeply embedded in their communities reflects a core imperative of the Sustainable Development Goals: to deliver for real people, in real places, and on their own terms," said Elizabeth Cousens, President and CEO of the UN Foundation. "Realizing the promise of the SDGs and ending gender-based violence will take implementation and leadership at

the local level, with a focus on the most marginalized girls and women – and that's exactly what this Fund is designed to do." More information on the WithHer Fund can be found in [Chapter 5](#) and [Chapter 7](#).

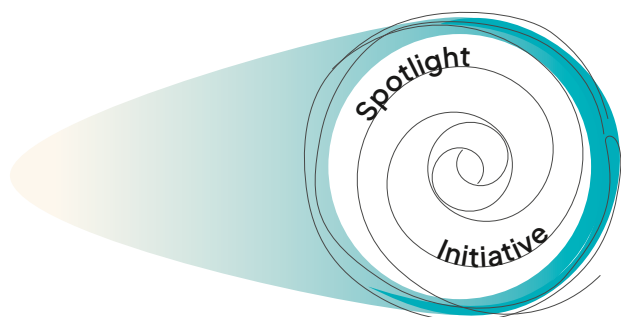
Meta (Facebook)

In 2021, the Initiative also collaborated with Meta (Facebook) to explore the possibility of a joint campaign around online security and safety for women and girls, with a view to involving global influencers and celebrities. The goal was to help women and girls understand best practices for keeping their information secure online, while educating the public more broadly about the impacts of online violence against women and girls (for example, doxing, online stalking and bullying, non-consensual sharing of images) and its intersection with offline violence. While ultimately this campaign was not feasible, the Initiative continues to raise awareness of these issues through its partnership with the Social Good Club and their roster of digital influencers. ([Chapter 7](#) shares more on this partnership.)

4.3.2 Diverse Programme Partnerships

The Spotlight Initiative partnership process acknowledges the critical role that national institutions and diverse stakeholders play in the effectiveness and sustainability of the work. All programmes have engaged a wide range of partners in programme design, implementation and monitoring to advance progress in ending violence against women and girls as depicted in the visual below.

The critical partnership with civil society is detailed in depth in [Chapter 5](#), due to its prioritization as a core model of partnering for the Spotlight Initiative. [Chapter 6](#) on Results and [Chapter 7](#) on Communications and Visibility further detail how partnerships supported the achievement of results. A short summary of how the Spotlight Initiative engages with these partners follows, along with illustrative examples from 2021 detailing how the partnership was leveraged and made a difference in ending violence against women and girls in a given country or region:



HEAD OF STATE
GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES
NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS
CIVIL SOCIETY
THE PRIVATE SECTOR
MEDIA
RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS
ACADEMIA
OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

**Collaboratively
partnering for
outsized impact**

Engagement at the highest level of government

The long-term success and sustainability of the Spotlight Initiative relies on the willingness and capacity of governments to lead efforts to respect, protect and uphold women's rights, and eliminate violence against women and girls. Specifically, Spotlight Initiative programmes have focused on a direct engagement with the highest level of its partner governments, beyond engaging at line ministry level only. This includes a direct mobilization of Heads of State and Prime Ministers to secure a political buy-in that is capable of setting national priorities and creating momentum to guide ministries and national institutions, and mobilize populations to fully eliminate violence against women and girls. Engaging with high-level leaders enables the Spotlight Initiative to bring political visibility to the issue, and position its elimination as critical to achieving sustainable development. In parallel, this allows Spotlight Initiative programmes to better leverage national platforms to disseminate key messages, raise awareness and advance social norm change.

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes made progress in elevating the elimination of violence against women and girls on national political agendas and advancing a whole-of-society approach to ending violence against women and girls under the leadership of governments. In **Niger**, the Spotlight Initiative has helped bring the elimination of violence against women and girls to the forefront of national and regional conversations while communicating its progress in reducing child marriage, fostering

positive behavioural change, and engaging religious leaders in the fight to end violence. As a result of this progress, in 2021, the President officially requested the expansion of the Spotlight Initiative into four additional regions, a testament to the Government's commitment to the Spotlight Initiative and to the sustainability of efforts to eliminate violence at the highest level. In **Nigeria, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan**, at high-level events and media appearances the President or Prime Minister has officially expressed their strong support for the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Engagement with and across ministries

For much of the day-to-day work of partnering with governments, Spotlight Initiative programmes engage counterparts at the ministry level. Typically, ministry representatives co-chair National Steering Committees on behalf of national governments in collaboration with UN Resident Coordinators. This governance arrangement facilitates coherence and coordination between UN Country Teams and government partners.

Furthermore, by working with partners across ministries, including those responsible for planning or national development, Spotlight Initiative helps coordinate a whole-of-government approach to ending violence against women and girls. In **Ecuador**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative has partnered with the Technical Planning Secretariat, responsible for national planning, to jointly shape the parameters for the design and implementation of policies on ending violence against women and girls, such as the National Public Policy on Comprehensive

Reparation. Moreover, in **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative convened inter-ministerial meetings to improve government coordination on the elimination of violence against women and girls. Following a joint field mission and calls for strengthened coordination of development initiatives, a “framework for success” was discussed in late 2021. Outlining critical principles for strengthening development coordination, the framework aimed to improve overall coordination, collaboration and communication among the UN, the Government of Liberia, and other development partners. Through this, Spotlight Initiative served as an essential platform to surface the most critical elements for development cooperation success among United Nations, the Government and development partners. A joint statement is expected to be signed by the Government, the United Nations and the Group of Development Partners in 2022 and is intended to serve as an overarching “Framework for Success” for development programming.

In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative continued to act on the recognition that resource allocations and the engagement of finance ministries and treasuries are necessary to finance development and end violence against women and girls. Many Spotlight Initiative programmes have had success in mobilizing development finance or blended finance for sustainable development, engaging not only ministries but also investors and the business community. **Chapter 6** provides concrete examples of countries that engaged in gender-responsive budgeting to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Engagement with other national institutions: Legislation, the judiciary, and parliament

Legislative bodies have served as critical programme partners in supporting the Spotlight Initiative in reforming legal frameworks and practices to systematically address and prevent violence against women and girls. Importantly, partnerships with legislative entities have focused on addressing the impunity of perpetrators and protecting survivors’ rights and dignity.

In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative continued its efforts to apply gender mainstreaming to laws and policies and

support the drafting of bills and the implementation of regulations to promote the elimination of violence against women and girls. Moreover, the Spotlight Initiative has partnered with judiciaries and parliaments to expand and ensure equal access to justice for survivors. To do so, Spotlight Initiative programmes work to address diverse barriers, including discrimination and corruption, to women and girls obtaining justice, especially women and girls traditionally left behind.

In **El Salvador**, the Spotlight Initiative has begun to collaborate with the legislative branch on law reform proposals to prohibit child marriage and better legislate the protection of women and girls against violence. In **Grenada**, the Office of the Attorney General has been an essential partner in advancing legal reforms, with the Attorney General herself participating in United Nations inter-agency meetings to help the programme identify key stakeholder priorities and strengthen programme efforts. In **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative leveraged pre-existing relationships between United Nations agencies and the National Parliament to broaden the scope of engagement to cooperate on legislative matters related to gender and protection.

From local to regional: Engagement across all levels of government

In most Spotlight Initiative programmes, decentralizing the government response to violence against women and girls has proven effective. Often, survivors of violence first interact with subnational authorities and networks. Consequently, in 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes invested time and resources in capacity building for local governments and institutions in order to secure local ownership, community buy-in, and more successful prevention and response mechanisms and strategies.

In **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative has helped link the obligations of the National Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence to the strategies and annual workplans of municipal authorities in order to better prevent and respond to violence against women and girls throughout the decentralized system. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative’s partnership with state agencies and provincial authorities has provided opportunities for the programme to



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help strengthen new subnational institutions that arise through public policy changes. Notably, the programme reported that local government entities, especially in smaller provinces, benefit from the symbolic significance of being supported by the United Nations and the European Union, in some cases even more so than from economic support. The backing of the Spotlight Initiative allows these entities to gain recognition among long-established peer organizations, particularly important in the context of securing sustainability for local and national actors undertaking efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Private sector

Partnerships with the private sector have provided valuable opportunities for the Spotlight Initiative to further connect the elimination of violence against women and girls with other Sustainable Development Goals.¹⁴ In partnering with companies and entrepreneurs, Spotlight Initiative programmes aim to turn actors into agents of change to end violence against women and girls and discrimination,

particularly sexual harassment, in the workplace. Moreover, programmes seek to leverage the opportunity of intervening in workplaces to reach vulnerable or isolated women who have limited community contact outside of work.

In **Belize**, through a “Gender Equality and Diversity Seal” initiative, the programme helped secure the commitment of ten private-sector organizations to strengthen their capacity to address issues of women’s economic rights and violence against women and girls and discrimination in the work environment. The **Safe and Fair** programme is engaging the private sector at both regional and national levels, partnering with the ASEAN Confederation of Employers to achieve work environments free of discrimination and harassment and with the Malaysian Employers Federation to develop policy templates and investigative guidelines to guide employers in responding to and preventing violence against women and girls in their workplaces.

¹⁴ Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG17 focused on global partnership as essential to the mobilization of diverse financial and in-kind resources from multiple sources, including the private sector.



HRH King Adedapo Aderemi shares the role traditional leaders have been playing to end violence against women and girls in Nigeria. ©Faremi Olanrewaju/UN Women

Media, religious institutions, academia and other stakeholders

Media and arts and culture organizations are critical partners for Spotlight Initiative programmes to advance healthy gender norms and behaviours and raise awareness about the rights of women and girls, especially at the community level. In **Malawi**, for example, the programme collaborated with the Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation to create a radio soap opera on ending violence against women and girls that raised national awareness on key gender-related laws, harmful cultural practices, referral pathways and the engagement of men and boys.

Engaging traditional and religious leaders in efforts to end harmful practices and transform cultural norms around violence against women and girls is essential for the success of Spotlight Initiative programmes. In particular, programmes have sought to partner with women faith leaders, who have a unique opportunity to influence religious communities and men religious leaders to denounce violence against women vocally, including in churches and in other community spaces. In **Honduras**, through engagement with community churches and the facilitation of interreligious dialogues among faith-based organizations, the

Spotlight Initiative supported the creation of a “Unity Pact” against violence against women and girls and dedicated action plans by participating churches.

Because research institutes and universities are the forums where future leaders and policymakers shape their beliefs and world views, Spotlight Initiative programmes have partnered with actors in academia to advocate for inclusive and non-discriminatory public policies and establish learning centres and curriculums aligned with eliminating violence against women and girls. For example, in **Trinidad and Tobago**, the Spotlight Initiative has partnered with a consortium of staff and experts from the University of the West Indies to develop a curriculum to train medical, nursing and other students in the proper care of survivors of intimate partner violence and sexual violence.

Civil society

The Spotlight Initiative prioritizes partnership with civil society and women’s and feminist movements as key mobilizers of change. As such, **Chapter 5** is dedicated to detailing the strategy and the desired impact of working with these critical partners.

Investing in Civil Society Organizations and Movements – Driving Transformative, Sustainable Change

5.1 The Importance of Engaging Civil Society in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

Civil society organizations – and particularly feminist and women’s rights organizations – are at the forefront of efforts to end violence against women and girls. They are organizing and movement building, advocating for and demanding justice, and providing direct support to survivors of violence as first responders and essential service providers, including in contexts of crises. Civil society organizations

also play a vital role in ensuring that, in order to end violence against women and girls, the voices and perspectives of structurally marginalized groups are integrated into programmes and policies, including into recovery plans and emergency policies.

The partnership with civil society is a fundamental dimension of Spotlight Initiative’s structure and functioning. The Initiative has worked toward a transformative way of engaging with civil society, guided by the principle of leaving no one behind and the Sustainable Development Goal on partnerships, and rooted in broad-based national ownership.



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“Prevention and eradication of violence against women and girls is within our grasp, if feminist voices are amplified, feminist strategies are valued, and feminist leadership is integrated within decision-making spheres. The Global Reference Group of Spotlight Initiative embodies these principles to ensure that a world without violence is possible.”

- Krishanti Dharmaraj, Global Civil Society Reference Group member and representative to the Governing Body

Toward this end, the Initiative aims to ensure its partnerships are equal, inclusive and transparent, and underpinned by principles that are human rights-based and feminist, and that localize and shift power. This way of partnering is a unique “value add” of the Initiative, and helps to ensure the Initiative’s relevance, impact, and sustainability.

From governance and advisory roles to programme implementation and monitoring, [Chapter 5](#) details the diverse and vital ways that civil society and movements have contributed to the Initiative, as well as Spotlight Initiative’s resourcing commitments to fuel their vital work.

5.1.1 Civil Society’s Role in Governing, Advising and Monitoring the Spotlight Initiative

Governance and advice

Representatives of women’s rights groups and human rights-based civil society organizations (including those representing groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination)¹⁵ have been critically engaged in shaping the Initiative from its inception through governance and advisory roles.

Spotlight Initiative teams have established Regional, National and Global Civil Society Reference Groups, as mentioned in [Chapter 3](#), engaging diverse women’s rights and feminist activists as well as subject-matter experts and marginalized groups. Reference Groups advise on and monitor the implementation of the Initiative’s programmes, recommend changes and hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable to its commitments.

In addition to participation in Reference Groups, the Initiative ensures a full role in decision-making and representation of civil society within its governance structures: on National and Regional Steering Committees – the highest decision-making body at the programme level – and, at global level, the Global Operational Steering Committee and the Governing Body. In 2021, as a result, civil society partners were engaged in key decision-making related to programme and budget revisions, Phase II planning, COVID-19 response plans and annual workplans, which helped to improve the responsiveness of these plans to local contexts and to serve civil society’s needs. In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, a number of recommendations from the National Reference Group were taken into consideration in the development of the Phase II proposal, including the integration of activities to increase awareness of duty bearers of the [Istanbul Convention](#).

¹⁵ These include, but are not limited to, women and girls living in rural communities, women and girls from ethnic minorities and indigenous communities, women and girls who are survivors of violence, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, LGBTIQ+ persons, women and girls living with disabilities, sex workers, domestic and informal workers, women of diverse sexual orientations, gender diverse women, etc.

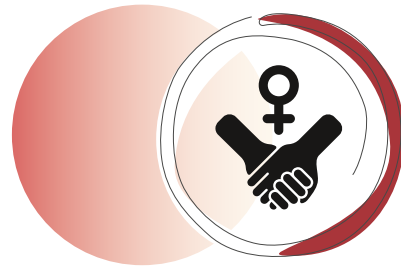


Monitoring

Independent monitoring and reporting by civil society on the Initiative's contributions are critical to the legitimacy and relevance of the Initiative. In 2020, the **Count Me In! Consortium** and several members of Civil Society Reference Groups collectively developed a **Civil Society Monitoring Toolkit**. The toolkit includes a set of 26 indicators that Reference Groups can use to monitor the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative at country, regional and global levels. Indicators focus on three key areas:

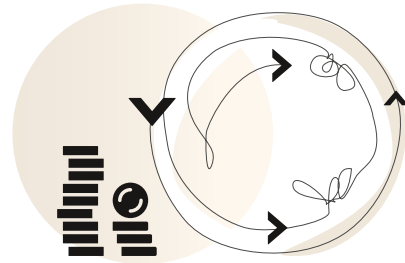
- Participation of civil society and intersectional feminist movements in governance, decision-making and programming
- Funding mechanisms and the disbursement of funds to feminist organizations and networks
- Implementation, including how well the Spotlight Initiative integrates the perspectives of feminist activists and constituency-led organizations.

Monitoring has resulted in the development of Advocacy Scorecards – a concrete tool to hold Spotlight Initiative accountable. In **Argentina, Belize, Niger** and **Zimbabwe**, the Reference Groups have produced such **scorecards**. Additional scorecards are in the pipeline for 2022.



Participation of civil society

and intersectional feminist movements in governance, decision making and programming



Funding mechanisms

and the disbursement of funds to feminist organizations and networks



Implementation

integrating the perspectives of feminist activists and constituency-led organizations



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The Global Reference Group's scorecard

In addition to programme level advocacy scorecards, noted above, the Spotlight Initiative Global Civil Society Reference Group (GRG) **also developed a scorecard**. The scorecard covered the period 2019 – 2020 and focused on assessing the participation, funding, protection and involvement of women's movements *at and from* the global level. Fully finalized in 2021, the scorecard takes stock of what works and what needs improvement. Regarding the latter, the Global Reference Group put forward a series of recommendations for future action, including: adding an additional civil society representative in the Operational Steering Committee; simplifying procedures and systems that impede grassroots organizations and women's movements from accessing and receiving funding; additional grant-based, demand-driven and flexible funding mechanisms; partnering with regional women's funds and other grant-making women's organizations; and additional resources and efforts for training in, and the full implementation of, the Spotlight Initiative's Specific Integrated Protection Approach in Spotlight Initiative countries and regions.

The Global Reference Group coordinators were able to present the results of their analysis and their recommendations to all Secretariat staff in December 2021. The Secretariat's civil society engagement team is committed to including them in its workplan for 2022.

More informal monitoring of the operations of the Spotlight Initiative and its engagement with civil society took place in March 2021, when the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat held its annual civil society consultation on the side-lines of the 65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The consultation highlighted gaps in the Initiative's engagement with civil society, particularly the need to: 1) better reach grassroots organizations; 2) remunerate Reference Group members; and 3) provide flexible and demand-driven funding during crises and beyond. Concrete action points for improvement were made, including the development of a strategy proposal on how the Initiative will *concretely* improve on flexible funding. The strategy is currently being developed by the Secretariat, with the guidance and support of the Global Reference Group.

Throughout 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat also rolled out its newly-developed **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Strategy**. During the reporting period, 15 countries implemented participatory monitoring and evaluation strategies in their programme, adapting the global strategy to their local context and needs. Through country-level pilot projects and global peer-to-peer dialogues, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to enhanced dialogue with, and participation of, rights-holders in monitoring and evaluation processes, ensuring alignment with the principle of leaving no one behind. More information on the participatory monitoring and evaluation work can be found in **Chapter 8**.

5.1.2 Facilitating Meaningful Engagement with Reference Group Members

Fostering dialogue and exchange

The Secretariat, in close collaboration with Reference Group members, developed a **Guidance Note on achieving meaningful engagement and partnership with Civil Society Reference Groups**, providing concrete guidance on meaningfully engaging Reference Group members on workplan development, budgeting, and monitoring. To track implementation of this guidance note, and further strengthen communication, collaboration and community between programme teams and

Reference Groups, and among Reference Groups, two surveys of Reference Group members were conducted. The surveys gather information on the programme's adherence to the principle of leaving no one behind, civil society's influence in decision-making bodies, the level of support provided to develop and implement a costed workplan, and coordination and communication with other Reference Groups. The survey results are shared with programme teams and Reference Groups, and this allows the Secretariat to provide targeted support where needed, informing guidance to strengthen engagement and partnership with civil society as well.

To further foster knowledge exchange, cross-regional meetings were also held in February and November 2021. Held twice-annually, these meetings serve as a platform for feedback and exchange of experiences across Reference Group members and Spotlight Initiative colleagues, ensuring that members' advice is regularly reflected in the Initiative's work. The Global Reference Group launched a focal point system across Reference Group members at global, regional and national levels. Focal points meet on a quarterly basis, and aim to further strengthen communication channels, conduct joint advocacy and facilitate the sharing of best practices among all Reference Groups.

Finally, the Secretariat hosts a set of diverse online platforms to facilitate communication among Reference Group members, including a Civil Society Reference Group Community of Practice page on Facebook with over 230 members and a **dedicated page on the Spotlight Initiative website**.



©Spotlight Initiative in Papua New Guinea

Resourcing Reference Group members

As the Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups became increasingly operational, it was clear that members needed – and wanted – to allocate significant time and effort to make their membership impactful. Reference Group members called for financial compensation for members’ time and expertise, recognizing and valuing the engagement of civil society with the Spotlight Initiative and more broadly to ending violence against women and girls. In addition, the mid-term assessments, and meta-review, found that while the commitment of the UNCT and the civil society reference group to civil society participation was a key driving force of success, a lack of financial remuneration constrained this.

In April 2021, the Deputy Secretary-General made a strong recommendation to Resident Coordinators to improve their engagement with Reference Groups by looking into appropriate modalities to compensate members’ engagement. In response to this and the findings of the mid-term assessments, the Secretariat, with support of the RUNOs, has provided guidance to compensate the efforts of civil society reference group members. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat engaged in wide ranging stakeholder consultations at all levels, developing a **Guidance Note on Compensation of Civil Society Reference Group Members** that sets out key parameters for

compensation of Reference Group members while leaving room for programme teams to determine context-based solutions. Though the Secretariat’s guidance is intended to help facilitate compensation where appropriate and beneficial, the decision on whether to compensate Reference Group members ultimately lies with the Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team, in line with established practice in each country.

Costed and budgeted workplans

In addition to compensation, to further ensure meaningful engagement, Reference Groups are encouraged to develop a costed workplan that resources the activities the Civil Society Reference Group plans to undertake (what is planned is up to the individual Civil Society Reference Group members, as captured in the box below). Notably, in 2021, the workplan now allows members to budget for their financial compensation, as described above.

In 2021, the Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups budgeted a total of USD 745,229 for their workplans,¹⁶ ranging from USD 4,000 to USD 115,000.¹⁷ The Global Reference Group budgeted USD 250,000 for a two-year workplan. Spotlight Initiative’s commitment to allocate resources to this represents an important step in the international development sector, valuing the time, expertise and contributions of civil society.

¹⁶ This total budget includes both annual and multi-year workplans.

¹⁷ While three Reference Groups (Nigeria, Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme and Safe and Fair) had not budgeted their workplans in 2021, two programmes (Afghanistan and Africa Regional) had not yet established a Reference Group and therefore did not have a workplan.

Budgeting the workplan: Supporting Civil Society Reference Group engagement in Belize

To ensure relevance and alignment with the specific contexts in which they work, individual Reference Groups decide on the activities they will undertake and reflect these in their workplans. In **Belize**, for example, the budget was utilized to contract a technical consultant to develop a two-year workplan (2022–2023), an advocacy strategy, a monitoring and evaluation tool and a Civil Society National Reference Group scorecard. These documents will enable the Reference Group members to undertake regular oversight visits and ensure that the activities being implemented reach the most marginalized groups and persons. Furthermore, the Civil Society National Reference Group's ICT capacity was strengthened through the establishment of three technical and ICT hubs to support greater functionality of the Civil Society Reference Group. Members can communicate and work online together more effectively, and the Civil Society National Reference Group can support actions under Pillar 6 geared towards strengthening civil society organizations and women's movements to advocate, design, implement, monitor and evaluate programmes on family violence.

5.2 Investing in Feminist and Women's Movements: Why it Matters

Civil society organizations have pushed for a bold, transformative feminist response to violence against women and girls, and other (intersecting) global crises. Their policy demands, which are directed to

international organizations, donors and governments, include the need to promote a paradigm shift when it comes to resourcing civil society organizations: greater flexibility and long-term, core funding so that civil society organizations – and particularly feminist and women's rights groups, and local and grassroots organizations – can continue promoting and protecting women's and girls' human rights.



We are dealing, right now, with an organized transnational movement, whose goal is the advancement of an anti-gender agenda that is attacking the rights of women, especially of LGBTQI+ people. And, paradoxically, these movements are better funded than women's rights advocates and women's rights movements. I am therefore calling for a paradigm shift from a vertical donor-grantee mentality to an equal partnership with more honest and humble conversations and a deep desire to learn together."

- Shamah Bulangis, Global Civil Society Reference Group member, 18 March 2021

5.2.1 Leveraging Quality Funding to Resource and Sustain Civil Society and Women’s Movements

Background on the analysis

Each year, country and regional programmes submit self-reported data on their formal funding-based partnerships with civil society organizations (that is, the civil society organizations contracted by a Recipient UN Organization as implementing partners, grantees or vendors of services). The reported data enables an analysis of how well the Initiative is meeting its targets on funding civil society, while also showcasing global and regional trends.

The results presented here are cumulative from the start of the Spotlight Initiative, underscoring that funding commitments are for the programme as a whole, and in its entirety (and will not necessarily follow a linear or proportional increase year-to-year). The analysis presents funds “allocated” as funds budgeted and planned for civil society partners in a particular Spotlight Initiative programme. “Awarded” or “delivered” funds are any financial grant, contract, or partnership agreement legally signed with a civil

society organization. The funds that are directly attributable to implementing the programme’s activities are referred to as “activity funds”. [Annex C](#) has details on the methodology used to calculate this.

The power of funding feminist movements and civil society

As noted in [Chapter 6](#), evidence demonstrates that the autonomous mobilization of feminists in domestic and transnational contexts is a critical factor accounting for policy change to eliminate violence against women and girls. The active presence of feminist movements in countries was associated with states where legal reforms on violence against women and girls had occurred, pointing to the fundamental importance of activism and a vibrant civil society.¹⁸ Despite this evidence, women’s rights organizations and autonomous feminist movements remain severely underfunded. As a fund that aspires to integrate feminist principles, the Initiative aims to close the resource gap by channelling significant funding to civil society organizations, and in particular, women’s organizations at national and local levels.



©Fabrice Nganda/UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

¹⁸ S. Laurel Weldon & Mala Htun, [Feminist mobilisation and progressive policy change: why governments take action to combat violence against women](#).



Dedicated outcome to support women's movements (outcome 6)

Engagement of CSOs as implementing partners, grantees and vendors

Engagement through reference groups at global, regional and national levels

Direct funding via two civil society grant-giving programmes (WPHF and UN Trust Fund)

In order to contribute to transforming the funding landscape, Spotlight Initiative aims to address deep-rooted power imbalances (often reproduced by international development programming) by working towards an inclusive, human rights-based and feminist funding ecosystem that shifts money and decision-making power to grassroots and local women's organizations and supports feminist movements. To do this, the Initiative invests in civil society through a twin-track approach: directly through its Pillar 6, focused on supporting autonomous women's movements; and through mainstreamed support across all other Pillars of the programme, partnering with civil society to deliver programming. The Spotlight Initiative's Civil Society Grant Giving Programmes complement this approach in partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

The Spotlight Initiative continues to meet and exceed the funding commitments to civil society and women's organizations (as seen below). **Chapter 6** details the impact of robustly resourcing civil society.

Resourcing the key drivers of change: Funding civil society

As the mid-term assessments, and meta-review found, despite Spotlight Initiative's commitment, low levels of funding are flowing directly to grassroots organizations, reflecting the extent to which UN agency specific recruitment and funding

processes and procedures are difficult and, at times, impossible to comply with for small, local civil society organizations. In response to this historical challenge, in 2019, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat launched the **Grassroots Action Plan**, which includes concrete recommendations on how programmes can simplify partnership processes and make them more inclusive, to be able to go beyond the "usual suspects" and reach new partners.

As of December 2021, cumulatively Spotlight Initiative programmes **allocated 49 per cent**, or about **USD 179 million**,¹⁹ of activity funds to civil society organizations, achieving its commitment to delivering 30–50 per cent of Spotlight Initiative programme funds through civil society organizations. This is an increase of approximately USD 33 million from the previous year. All five regions in which the Initiative works are exceeding the minimum target of 30 per cent, with Central Asia²⁰ leading at 60 per cent. Of the allocated civil society funds, a total of **USD 144.5 million** was already **awarded** to civil society organizations, an increase of **close to USD 48 million from 2020**. This means that programmes have now delivered about 81 per cent of the total allocated funding for civil society organizations.

¹⁹ This includes USD 36.7 million allocated to CSOs by the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

²⁰ For the purpose of this analysis, Afghanistan is included in the Central Asia region.

USD 179 million allocated to civil society organizations as of December 2021

(49% of activity funds)

Of this, USD 144.5 million has been already awarded



30%
minimum commitment

Spotlight Initiative's fund allocation to Civil Society as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Region*	Overall funds allocated to the civil society as of end of 2021	Overall funds delivered to the civil society as of end of 2021
Africa	83,729,092	69,352,782
Latin America	14,941,813	11,312,309
Pacific	10,754,522	10,431,325
Caribbean	9,726,244	8,363,138
Central Asia	13,133,082	6,183,772
WPHF and UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women	36,796,835	33,659,404
Safe and Fair	9,818,535	5,204,320
Global Total	178,900,123	144,507,050

* The table provides a breakdown of Spotlight Initiative's fund allocation to Civil Society in each of the 5 regions in each of the 5 regions. WPHF, UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Safe and Fair are presented separately.

In all regions, the high and increasing implementation rate of funding through civil society organizations demonstrates Spotlight Initiative's strong commitment and sends an important signal to other donors on the importance of investing in autonomous women's movements and in national, local and grassroots civil society organizations as essential partners to eliminate violence against women and girls.²¹ The Spotlight Initiative is committed to continuing on an upward trajectory in supporting civil society organizations, with additional civil society organization allocations to be confirmed in 2022 for the **Caribbean, Central Asia** and the **Pacific**

regions as they enter into their second phase of programming.

Funding national, local and grassroots organizations

In line with feminist funding principles and the Initiative's Theory of Change, Spotlight Initiative believes civil society organizations and movements anchored in local communities are best placed to advocate for and pursue sustainable solutions to end violence against women and girls. As of 2021, the Initiative has exceeded its target of delivering

²¹ See the regional allocation table further in this chapter.

Support to grassroots organizations



USD 25 million
directly awarded to local
and grassroots groups

as implementing partners, grantees
and vendors

50–70 per cent of civil society organization funding to national, local and grassroots organizations, with 78 per cent of the USD 144.5 million delivered to civil society organizations channelled to national, local and grassroots organizations,²² which is over a USD 40 million increase from 2020. All regions are significantly exceeding the minimum threshold of 50 per cent ranging from 67 per cent in the Pacific to 87 per cent in Central Asia. Of the funding delivered to civil society organizations, **USD 25 million went exclusively to local and grassroots organizations.**²³ This is an additional **USD 12 million** compared to the previous reporting period, demonstrating the sustained and increased focus of the Initiative's support to local actors.

grants allocated to these organizations, at least two platforms of local and grassroots organizations were established and included women and girls living with disabilities and women and girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination. Through these platforms, at least 15,000 direct participants have benefitted from second-chance education opportunities and livelihood support to minimize their vulnerabilities to gender-based violence, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health rights violations. The section below on “sub-granting and subcontracting” has more information on how the Initiative is funding local and grassroots organizations.

The impact of investing locally: Amplifying grassroots groups' advocacy

In **Nigeria**, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with local and grassroots organizations and provided opportunities to strengthen their capacities for advocacy on issues surrounding violence against women and girls, sexual violence, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Through

²² In contrast, 6.5% of the delivered funds were channelled to regional civil society organizations and 15.9% to international civil society organizations.

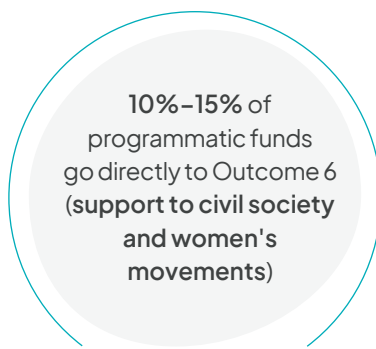
²³ See definition in the Methodology note included in [Annex C](#).

Funding commitments

ACHIEVED AS OF DECEMBER 2021



ACHIEVED **49%**



ACHIEVED **14%**



ACHIEVED **10%**



ACHIEVED **78%**



Funding women-led, women's rights and feminist organizations

Most bilateral and multilateral funding does not reach the women's rights organizations that are driving transformative and sustainable social change, particularly in the Global South. Studies show that 1 per cent of gender-focused aid from governments

goes to autonomous women's organizations²⁴ and only 5 per cent of total bilateral aid goes to advancing gender equality as the principal priority.²⁵ Most gender equality funding tends to be invested in international organizations based in donor countries rather than grassroots feminist organizations leading their own, context-specific solutions.²⁶ To address this funding gap, the Initiative delivered **72 per cent (USD**

24 OECD, (March, 2019). *Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Donor Charts*.

25 OECD Development finance for gender equality and women's empowerment: A 2021 snapshot.

26 Foundation centre, *State of Global Giving by U.S. foundations the state of 2011–2015*, showing that of USD 4.1 billion that US foundations donated between 2011 and 2015, only 11.7 per cent went directly to local organizations based in the country where programming occurred.

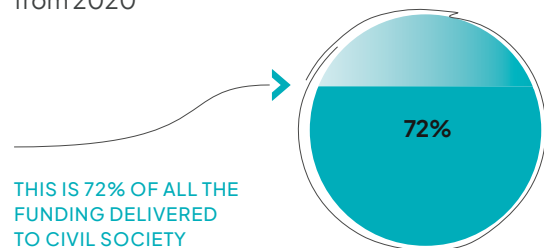
104 million) of the awarded funds to civil society organizations that are led by women, feminist and women's rights organizations.²⁷ This is an additional USD 28 million compared to the end of 2020 and ranges from 61 per cent in **Africa** to 81 per cent in the **Caribbean**, and 94 per cent by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

The Spotlight Initiative's intentional and deep investment in women's organizations accelerates change in the lives of women and girls and has a ripple effect across all of society. The Spotlight Initiative in **Uganda**, for example, supported the national women's organizations lobby to successfully secure high-level appointments (ministers and vice presidency) for women in the 2021 election in the parliament. This shift towards more women in leadership is an important milestone for the status of gender equality and equal political engagement in the country more broadly. The Spotlight Initiative is optimistic that these women will serve as reliable, key government partners in maintaining political buy-in to eliminate violence against women and girls in the long term. To sustain the efforts of funding women's organizations across the **Central Asia** region, the regional programme worked towards the establishment of a regionally rooted grant-making mechanism, with a scoping study to map over 600 active women's civil society organizations and activists in the region and developed a grant-making manual to ensure alignment with local needs. **Chapter 6** has more examples of the impact of sustained funding to women's rights groups.

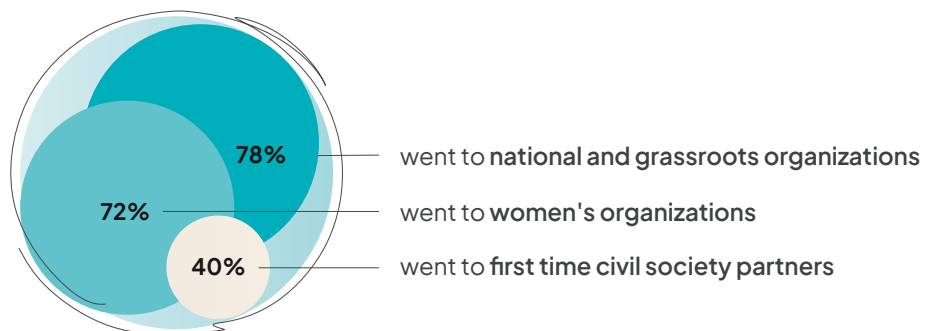
Funding new partners and broadening the ecosystem

Finally, Spotlight Initiative is continuously seeking to expand its pool of civil society partners to better reach groups, especially marginalized women and girls and those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, that are otherwise excluded from traditional funding and programming. **As of December 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes delivered 40 per cent of the global civil society funding to new partners that had not previously worked with the respective United Nation agency – an increase of USD 15 million** from the previous reporting period. This ranges from 16 per cent in the Pacific to 42 per cent in the Caribbean and 76 per cent by the two Trust Funds, and is the result of intentional work at programme level to diversify and

USD 104 million invested in women's organizations, an additional **28 million** from 2020



Of the **USD 144.5 million** delivered to CSOs so far



²⁷ See definition in the Methodology note included in [Annex C](#).

Civil Society National Reference Group partners to help diversify funding

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the Civil Society National Reference Group actively participated in an activity that aimed to build the institutional capacity of grassroots organizations to overcome barriers in diversifying their funding streams and gaining access to international grants and opportunities to implement large-scale projects. This is part of a broader goal of the Spotlight Initiative country programme to shift ownership for sustainable development and gender equality from international agencies to national, and importantly, local and grassroots organizations. The Civil Society National Reference Group supported programme implementation and provided guidance to the capacity-building team on the mapping of civil society organizations with 51 organizations participating in a needs assessment from which a curriculum and capacity-building workshops were developed, supporting organizations to diversify their funding streams.

The new WithHer Fund: Mobilizing flexible financial support to frontline women's organizations The drivers of change

In partnership with the UN Foundation, and as part of a commitment made during the Generation Equality Forum, the Spotlight Initiative launched a funding vehicle – the **WithHer Fund**. Operating under feminist grant-making principles (flexibility, trust and transparency), the WithHer Fund works to channel flexible core funding to grassroots and women's organizations working to end violence against women and girls in their communities. The fund addresses the barriers to funding that small organizations usually face, by applying a streamlined application and reporting process and offering small-sized grants. The fund also aims to complement existing international grant-making mechanisms by raising money from new or untapped sources, such as the private sector and the general public.

The UN Foundation and Spotlight Initiative selected the first cohort of WithHer Fund grantees – working in Argentina, Belize, El Salvador, Malawi, Mali, and Trinidad and Tobago – based on certain criteria. The fund grantees were chosen based on: their track record in work in ending violence against women and girls in general and in the work place in particular; grassroots women's and feminist leadership; regional diversity; urgency of resourcing needs; and experience of historic barriers in accessing funding of this kind.

Seed funding for the first cohort of grantees was made possible with initial support from the UN Foundation, as well as The Estée Lauder Companies Charitable Foundation and the H&M Foundation. At the end of 2021, the WithHer Fund had been seeded with a total of USD 180,000. The UN Foundation and Spotlight Initiative plan to scale up this funding to reach more grassroots organizations in the months to come, continuing to mobilize resources with individual philanthropists, corporate foundations, private sector companies, **the general public** and other potential donors, as noted in **Chapter 7**, as well.



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localize its partners, through mapping and targeted outreach as well as institutional strengthening of civil society organizations.

Flexible funding – fuelling civil society, feminist and women’s movements

As noted above, local women’s rights and feminist organizations have for decades called for flexible, sustainable and long-term funding. In response, the Spotlight Initiative is continuously working to localize and decolonize resourcing by investing in grassroots women’s movements and organizations. The Initiative recognizes the institutional and systemic barriers that inhibit these groups and movements from accessing funding, and is pushing to change the way we fund feminist social change to be more flexible and locally driven.

Core institutional funding

Core institutional funding can be defined by what it is not: it is not funding earmarked for specific programmatic activities or overhead costs related to delivering. Rather, the purpose of core institutional funding is to support an organization’s overall institutional capacity. Core funding may cover general operations and core costs, such as paying staff salaries and office rent, purchasing equipment and ICT services. Institutional funding also provides psychosocial support and health insurance for staff to put in place new adaptive strategies and systems or even to raise staff awareness and develop their capacities in technical areas.

USD 22 million has been invested in core support to civil society

THIS IS 15% OF TOTAL AWARDED CSO FUNDING



As such, institutional funding is essential to local women's organizations' survival and their ability to respond to changing circumstances and contexts; it is particularly helpful for local organizations working in complex and rapidly evolving environments. And it continues to be urgently needed: the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund 2021 annual civil society organization survey, which included 61 civil society organizations from 23 countries, revealed that nearly 91 per cent of civil society organizations feel that their organization's existence is under threat, at moderate, high or very high risk, due to a lack of institutional funding or core funding in the women, peace and security (WPS) and humanitarian sphere. This is an increase of around 4 per cent from 2020. Another 20.5 per cent of organizations feel that this risk has substantially increased from 2020.

Core funding strengthens organizational capacity and learning, allows organizations to determine their own priorities, and recognizes them as the key drivers of change, ultimately enhancing their impact.²⁸ Core support also widens democratic space, enhances accountability and supports the protection of human rights and peace.

As of December 2021, USD 22 million has been invested in core institutional funding globally, of which USD 10.5 million comes from country and regional programmes and USD 11.5 million from the two civil society grant giving programmes (through WPHF and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women). This corresponds to approximately 15 per cent of the total delivered amount to civil society

organizations globally. A total of 51 per cent of all awards to civil society organizations include core institutional support. This showcases the Initiative's dedication to intentionally support the resilience and autonomy of civil society organizations. That said, in the face of increasing and multifaceted crises (climate change, conservative backlash facing women's rights organizations and feminist organizations etc.) more funding should be channelled and earmarked for quality, long-term, core institutional support for civil society organizations to respond to their evolving needs and provide them with the adequate resources needed to strengthen their adaptation and resilience capacity.

Small grants: a rights-based funding modality for drivers of change

Small grants are a funding mechanism used by some United Nations agencies to deepen their reach to national, local and grassroots organizations, in particular organizations that struggle to meet the selection requirements of the United Nations. The small grants have a simplified application process and usually range between USD 2,500 to USD 50,000 (depending on the United Nations agency) and may be applied for in relation to programmatic activities or to support and strengthen the institutional capacities of civil society organizations. During the reporting period, Spotlight Initiative programmes continued to apply the small grant mechanism as a means to channel core institutional funding to local women's organizations. In fact, 17 per cent of the awards that include a core institutional support component

²⁸ Angelika Arutyunova and Cindy Clark, *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots*, 7 October 2013. Page 25.

provide 100 per cent core support, for example in the form of small grants.

In **Jamaica**, seven civil society organizations received grant funding to support the scale-up of existing initiatives currently being implemented in advocacy, service delivery, programming and creating safe spaces. The simplified modality for the disbursement of grants has been crucial for civil society organizations that engage key and traditionally left-behind constituents to access funding. In Jamaica, through flexible grants, WE-Change was able to undergo crucial capacity building for their volunteer network to address the increase in violence against women and girls within the lesbian, bisexual and queer+ community during the COVID-19 pandemic. The organization's ability to advocate more meaningfully for lesbian, bisexual and queer+ women in Jamaica was strengthened and its ability to provide psychosocial support to members of the LBQ+ and ally community who are experiencing violence was increased. The grants further enabled the **Jamaica Association for the Deaf** to host a series of workshops and consultation

sessions engaging 51 deaf and hard-of-hearing girls and women and 77 members of staff from deaf schools and organizations. The workshop focused on building awareness around violence against women and girls, building confidence to report incidents of violence against women and girls and cultivating willingness to access victim support services.

The **Caribbean and Pacific regional programmes** ensured that the grant application processes involved fewer steps than other partnership mechanisms. Organizations were invited to apply to a small grant funding opportunity, and a series of virtual town-halls were hosted to prepare potential applicants for the application process and to provide an overview of the requirements, guidelines in the development of proposals and budgets, and reporting and monitoring and evaluation requirements. In **Mexico**, as a direct response to the request of civil society organizations for increased funding to grassroots and local organizations, 23 civil society organizations and 5 women's shelters were supported, which ultimately benefitted over 24,000 women and girls.

Core institutional funds and mental health

Grantees of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women used the core institutional funds to ensure the **self-care and resilience** of staff, which enabled organizations to continue to work productively in communities with women and girls. For example, in **Argentina**, Fundación Andhes (*Abogados y abogadas del Noroeste argentino en Derechos Humanos y estudios sociales*), a small organization training cis, trans and lesbian women in various organizations to become community legal advisers for survivors of violence, decided to use its self-care funds to hire a psychologist for the organization's staff who have been dealing with an increasing number of reports of violence. The HACEY Health Initiative in **Nigeria** engaged a therapist for its own staff's mental health well-being. Staff reported this benefitted the organization by enabling staff to improve their self-care and to cope better with challenges that they experience. Quarterly reports from this intervention have shown a general decrease in anxiety and depression among staff, as well as positive coping mechanisms to manage stress. Also in Nigeria, the Society for Life Changers and Good Parental Care enrolled all its staff into a health insurance programme, which ensured continued project implementation.

Sub-granting and subcontracting

When Spotlight Initiative programmes' civil society organization partners sub-grant or subcontract a portion of the awarded funds, it allows local and grassroots organizations to access funding and capacity development opportunities that they may not qualify for under United Nations accountability and procedure standards. Indeed, the sub-grantor or subcontractor entity, often a larger or more consolidated national civil society organization, is often better placed to ensure greater support and flexibility and to open up opportunities for entities, which by virtue of their closeness, are naturally positioned to better reach and serve marginalized groups. Spotlight Initiative programme teams continue to explore this modality as an effective way to expand the grassroots outreach of the United Nations.

As of December 2021, 12 per cent of awards to civil society organizations reported channelling some awarded funds through sub-granting or subcontracting mechanisms. Of those that reported this data,²⁹ a weighted average of 36 per cent of the award's financial value is dedicated to sub-granting or subcontracting. For example, in **Nigeria**, local and grassroots civil society organizations received sub-grants to work directly with women and girls, schools and communities in the programme's focus states. The sub-grantees helped to form

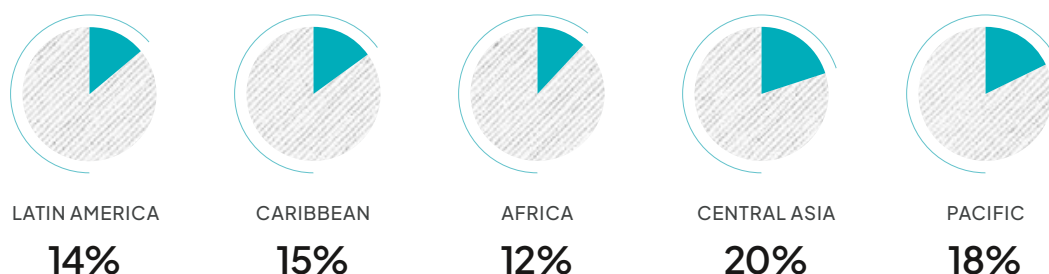
coordination mechanisms and effective monitoring of the intervention, thus ensuring ownership, local sustainability and, most importantly, that marginalized groups are not left behind.

While this is a step in the right direction, it is important to recognize the policy and process-related barriers that make it inherently difficult for local organizations, particularly those led by women and marginalized groups, to access quality funding. Spotlight Initiative is devoted to continuing its investments and partnerships with women's organizations and movements at an unprecedented scale and scope, while simplifying and adapting its processes to enhance access to small, grassroots and local women's and youth organizations. **Chapter 8** has more details on this.

Supporting women's movements through a dedicated outcome area

The recognition that women's movements are at the core of efforts to end violence against women and girls led, in 2017, to the expansion of the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change, with the inclusion of Pillar 6 focusing on strengthening women's movements. While civil society organizations and women's organizations are supported and engaged as programme partners across all Outcome Areas, this particular Outcome allows for deep and targeted support for autonomous women's movements,

% of programme activity funds allocated to **Pillar 6 – Women's Movements**



²⁹ 74% of awards to CSOs that have reported having a sub-granting or sub-contracting component have reported data on the share of the award's financial value dedicated to these modalities.



“I had never used a smartphone before and when our organization received the tablets, I had no idea what to do with it... Today, I am able to surf the internet, manage the Omprakash platform and attend all trainings on zoom without any difficulties. I will use my new acquired skills in looking for further collaboration and networking. I am more confident in my abilities than I was 6 months ago”

– Masauko Jafali, Young Women Rise, Chiradzulu, Malawi (UN Trust Fund)

including network-building, capacity-strengthening, institutional funding of organizations and efforts to increase civil society organizations’ influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls. **Chapter 6** has concrete results related to Pillar 6.

Across all five regions, USD 41.5 million or 14 per cent of activity funds are currently allocated to Pillar 6, which falls on the high end of the Initiative’s target range of 10–15 per cent. This ranges from 20 per cent in Central Asia³⁰ to 12 per cent in Africa. This is an increase of USD 8 million since December 2020. This investment aims to contribute to strengthening the movements and sustaining organizational resilience to continue their important work. **Chapter 6** has more information.

Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

To complement the civil society support efforts of country and regional programmes, the Initiative has committed to channelling 10 per cent of each of the five regional investment envelopes to Civil Society Grant Giving Programmes. These funds are aimed at reaching national, local and grassroots feminist organizations and supporting women’s movements. Since July 2019, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) has been allocating grants in Africa and Latin America, with the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) further supporting five African countries. Since 2020, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund has also been granting funds in Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea. For the Caribbean,

³⁰ The Safe and Fair programme in the ASEAN countries has a different programmatic structure and, as a result, it lacks Outcome 6 and is therefore not included in this analysis.

Central Asia and the Pacific, the 10 per cent regional allocation for civil society grants was integrated into the regional programmes³¹ by adding a Pillar 6 that focuses on strengthening women’s movements, including both programmatic activities and direct grants. Overall these grant giving programmes have allocated **USD 36.7 million** in grants to civil society to address violence against women and girls.

As of December 2021, the UN Trust Fund and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund have jointly delivered USD 33.6 million³² to civil society organizations across all regions. This is an additional **USD 5.5 million** delivered compared to the previous reporting period. The Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund has remaining funds in Papua New Guinea and in Afghanistan that are yet to be granted, but these funds face uncertainties due to the political and security situation. Of the total funds delivered through the two UN trust funds with whom the Initiative partners, 79 per cent supports national, local and grassroots organizations, and 94 per cent supports partners that are women-led, women’s rights organizations and feminist organizations. Lastly, 60 per cent was awarded to new partners, which had not previously worked with the respective UN Trust Fund prior to the launch of the Spotlight Initiative.

In total, 37,761,857 people were reached by the 55 UN Trust Fund grantees funded under the Spotlight Initiative by 2021.³³ Grantees specifically reached women and girls experiencing intersecting forms of violence and oppression and had the objective of leaving no one behind. As of 2021, grantees reached 9,935 women and girls living with disabilities, 32,790 indigenous women and girls and 340 lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and girls.

Similarly, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund focuses on resourcing local and grassroots women’s organizations, with grants ranging in size from USD 2,500 to USD 200,000. During the reporting period, 74 partners reached 126,223 direct right-holders, of which 73 per cent were women and girls. An estimated 2.5 million indirect right-holders were also reached. Overall, roughly 20 per cent of grantee projects work with women who are forcibly displaced, 41 per cent with women and people living with disabilities, 27 per cent with child mothers, single mothers and widows, 8 per cent with indigenous and ethnic minorities, nearly 3 per cent with women and girl sex workers, and over 1.0 per cent with LGBTQI communities.³⁴ **Chapter 6** has more information on the impact of these grants.

The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund

allocated **USD 36.7 million** to civil society organizations

92% HAS ALREADY BEEN AWARDED



31 Caribbean (USD 2,952,830), Central Asia (USD 1,773,584) and the Pacific (USD 2,952,830).

32 USD 24 million by the UN Trust Fund and USD 9.6 by the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

33 All numbers are based on self-reported data, and account for double-counting as feasible. In addition, this data is an aggregate of data collected through a survey sent to all grantees, of which the UN Trust Fund received a response rate of 95%.

34 Data reported by WPHF aggregated grantee projects working with LGBTQI communities and female sex workers at 4%; in the running text above, the data is disaggregated (with roughly 1.0% of projects working with LGBTQI communities, and roughly 3% with female sex workers).



©Consórcio Contra a Violência / Etevaldo Jack

Flexible funding through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund

In 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact the work of grantees in numerous ways, including the sustainability of their organizations.³⁵ The Initiative supported two UN trust funds – the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund – to continue adopting more flexible funding mechanisms for the resilience of grantees and their capacity to adapt to the new, continuing and reinforced challenges that the pandemic has brought for women and girls.

The two Trust Funds invested a total of **USD 11.5 million**³⁶ in **core institutional support**, with an average of 34.3 per cent in all awards. This is likely to increase in 2022 as the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund will award the remaining grants in Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan.

The **UN Trust Fund’s** grantees used funds from the influx of COVID-19 institutional funding³⁷ to continue adapting to the ongoing crisis and innovating as necessary to deliver services. The 44 grantees receiving **COVID-19-related funding in sub-Saharan Africa reached at least 15,244,263 people** and a minimum of 190,725 women and girls were directly supported to exercise agency for change in their own

³⁵ The Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund’s annual CSO survey in 2021 included 61 CSOs from 23 countries. It revealed that 90.7% of CSOs feel that their organization’s existence is under threat, at moderate, high or very high risk, due to lack of institutional funding or core funding in the women, peace and security and humanitarian sphere, an increase of around 4 per cent from 2020. Another 20.5% of organizations feel that this risk has substantially increased from 2020.

³⁶ UN Trust Fund channelled USD 11,227,353 and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund channelled USD 315,990.

³⁷ In July 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee re-allocated USD 9.1 million, as a COVID-19 response, from the UN Trust Fund planned envelope for Africa for institutional funding support to existing grantees in sub-Saharan Africa. A total of 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa received funding for institutional strengthening through the 2020 COVID-19 window. The re-allocation included USD 500,000 to create a practitioner-based online collaboration platform to enhance the exchange of knowledge and information on the intersection of crisis response, organizational strengthening and ending violence against women and girls.

lives. Grantees reported that the infusion of resources for organizational resilience in the COVID-19 response strengthened their ability to respond to and cover the basic and emergency needs of women and girls. Institutional strengthening also extended to ensure self-care, resilience and remote working for staff with at least **1,206 staff enabled to work from home effectively** in order to continue to work productively in communities with women and girls.

The **Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund** included a new funding stream for institutional support to the calls for proposals in **Afghanistan, Papua New Guinea and Haiti**.³⁸ This allowed local women’s rights organizations to receive both institutional and programmatic funding to strengthen their capacity and cover the costs of adapting to COVID-19. Simultaneously, grantees had resources to focus on their advocacy and train their staff in proposal-writing to ensure future funding and sustainability of their actions. Organizations could apply to one

or both streams, individually, with formal registration being mandatory only for the lead organization. During the reporting period, new adaptive strategies, tools and systems were adopted for continuity of their operations, including in **Haiti** where 3 women’s rights organizations developed risk management and contingency plans or strategies. This funding has also helped organizations sustain themselves during crises, with 221 staff and volunteers in Haiti retained during the reporting period for the continuity of their operations.

Regional funding snapshot: Distribution of civil society funds awarded by Spotlight Initiative programmes

The table on the next page provides a consolidated snapshot of the above information. It details the percentage of funding, by region, that is directed to various types of civil society organizations from the start of the Initiative.

Region	Percentage of activity funds allocated to CSOs	Percentage of delivered funds to national, local and grassroots organizations	Percentage of delivered funds to local and grassroots organizations	Percentage of delivered funds to women-led, women’s rights and feminist organizations	Percentage of delivered funds to new partners to the UN agencies
Africa	43%	79%	11%	61%	27%
Latin America	44%	74%	14%	69%	44%
Pacific	39%	67%	16%	70%	16%
Caribbean	36%	77%	29%	81%	42%
Central Asia	60%	87%	27%	74%	33%
WPHF and UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women	100%	79%	30%	94%	76%
Safe and Fair	36%	68%	0% ³⁹	71%	27%
Global Total	49%	78%	17%	72%	40%

³⁸ The programmatic funding stream ranged from USD 30,000 to USD 200,000, and an institutional funding stream ranged from USD 2,500 to USD 30,000.

³⁹ Safe and Fair is a regional programme in the ASEAN region. Due to the nature and regional focus of its activities, the programme engages international, regional and national CSO partners, including grassroots and community groups at the local level.

The impact of core institutional funding through the UN Trust Fund and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

In **South Africa**, Gender Links used institutional funding from the UN Trust Fund to implement a fundraising strategy and establish a “sustainability hub” to ensure its organizational sustainability. As a result, Gender Links has raised additional funding towards its future work and sustainability of women's rights work over the next three years. In **Somalia**, the International Solidarity Foundation reported that the institutional resilience of local CSOs improved by engaging 75 people from community organizations on capacity assessment and capacity development activities. In addition, to maintain and adapt planned interventions, laptops were distributed to women's associations. Grantees also utilized this funding to respond to emerging needs in their communities. In **Cameroon**, the Rural Women Centre for Education and Development invested the grant to scale up its services by establishing 13 counselling centres in 13 villages in Ngoketunjia Division, which provided trained counsellors to support survivors of violence. Project initiatives saw an increase in reporting of violence (285 cases were reported in the 13 counselling centres) and improved access to justice and services, including for indigenous women and girls.

In **Papua New Guinea**, five Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund grantees used the institutional funding to develop risk management and contingency plans to strengthen their organizational resilience in crises. The funding was also invested in strengthening their operational and technical capacity through staff training on referral and case management and acquiring transportation to enhance their reach within local communities. In **Haiti**, the grantee MOFEDGA was able to adapt to the crisis by adopting remote-working modalities, and sustain its operations by retaining staff and equipping them with new technology to continue their work. This flexible funding not only contributed to rebuilding part of the destroyed premises following the earthquake (electricity with solar panels, windows, IT equipment), but also allowed the organization to more efficiently and quickly respond to women and girls' urgent needs on the ground.

Spotlight Initiative Results – Contributing to Change in Ending Violence against Women and Girls

This chapter opens with an overview of the context and describes how the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change addresses violence against women and girls. The chapter then provides an overview of the key results achieved for women and girls under the Initiative’s six Pillars or outcome areas, with detailed case studies appearing under each outcome to illustrate compelling examples of change and innovative programming. A snapshot of key achievements to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights in the Spotlight Initiative’s programmes in Africa is also provided. Sexual and reproductive health and rights featured prominently in these programmes, with dedicated funding to strengthen the links between ending violence against women and girls and eliminating harmful practices, and the advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Finally, the chapter rounds out with a discussion of commonly faced challenges to ending violence against women and girls and highlights creative mitigating measures.

6.1 The Context

Globally, women’s human rights experienced significant declines over the past year, further exacerbated by COVID-19 and conservative backlash.⁴⁰ At the same time, climate change and increasing climate-related disasters, together with

the outbreaks of conflict, intensified the vulnerability of women and girls to violence and presented obstacles to sustainable development.⁴¹ Several years into the pandemic, rates of violence against women and girls have increased (as **numerous studies have shown**),⁴² with many of the former options for security, shelter and care unavailable or inaccessible due to associated lockdowns and restrictions.

⁴⁰ [The World’s Women 2020: Trends and Statistics](#).

⁴¹ [Climate and weather related disaster surge 5-fold over 50 years but early warnings save lives: WMO Report](#).

⁴² [World Bank Blogs \(January 5, 2022\) “Global crisis of violence against women and girls: tackling it with new, better data use”](#).



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Globally, reports of intimate partner violence and other forms of violence against women and girls to helplines, police, and other service providers have seen dramatic upticks,⁴³ with, for example, a 35 per cent increase in cases of violence reported to the police across countries covered by the Spotlight Initiative. The shift to remote work and schooling in many communities has also highlighted the pervasiveness of cyber or online violence globally.⁴⁴

In parallel, violence against women human rights defenders, including land and water defenders and labour organizers, feminist and social justice activists – as well as progressive politicians and journalists⁴⁵ increased in the context of conservative backlash to progress on gender equality. The ascent and influence of right-wing conservative groups and populist political leaders continued as well,

promoting restrictions to and roll-backs on women's rights, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and bodily autonomy around the globe.

In fierce resistance to this backlash, this past year also witnessed massive mobilizations and movements demanding rights and justice: communities organized and demanded climate justice, labour rights, racial justice, women's reproductive rights, and trans rights, and called for economic justice, additional social protections, and vaccine justice in the face of COVID-19. The Spotlight Initiative embraced and supported this momentum, amplifying its commitment to centring civil society organizations, and movement building to end violence against women and girls.

43 World Bank Blogs (January 5, 2022) "[Global crisis of violence against women and girls: tackling it with new, better data use](#)".

44 The Economist Intelligence Unit "[Measuring the prevalence of online violence against women](#)".

45 UNESCO sounds the alarm on global surge in attacks against journalists covering protests.

Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change

Initiative Goal: All women and girls, especially those most vulnerable, live free from violence and harmful practices



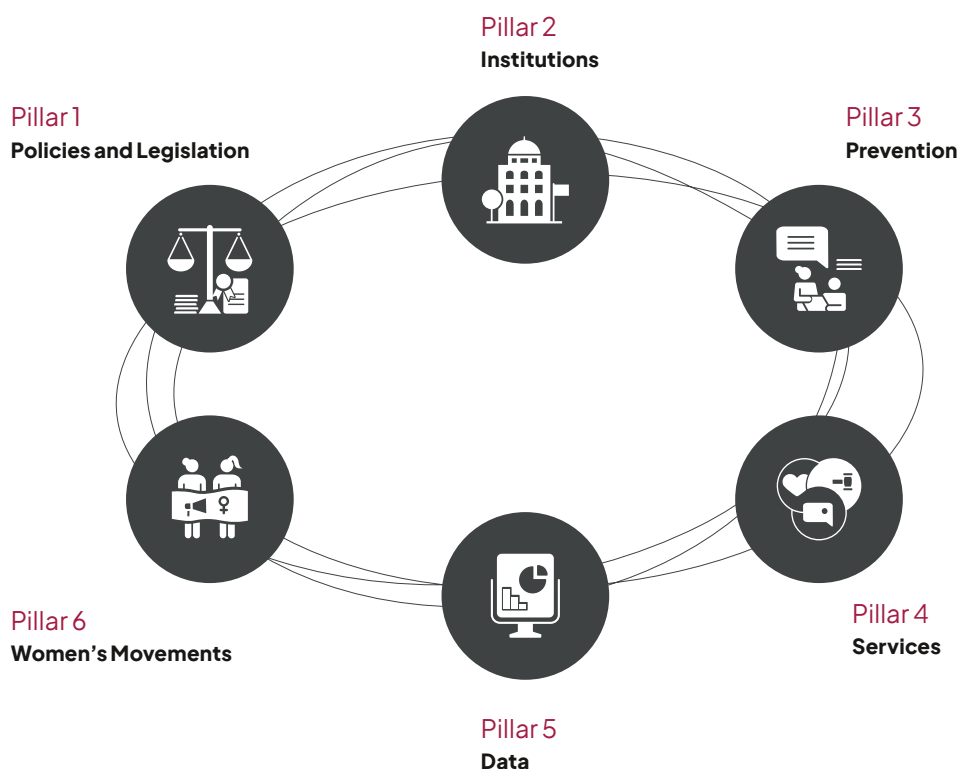
6.2 How Spotlight Initiative Contributes to Change: The Initiative's Theory of Change

The regression in women's rights has shown, once again, that sustained collective action is required to respect, protect and fulfil human and women's rights and to resist roll-backs. Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has aimed to encourage meaningful and sustained engagement with civil society organizations, particularly local and grassroots organizations and feminist and women's

rights organizations, and support intersectional movement building. This approach is central to Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change, seen below, which posits that a robustly resourced, rights-based, comprehensive approach – one that addresses the root causes of violence – will, over time, contribute to ending violence against women and girls.

Reflective of its Theory of Change, the Spotlight Initiative, together with its broad base of partners, focuses on achieving results across six outcome areas or Pillars:

Spotlight Initiative – Working across 6 Pillars



Programmes work comprehensively across all Pillars, targeting inequitable laws and policies, strengthening institutions, and challenging harmful social norms, attitudes, and behaviours, while also championing women's control over their bodies and bodily integrity. Support to movement building (Pillar 6) is a particularly critical dimension of the Spotlight Initiative's work, as evidence has shown that the most effective way to advance policies on

eliminating violence against women and girls is by supporting and strengthening feminist movements and progressive civil society organizations, including local and grassroots groups (Chapter 5 has more details on this).

Violence against women and girls is a multi-dimensional phenomenon fuelled by intersecting sexism, racism, homophobia and systems of power.

While ubiquitous, violence against women and girls manifests differently in different contexts and over time. As such, the Initiative has prioritized addressing certain forms of violence in the regions in which it works.⁴⁶ The results below capture the significant progress the Initiative has made in addressing these forms of violence, while always aiming towards their full eradication.

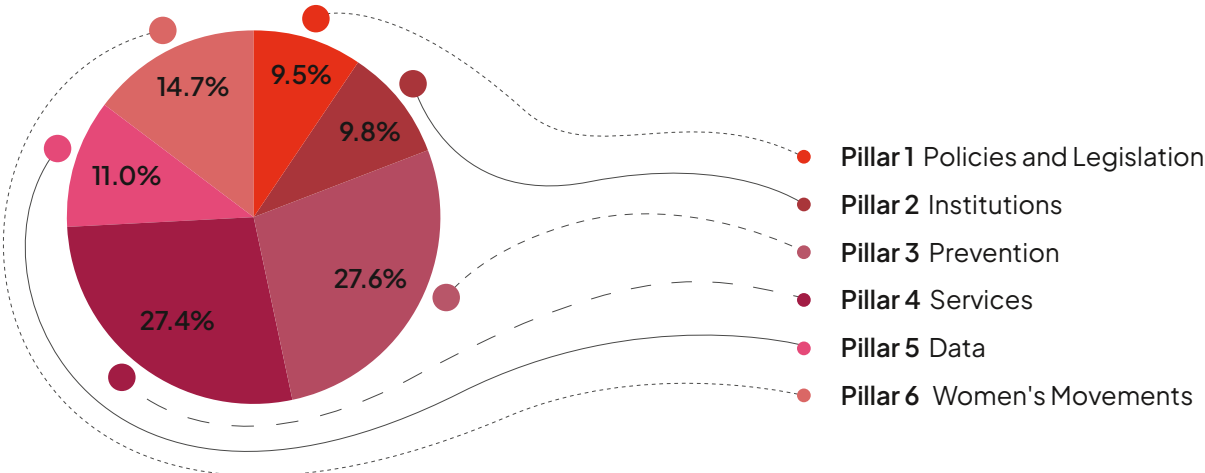
6.3 The Impact of Spotlight Initiative: Critical Results toward Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

The Spotlight Initiative invests across the six Pillars of its comprehensive Theory of Change. Cumulatively, from the start of the Spotlight Initiative, the Fund has allocated the largest share of resources towards

work on prevention, to address the underlying drivers of violence against women and girls, followed by investments in services, improving accessibility, availability and quality. The pie chart illustrates the proportion of allocated investment across Pillars.⁴⁷

6.3.1 Overarching Results: The Importance of Investing in a Comprehensive Model

In the spirit of capturing the Spotlight Initiative’s comprehensive and innovative approach to ending violence against women and girls and fostering synergistic impact across Pillars, Spotlight Initiative programmes have reported on cross-cutting results that go beyond individual outcomes. This sub-section shares key overarching results collectively achieved across programmes in 2021.



Spotlight Initiative allocated investment globally by Pillar as of December 2021

⁴⁶ Africa: Sexual and gender-based violence (with a focus on harmful practices including female genital mutilation and child marriage); Asia: Sexual and gender-based violence and child marriage; Caribbean: Family violence; Latin America: Femicide; and in the Pacific: Domestic violence and intimate partner violence.
⁴⁷ Data aggregation comes from budgeted funds in OSC-approved Phase I+II budgets for programmes in Africa and Latin America, and from the most recent annual workplan data for Phase I programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and Afghanistan, as well as Ecuador and the Africa Regional Programme (for its three focus Pillars). For the Caribbean Regional Programme Grenada, Haiti, Pacific Regional Programme, and Samoa programmes, data comes from OSC-approved Phase I budgets. Data does not include the UN Trust Fund, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund and the Safe and Fair programmes.



*Twenty-five years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, progress towards equal power and equal rights for women remains elusive. No country has achieved gender equality, and the COVID-19 crisis threatens to erode the limited gains that have been made.*⁴⁸

– António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

RESULT: Elevated the position of ending violence against women and girls on political agendas

The Spotlight Initiative has leveraged the UN-EU partnership at the highest levels to prioritize elevating ending violence against women and girls more broadly in countries' political agendas. This has been achieved through: ensuring that civil society plays a central role in agenda setting; engaging a wide range of partners; positioning violence against women and girls as an issue that requires a whole-of-government approach; supporting the development of policy solutions to respond to pressing needs on the issue; and engaging in advocacy to garner support from stakeholders and mobilize decision-makers and duty-bearers to take action.

To that end, in October 2021, **Zimbabwe** successfully launched the High-Level Political Compact (HLPC), a multisectoral document on ending gender-based violence and harmful practices⁴⁹ drafted through a context-centric approach, in consultation with the Civil Society National Reference Group, the European Union and stakeholders from the five Spotlight Initiative provinces. The “commitments and actions in the HLPC aim to ensure that women and girls are able to realise their full potential in a violence-free, gender-responsive and inclusive society.” The launch of the HLPC was attended by the President and Vice President of Zimbabwe, other high-level government officers, and representatives from the United Nations, the European Union and civil

society, effectively elevating violence against women and girls to the executive level and engaging key stakeholders. Developed by an intergovernmental team in a whole-of-government approach, it seeks to promote continued high-level political commitment to ending violence against women and girls, and to ensure its sustainability within the framework of the Spotlight Initiative and beyond. This approach and associated action plan are expected to bring to fruition results beyond any one outcome area while championing women's human rights.

Similarly, in **Grenada**, a rights-based, survivor-centred approach to the implementation of activities helped elevate the rights of victims and survivors of violence against women and girls in the national agenda. This, in turn, helped maximize the impact of transformations in the lives of victims and survivors. It did this by, for instance, fostering a two-pronged approach to closing gaps in service delivery concentrated on addressing the issues at: i) the policy level; and ii) the practical level. Additionally, a National Gender-Based Violence Victims'/Survivors' Rights Policy for Grenada was drafted and, upon review, the Office of the Cabinet requested the addition of a chapter on accountability to ensure that a suitable mechanism would be established to enforce and monitor the application of the rights identified in the policy.

48 UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Statistics, “The World's Women 2020 – Trends and Statistics”

49 United Nations Zimbabwe “Zimbabwe's Spotlight Initiative launches High-Level Political Compact to end gender-based violence, harmful practices”



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In **Nigeria**, the Spotlight Initiative engaged the Executive Governor of Cross River State, who became a champion for gender equality and announced a commitment to increase the number of women in decision-making positions at the launch of the #HeforShe campaign. Engaging leaders is a key strategy to ensure the issue of violence against women and girls remains at the top of the political agenda, and to support the emergence of new social norms that respect women and girls, their rights and their bodily integrity.

RESULT: Implemented UN Reform to improve integrated delivery leading to programmatic success

Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has committed to promoting the principles of UN Reform through its structure, interventions and programmes. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator,

Spotlight Initiative country and regional teams have made a concerted effort to leverage expertise across agencies in the United Nations system to: eliminate violence against women and girls; harmonize coordination across UN Country Teams; streamline procurement and operational processes; collectively establish partnerships; and set clear accountability lines.

This coordinated approach across United Nations agencies has brought about a concomitant rise in efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of interventions across the Initiative's results framework. In **Ecuador**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative fostered efficient programme implementation by successfully streamlining procurement processes across agencies. The programme implemented the business operations strategy to achieve greater efficiency in operational procedures, and used cross-agency procurement mechanisms to leverage

existing long-term agreements and establish relationships with key partners already working with other agencies. As a result, the programme efficiently contracted a marketing agency with previous knowledge of the United Nations system for their prevention campaign #EseTipoNo. In doing so, the programme successfully engaged in an inter-agency approach to further prevention and advocacy efforts, maximizing both efficiency and impact.

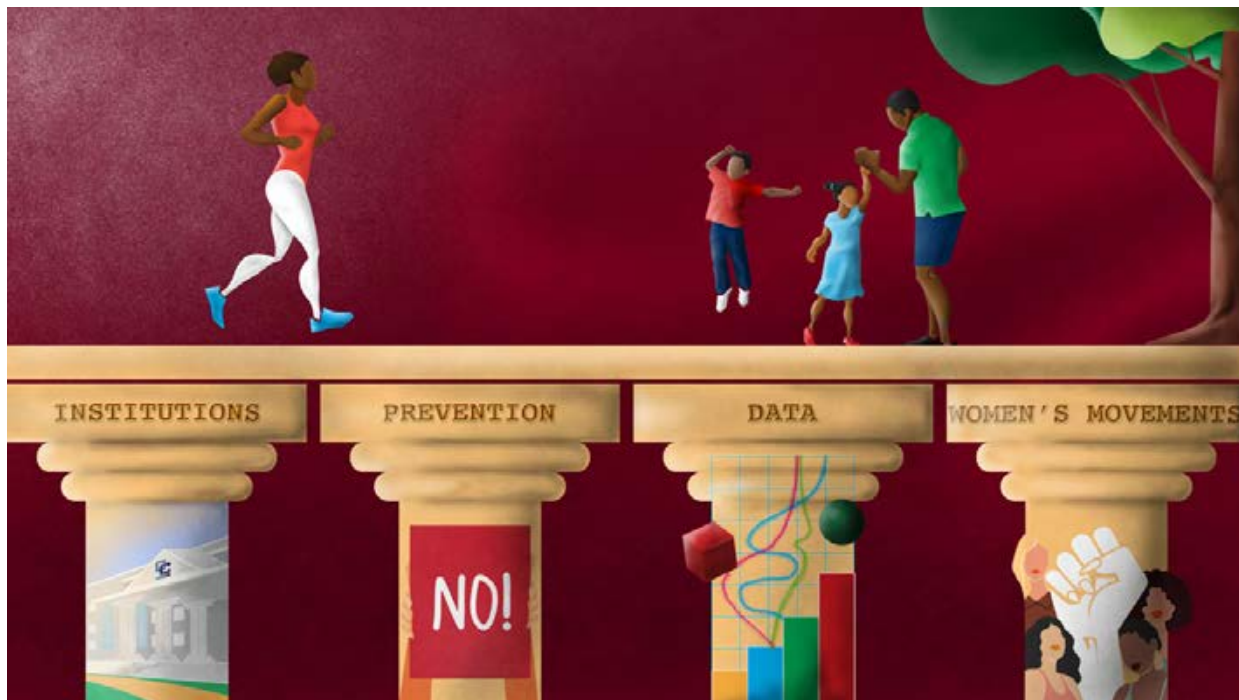
Similar efforts to enhance inter-agency work have also helped programme teams better engage civil society and advance the principle of leaving no one behind. In **Timor-Leste**, for example, the Initiative's inter-agency programme team leveraged existing United Nations-non-governmental organization coordination mechanisms to better engage civil society, foster multi-partner coordination, and identify priority needs of marginalized groups. Via technical and advisory support to the gender and protection coordination mechanism, the Initiative engaged civil society to raise awareness and strengthen prevention and response efforts. Local civil society and marginalized groups regularly shared priorities and updates with up to 50 international and national organizations, including the European Union Delegation. This positioned the Initiative to better centre civil society in the response and adaptation of programming during COVID-19 and, following the 2021 April floods emergency, strengthen responsiveness.

Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Uganda, Vanuatu, Zimbabwe** and a wide range of countries and regions have established similar coordination mechanisms, including dedicated technical working groups, regular inter-agency meetings, task forces, tools, platforms, joint procurement processes, Memorandums of Understanding, action plans and business operations strategies to foster and enhance a whole-of-system approach to ending violence against women and girls, in order to more efficiently respond to the needs of women and girls.

Through collaborative implementation, the Spotlight Initiative has leveraged United Nations agencies' technical expertise to enhance programming and foster a needs-based, context-specific approach. In **Zimbabwe**, for example, agencies collectively formulated programming by building on lessons learned from ongoing joint programmes and developed joint action plans, in consultation with civil society. Concurrently, agencies participated in each other's meetings and interventions to identify areas for collaboration and avoid siloed programming, improving the coherence of programming targeted at particular institutions and communities.

In **Belize**, a prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse inter-agency task force was established to ensure coordination mechanisms on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. In order to amplify the message on United Nations standards of conduct relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, and to encourage a safe "speak-up culture," the programme organized a key leadership dialogue with the entire United Nations staff and another with civil society organization implementing partners, in collaboration with the wider United Nations system in Belize.⁵⁰ Further, the programme has organized joint trainings for seven civil society organization partners on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse and is supporting civil society organizations in developing action plans to strengthen their institutional policies and procedures to reflect stronger prevention guidelines. This integrated approach to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse has improved both programme management and the quality of associated activities. Materials were also used to train community leaders and organizations that interact with children, including the Belize Sports Council, marriage officers and Justices of the Peace. Engaging in a joint approach on this issue, including with civil society and government, has been pivotal to the programme's impact and to ensuring compliance with associated guidelines across the board. A similar regulatory framework on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse was drafted in **Liberia** after extensive assessments that included both the private and public sectors.

⁵⁰ These sought to "raise awareness about the United Nations' mandate on PSEA; strengthen capacity to conduct PSEA self-assessment and implement action plans; and sensitize partners on victim assistance and reporting mechanisms.



The illustration was born out of a persona, Paula, developed during the Key Messages workshop held in September 2021. Paula lives on an island in the Caribbean where she works tirelessly on women's rights. She is an avid runner and a mother of three. As an advocate, Paula has made a significant contribution to the struggle and effort to make the Caribbean a safe place to live. She is passionate about life and a go-getter, yet focused on her family.

RESULT: Fostered a synergistic impact and comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls

The Spotlight Initiative's unique approach demonstrates that, when working comprehensively to address ending violence against women and girls (in line with the Initiative's Theory of Change), **results achieved in one Pillar can and often do support changes in another Pillar, amplifying overall impact. This was witnessed across programmes.** In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, the issue of gender-based violence gained traction during public hearings regarding the law on domestic violence led by the Parliament Committee on Law Enforcement, Crime Prevention and Counteraction to Corruption. Official and media-driven discussions on this engaged survivors of violence, women's rights advocates, women judges and civil society organizations. The last of these have been mobilized, under the Initiative's Pillar 6, to review the normative documents based on findings from the comprehensive legal review carried out under Pillar 1, which resulted in the integration of previously overlooked articles. Strategic discussions were also held in 12 target municipalities, after which

local stakeholders began prioritizing ending violence against women and girls in local development planning, monitoring and accountability frameworks. These institutional changes (Pillar 2) have, in turn, been promoted by locally trained champions of the Gender Action Learning System, fostering normative change and shifts in attitude (Pillar 3).

In **Tajikistan**, the programme worked to engage stakeholders at both the grassroots and national levels to establish accountability and complaint mechanisms within the Government to help prevent and address violence against women and girls. Concomitantly, the programme worked with schools and local communities to establish similar mechanisms and to raise awareness on the issue. This allowed the programme to work across Pillars 2 and 3 to sustainably establish the legal framework needed to meet this pressing need and provide practical guidance to rights holders. Additionally, areas of improvement to further streamline and improve these mechanisms were flagged; the information will be used to further encourage their use and strengthen their relevance.

6.3.1 Contributing to Changes at Outcome Level

This section captures the high-level results under the Spotlight Initiative's six Outcome Areas (or Pillars) and closes with reflections on how Spotlight Initiative programmes addressed and nimbly adapted to rapidly changing contexts, including the ongoing impact of COVID-19. This sub-chapter provides an illustrative mix of programme achievements and results for 2021 and, cumulatively, highlights the impact of the Spotlight Initiative from its launch.⁵¹

Annex B has more detailed programme-level information, including additional information on key results as well as two-page summaries of the programme annual reports.



Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

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

Central to ending violence against women and girls is the existence and enforcement of comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that safeguard the human rights of women and girls, and employ targeted and coordinated response mechanisms. Under this Pillar, the Spotlight Initiative engages a diverse set of partners to develop, strengthen and advocate for policies and legislation that guarantee rights and protection. To ensure their translation to meaningful and transformative change, the Spotlight Initiative focuses on establishing or strengthening existing mechanisms for implementation – including

national and subnational action plans, aligned with international standards.

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

- Conducted an analysis of existing legislation and legal frameworks, to promote and establish gender-sensitive laws and policies
- Strengthened, or newly established, laws to end violence against women and girls, addressing intersectional issues
- Strengthened advocacy for legal and policy reform by key partners and stakeholders at grassroots, local, subnational and national levels

RESULT: Conducting an analysis of existing legislation and legal frameworks in order to promote and establish gender-sensitive laws and policies

Robust assessments of national legal frameworks provide critical information, including on the extent to which frameworks align with international standards, on common trends and challenges across countries, on the status of implementation and on gaps in the legal protection of marginalized groups. Assessments are an important step towards advocacy and reform.

Numerous Spotlight Initiative programmes – including **Grenada, Guyana, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Timor-Leste** and **Trinidad and Tobago** – conducted assessments of existing legal and policy frameworks addressing violence against women and girls and examined legal frameworks related to gender equality overall. These analyses identified the existence or absence of key laws and policies and assessed key barriers to implementation – including inadequate funding or capacity to implement. A wide range of stakeholders, including survivors, activists, and marginalized groups contributed their perspectives, providing a rich evidence base to guide law and policy-making,

⁵¹ It is important to note that programmes have had different start dates; as such, comparison to “baseline” may include baseline data from different years. This does not, however, affect the assessment of the Initiative’s cumulative contribution.

and to support informed action planning to ensure successful implementation.

Through the Spotlight Initiative **Africa Regional Programme**, for example, a regional evidence-based mapping assessment was conducted on the status of implementation and enforcement of laws and policies, action plans, financing and capacity to deliver programmes that end violence against women and girls by regional partners and member states. The findings and recommendations led to the development of the first evidence-based African Regional Action Plan on Ending Violence against Women and Girls. With only 26 out of 55 African Member States having national action plans on ending violence against women and girls, the regional framework provides a guiding framework for all Member States. To lay the foundation for reform of the legislative framework to protect women and girls against violence, the Spotlight Initiative in **Haiti** coordinated with the Ministry for Women Conditions and Rights to conduct a gap analysis on various legal instruments, and explore international norms related to protection of women and girls.

RESULT: Strengthened, or newly established, laws that address intersectional issues to end violence against women and girls

To ensure women and girls are able to live a life free from violence, Spotlight Initiative programmes focused on the establishment and strengthening of comprehensive legal and policy frameworks to end violence against women and girls. **Through interventions implemented by the Spotlight Initiative’s regional and country programmes, 198 laws and policies have been signed or strengthened in 2021 to address violence against women and girls or to improve gender equality and women’s empowerment in 40 countries.**⁵² Overall, since the beginning of the Spotlight Initiative, more than 300 laws across the world have been adopted or strengthened due to the Spotlight Initiative’s contributions.

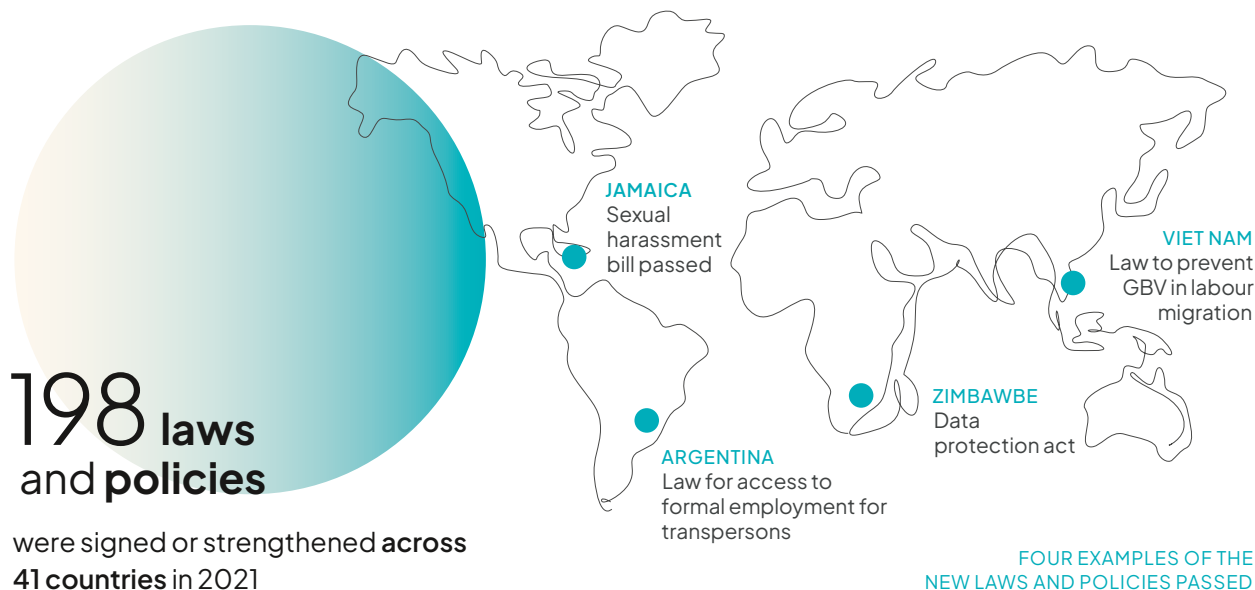
Overall, since the beginning of the Spotlight Initiative, more than 300 laws across the world have been adopted or strengthened due to the Initiative’s contributions.



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⁵² Spotlight Initiative country programmes: Argentina, Belize, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Zimbabwe. Regional Programmes: Africa RP (Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mauritania, Mozambique, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Zambia) and the Safe and Fair programme (Viet Nam, Philippines, Indonesia).

SCALING UP LEGAL PROTECTION



As previously detailed, these efforts were informed by extensive reviews and assessments, providing valuable evidence to guide new laws and to draft bills and amendments. Further, recognizing that the root causes of violence against women and girls reside in systemic and deep-rooted patriarchal and gendered norms, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the development of laws directly addressing gender-based violence, in addition to laws that more broadly protect women and girls. As such, important legislation and policies in family laws, labour laws, marriage, divorce, child custody, reproductive health access, and inheritance, to name a few, were made.

The **Safe and Fair** programme contributed to strengthening numerous laws and policies related to labour migration, including violence and (sexual) harassment in the world of work, significantly expanding and strengthening the legal framework protecting the rights of women migrant workers. For example, Safe and Fair supported the development of the Department of Migrant Workers Act (Republic Act No.11641) in the Philippines. The Act establishes a new department to regulate recruitment and service provision for overseas migrant workers regardless of their legal status, and provide reintegration and skills development for returning migrant workers. Importantly, the Act designates that gender focal points – with a specific remit to focus on ending

violence against women and girls – be instituted in Philippine missions abroad, representing the first time a major labour migration law in the Philippines includes a specific provision to address violence against women and girls (regardless of survivors' legal status). Safe and Fair also provided technical support to ASEAN countries in fulfilling their commitments to gender equality, eliminating violence against women and girls, and ensuring gender-responsive labour migration and decent work through 26 legal and policy instruments, of which 15 were adopted in 2021. Likewise in **Kyrgyzstan**, the programme collaborated on amendments to the Labour Code to counter violence and harassment in the workplace, which were initiated and published by the Parliament in May 2021 for public discussion. In **Jamaica**, the Sexual Harassment Bill was passed in the Senate in July 2021 with recommendations from the Spotlight Initiative including: redefining the work environment to protect women operating in informal sectors; expansion of protection to include clients, customers, beneficiaries, and others; and expanding the range of institutions and services to include children's homes, community spaces and sports facilities among others. In **Nigeria**, the Initiative supported the development of a revised National Gender Policy, which detailed the institutional framework for the operationalization of the Government's commitments to achieving gender equality and women's rights.

Spotlight Initiative programmes progressed on securing women's sexual and reproductive rights and health, essential to the elimination of violence against women and girls, through laws and policies. The Spotlight Initiative in **Ecuador**, for example, provided technical assistance and advocacy to the Ecuador Ombudsman and the National Assembly to include international human rights standards in the Law on the Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy in cases of rape. The passing of this law led to the Constitutional Court's decriminalization of abortion for rape in all cases and for all women without any distinction, significantly improving women's health, safety and rights. Based off an initial assessment on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in the public and private sectors, the Spotlight Initiative in **Liberia** drafted a protection from sexual exploitation and abuse policy in collaboration with the Government and partners. The protection from sexual exploitation and abuse policy outlines steps to ensure protection and end sexual exploitation and abuse in the public sector, while also serving as a model for the private sector.

In line with the principle of leaving no one behind and to protect the most vulnerable, several Spotlight Initiative programmes focused on strengthening legal protections for children, including specifically girls, as both the direct and indirect victims of violence against women and girls. In **Mexico**, the programme submitted to the state congress of Chihuahua legislative reforms that would ensure that children orphaned by femicide receive services from childcare centres, have the right to comprehensive reparations for the damages they have endured, and would have their rights and interests defended by the Office of the Procurator for Protection, the office responsible for representing girls, children and adolescents who have lost their lives as a result of a crime. The **Mozambique** programme collaborated on the design and finalization of the Children's Act, which protects children from exploitation and child labour, while in **Zimbabwe**, the national Cabinet endorsed in August 2021 two bills supported by the Spotlight Initiative, the Child's Justice Bill and the Children's Amendment Bill, which are now before Parliament for final adoption into law. In **Timor-Leste**, the programme supported the development of the Child Protection Law, to enable prevention and response to risks faced by children and families, and in **Kyrgyzstan**, the programme developed amendments to the Child Code, accompanied by a package of 17 law

amendments, which were approved by Parliament and will significantly improve the country's existing system of protection for girls and boys.

Other Spotlight Initiative programmes began the process of supporting successful advocacy efforts in the process of drafting bills to secure women and girls rights and improve protection to GBV survivors, for example in **Grenada, Niger, and Kyrgyzstan**. Spotlight Initiative in **Grenada**, having undertaken a comparative gap analysis of laws related to combatting and ending violence against women and girls, supported the drafting of five position papers (on child protection, sexual offences, domestic violence, family rights, including maintenance and property, and victims' rights reform) and 17 bills. Draft position papers and draft bills were circulated for consideration and feedback by government entities, women's rights organizations, civil society, the Bar Association, faith-based organizations and the public. The collective feedback will be used to finalize and submit the draft bills and position papers to the Cabinet for formal review and approval.

Additionally, with the vastly changing landscape of virtual and online spaces, Spotlight Initiative programmes – including the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, the Latin America Regional Programme, Belize, Honduras and Vanuatu** – have focused on protecting women and girls from online violence, including exploitation, bullying and abuse. For instance, in **Zimbabwe** the Data Protection Act was enacted. This Act, passed in December 2021, provides Zimbabwe with one of the most comprehensive legal frameworks in the southern African region for addressing online violence against women and girls. This Act includes comprehensive amendments to the criminal law that acknowledge the increased risk of online violence women and children are exposed to and it criminalizes using information and communication technology to commit these acts.

RESULT: Strengthened advocacy for legal and policy reform by key stakeholders and partners at grassroots, local, subnational and national levels

Central to the Spotlight Initiative's approach is ensuring that partners are effective advocates, supporting legal and policy reform processes to end violence against women and girls. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative worked to build the advocacy capacity of partners, including civil society, survivors, grassroots activists and government, to promote change at all levels of governance.

The **African Regional Programme, Latin America Regional Programme, and programmes in Belize, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste**, among others, facilitated innovative channels for survivors, activists, marginalized groups, and women leaders to influence legislation. In **Belize**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative facilitated virtual consultations between survivors and key government officials representing human services, police and family courts. Rural and migrant women shared experiences in accessing justice through family law legislation, seeking support and accessing essential services. These virtual consultation spaces provided an opportunity for government officials to learn, understand and respond to women and girl survivors of violence, including rural and migrant women, and to hear from communities about policy gaps.

Through the support of the programme in **Papua New Guinea**, a Special Parliamentary Committee on Gender-Based Violence was held, to lead the country's first public inquiry into gender-based violence, which gave civil society a direct avenue

to discuss the issue with policy makers. Leading government bodies and civil society actors testified on the challenges in preventing and responding to gender-based violence, advocating for legislative change and essential service delivery. This was the first occasion where the police and justice sector had to answer for inaction and the impunity with which men have taken advantage of, and instigated violence against, women and girls across the country. As a result, this opened up opportunities for advocating directly with policy makers and resulted in national funding and dedicated budgets to fund and operationalize the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat. Through these and other efforts, the Initiative **further strengthened the capacity of nearly 1,000 women's rights advocates in 2021 to draft legislation and policies that end violence against women and girls, and promote women's human rights and gender equality more broadly**. As a result, since the beginning of 2021, **42 draft laws or policies across 16 countries** were developed with significant inputs of women's rights advocates, improving the quality of legislative documents, and strengthening the effectiveness of legal remedies for survivors.

In addition to strengthening the capacity of women's rights advocates to shape laws and policies, as noted above, specific support was also provided to networks and alliances of human rights defenders in particular. Across programmes, **507 women human rights defenders were trained on the development of laws and policies, allowing them to better participate in legislative processes, including by providing substantial contributions to new laws and policies**. In 2021, **388 women human rights defenders reported having contributed to the**

DURING 2021,

29 laws and policies were developed to protect women human rights defenders



Case study:

Leveraging the collective power of women parliamentarians

Through the **Jamaica Spotlight Initiative programme**, Jamaica is establishing the women's parliamentary caucus, creating a collaborative space for all women parliamentarians – regardless of party affiliation or the chamber in which they serve – to network, engage in productive dialogue on women's rights and gender equality, and undertake actions to positively impact the inclusiveness of the legislature and legislative processes.

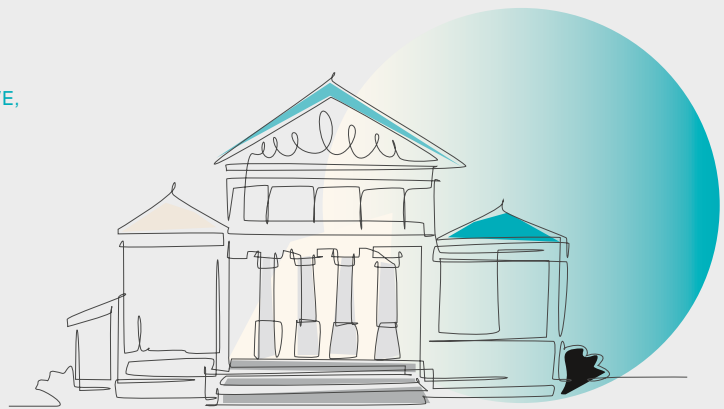
The caucus sets out to build on historic advances in women's political participation and seeks to further expand women's access to and influence in decision-making spaces, recognizing the value of collective action by women parliamentarians to advance women's rights and gender equality. Through the establishment of the caucus, women parliamentarians will receive capacity building on issues relating to violence against women and girls, the legislative framework for gender equality and the empowerment of women. As such, they'll be positioned to use their collective power to drive changes in the legal framework, including by advocating for new (or strengthening existing) legislation and ensuring its implementation.

In 12 Spotlight Initiative programmes, since the beginning of the initiative, 6,909 parliamentarians received dedicated training to advocate for, draft, strengthen and implement legislation on gender equality, non-discrimination and ending violence against women and girls.

SINCE THE BEGINNING OF SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE,

6,909
parliamentarians

are better able to support the design of laws and policies to end violence against women and girls



development of laws and policies, improving their relevance and responsiveness to marginalized groups. This work also helped to facilitate the establishment of accountability mechanisms that enhance the safety of individuals and groups advocating for women's rights, particularly those facing intersecting forms of discrimination. **As a result of this effort, and to guarantee formal legal protection, 29 laws and policies were developed to guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and women human rights**

defenders to advance human rights agendas, including in Argentina, Mali, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Samoa.

Spotlight Initiative is also working closely with existing national human rights institutions to ensure that they are involved in efforts to end violence against women and girls and are mobilized to advocate for the rights of survivors. This strategy is also aimed at strengthening the sustainability of Spotlight Initiative's interventions, considering that these actors

will remain after the end of programme activities. In 2021, 2,214 staff from human rights institutions in national and regional programmes were supported to advocate for, draft, strengthen and implement legislation on ending violence against women and girls, gender equality, and non-discrimination. In total, since 2019, the Spotlight Initiative has collaborated with close to 5,000 members of human rights institutions in Argentina, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The Initiative also extended support to other government officials to increase their understanding and awareness of human rights standards and obligations, and strengthen their capacity to develop laws and policies that protect civic space and advance gender equality and ending violence against women and girls. In 2021, 2,713 government officials in Argentina, Belize, Honduras, Liberia, Mali and Nigeria were trained, with many reporting actively participating in the development of laws and policies following the training. Since the beginning of the Initiative, 5,668 government officials – including 2,358 women – contributed to legislative and policy processes that have the potential to advance the rights of women and girls and end violence against women and girls.

In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative focused on strengthening community leaders, informal and formal legislators and improving their legal literacy on sexual and gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights to develop bylaws using national bylaw guidelines. As a result of these efforts, seven draft bylaws, focused on sexual and gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights and child marriage, were developed, abolishing or amending 18 harmful traditional practices. Likewise, in **Niger**, the programme identified 50 “gender lawyers” to serve as champions in the fight against violence towards women and girls and harmful practices, and provided them with a gender-specific toolkit for legal reform to support their advocacy. Additionally, nearly 4,000 community champions have been trained to support social mobilization and advocacy for policy reforms. These community champions reached nearly 5,000 people, the large majority of whom were women and young people. In total 4,800 people (499 men, 2,130 women, and 2,171 young people), improved their knowledge on the negative impact of gender-based violence and the need for future reforms to protect women and girls against gender-based violence.

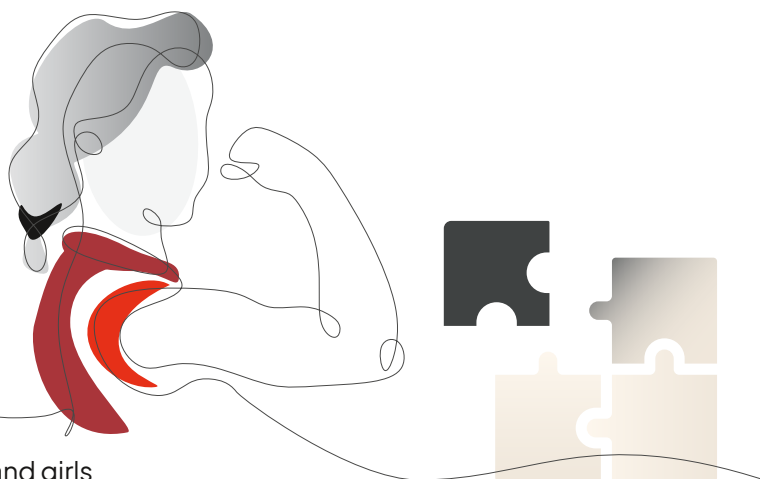


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HIGH-LEVEL COMMITMENT

43

countries strengthened their **National Action Plans** to eliminate violence against women and girls



Pillar 2: Institutions

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

Institutions play a critical role in ensuring that laws and policies are implemented and adequately funded. Addressing violence against women and girls requires a multisectoral, multi-layered, and coordinated approach across all levels and branches of government and ministries. This ensures that efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls are systematically addressed across plans, policies, budgets and activities and that responses are efficient and effective, responding to community needs.

RESULT: More countries integrating ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices into sector development plans, and having developed or strengthened national action plans on eliminating violence against women and girls

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

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

National action plans support a relevant and comprehensive response to violence against women and girls, demonstrating government accountability to rights holders and a commitment to international treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the development and strengthening of national

action plans to eliminate violence against women and girls and gender equality more broadly in 43 countries, with many reporting that their national action plans met at least three out of the following six criteria: evidence-based; costed; funded; has a developed monitoring and evaluation framework;

responds to the rights of all women and girls; and is developed in a participatory manner. Spotlight Initiative teams worked with government, civil society and national stakeholders (including EU Delegations) to ensure that national action plans were aligned to international standards.

Countries that have national evidence-based, costed and funded action plans and M&E frameworks on VAWG/HP that respond to the rights of all women and girls and are developed in a participatory manner			
Programme	2019	2020	2021
Belize		●○○○○○●	●●○○●●●●
Ecuador			●○○●●●●●
Africa RP			●●●●●●●●
Grenada		●○○○○●●●	●○○○○●●●
Guyana		-	○○○○●○○○
Haiti		-	●○○○○○○○
Kyrgyzstan		○○○○●●●●	●●●●○○●●
Papua New Guinea		-	●●●●●●●●
Samoa		●●○○●●●●	●●○○●●●○
Tajikistan			●○○○○○○○
Safe and Fair		○○○○●●●●	●○○○○○○○
Timor-Leste		○●●●●○○●	●●●●○○●●
Trinidad and Tobago		●●○○○○○●	●●○○○○○●
Argentina	●●●●●●●●	●●●●●●●●	●●●●●●●●
El Salvador	●○○○●●●●	●●●●●●●●	●●○○●●●●
Honduras	●○○○○○○○		●●○○●○○●
Liberia	●●○○○○●●	●●●●●●●●	
Malawi	●●●●●●●●	●●●●●●●●	●●●●●●●●
Mali	●●●●○○●●	●●●●○○●●	●●●●●●●●
Niger	●●○○●●●●	●●○○●●●●	●○○○○●●●
Nigeria	○○○○○○○●	-	-
Zimbabwe	●○○○●●●●	○●●○○○○○	●●○○●●●●

● Evidence-based ● Costed ● Funded ● M&E framework ● Rights of all women & girls ● Participatory Development
 - Does not apply/there is no plan

Spotlight Initiative contributed to stronger national action plans and development plans through multi-stakeholder collaborations in many countries: in the **Safe and Fair** programme (Malaysia), countries in the **Caribbean and the Central Asia and Afghanistan regional programmes** and in **Argentina, El Salvador, Grenada, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe**. For example, beginning in 2021, in **Grenada**, the Spotlight Initiative supported updating the action plan of the National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan (2014–2024). The policy and action plan supports monitoring of public institutions to enable effective implementation and to ensure violence against women and girls is prevented, detected and addressed. Similarly, building from work in 2020, during 2021, the Initiative in **Zimbabwe** and the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** provided technical and financial support to develop and implement national action plans to end child marriage, while the **Africa Regional Programme** provided technical assistance to ten countries (**Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe**) to launch costed, evidence-based national action plans to end child marriage, along with monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

In addition to developing national action plans, Spotlight Initiative programmes strengthened their implementation through decentralization mechanisms, supporting the ownership of these at subnational and municipal and provincial levels through plans and strategies. **Over the last year, 212 strategies, plans, or programmes were developed by government and non-governmental institutions to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls across 20 countries. This is three times as many as were developed in 2020, contributing to a total of 326 since the beginning of the Initiative.**

Spotlight Initiative programmes in, for example, **Argentina, El Salvador, Grenada, Papua New Guinea, Jamaica and Timor-Leste** all supported deepened decentralization of national action plans, strengthening their local relevance and responsiveness, including by ensuring the perspectives of a range of stakeholders were integrated into decentralization processes. In **Argentina**, for example, Spotlight Initiative supported the development of civil society organization



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consultative bodies, engaging more than 4800 people with diverse identities to give feedback on the development of a provincial plan to eradicate violence that addressed women’s and girls’ specific needs in Buenos Aires: the Buenos Aires Equality Plan for Inclusion and Social Justice. This ensured that a diverse range of voices and perspectives were heard in relation to the development of the provincial plan, supporting the principle of leaving no one behind. Also, supporting the principle of leaving no one behind in implementation, the Spotlight Initiative in **Timor-Leste** held national meetings that included people with disabilities and LGBTI+ groups on coordination, communication and referral mechanisms related to violence against women and girls, which contributed to substantial advancements in their national action plan.

In addition to supporting the development of national action plans on violence against women and girls specifically, programmes also ensured that ending violence against women and girls was integrated into other sectoral and national action plans including those related to education, health, justice and migration. In 2021, 90 policies, strategies and sectoral planning efforts in 13 countries were developed with the participation of key actors and partners of the Spotlight Initiative, with more than 160 developed since the start of the Initiative. Employing a whole-

90 new strategies, plans and programmes that integrate VAWG were developed across 6 sectors



HEALTH



EDUCATION



JUSTICE



SECURITY



SOCIAL SERVICES



CULTURE

2021	10	6	19	6	45	4
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of-government approach helps ensure that efforts to ending violence against women and girls are more sustainable. It also helps increase political buy-in and the engagement of decision-makers who may not traditionally engage with these topics, expanding the opportunities for national investment in ending violence against women and girls. These efforts have also accelerated progress in Pillar 4: more than 20 million women and 7 million girls accessed programmes and services in **health, education and migration that integrated efforts to end violence against women and girls.**

In 2021, innovative approaches were also used to integrate issues of violence against women and girls into disaster response and preparedness. In the **Caribbean region**, for example, for the first time, significant progress was made in integrating violence against women and girls and family violence into the disaster reduction response process and COVID-19 response plans. In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative and the Ministry of Gender supported advocacy to continue to ensure that a response to gender-based violence was integrated into the national COVID-19 response strategy, given the significant increase in violence due to lockdowns.

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

Spotlight Initiative programmes focused on strengthening existing, or creating new, institutional mechanisms that foster a coherent multisectoral approach to addressing violence against women and

girls and providing appropriate responses. Nearly half of Spotlight Initiative programmes – including in **Afghanistan, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe** – have either established or strengthened multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms in line with international standards.⁵³

In **Nigeria**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative advocated to increase the status and influence of the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team by turning it into a State government agency. This government agency is the first of its kind institutionalizing a State response to gender-based violence and represents a key advancement in commitment to women and girls' rights and equality, while elevating the prominence of addressing gender-based violence on the national agenda. To prioritize rights protection for women and girls, the **Liberia** programme mobilized government and top legal officials to establish a gender and human rights desk at the Law Reform Commission. The desk mainstreams human rights and gender into national policies and law reform processes, and prioritizes initiatives relating to women and girls. In **Timor-Leste**, the Initiative supported the creation of an Inter-Ministerial Commission designed to provide oversight on the national action plan report on violence against women and girls submitted to parliament annually, on which three civil society organizations sit.

Gender mainstreaming was used as a strategy to strengthen institutions (and institutional mechanisms) to better advance gender equality and address violence against women and girls, including in the **Caribbean Regional Programme, Latin America Regional Programme, Ecuador, and Tajikistan.**

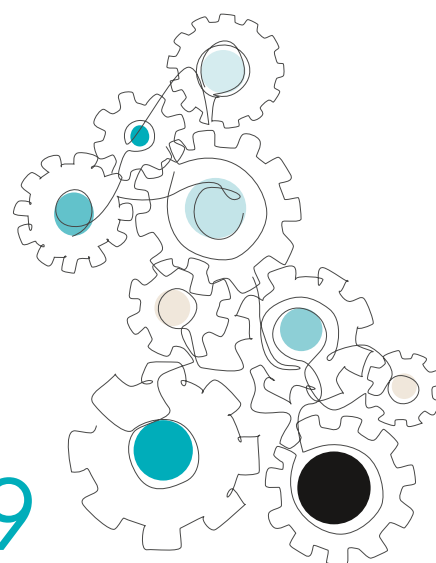
⁵³ To be aligned with international standards means, among other things: to be established at the highest level, and be composed of relevant stakeholders; to have a clear mandate and governance structure; and to develop and implement annual workplans.

These programmes focused on establishing gender mainstreaming strategies within institutions to ensure that the issue of violence against women and girls is meaningfully integrated throughout government. In **Tajikistan**, for example, a gender mainstreaming strategy was developed for the Committee on Women and Family Affairs and select ministries such as the Ministry of Justice. The strategy is expected to promote increased access to decision-making positions for women in state institutions and ensure stronger skills amongst staff to better integrate the elimination of violence against women and girls in policies, and better support access to services. The programme in **Ecuador** launched the process to implement the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Gender Seal, adapted for Spotlight Initiative, with the Secretariat for Human Rights and the National Mechanism for Women and Equality. With accreditation expected in 2022, the Gender Seal aims to ensure that all ministries and municipalities embed a strong gender lens in their programming, policies and practice, and have a better understanding of their role in the implementation of the Law to End Violence against Women.

In a variety of Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as **Belize**, **Guyana**, and **Uganda**, and extensively in the **Safe and Fair** programme, the private sector was engaged as a strategic stakeholder to mainstream gender in order to end violence against women and girls. In 2021, for example, Spotlight Initiative in **Guyana** engaged an expert to implement the Women's Empowerment Principles, a framework to mainstream and promote gender equality in institutions such as the workplace, marketplace and within wider society. The initial consultations were conducted in 2021, and companies are expected to become signatories to the Women's Empowerment Principles. Gender action plans are to be developed in early 2022, detailing the fair treatment of all employees, and promoting safe and healthy workplaces. Similarly, with the support of the **Latin America Regional Programme**, companies in Colombia, Honduras, Panama, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica participated in the pilot

programme "Violence Against Women in the Private Sector" and, as a result, ended up developing and putting in place action plans to address VAW within their work environment. The programme identified existing organizational practices in terms of prevention, care and punishment of violence, prevalence of cases of VAW through a multi-thematic survey addressed to the staff and a technical group of each company and delivered tailored indicators and recommendations.

As described above, Spotlight Initiative programmes have established and strengthened multi-stakeholder institutional coordination mechanisms to coherently address violence against women and girls. Experience shows that the inclusion of survivors' perspectives in establishing or strengthening these mechanisms makes a critical difference, better ensuring a survivor-centred and human-rights based approach, and more effectively responding to the needs of women and girls. **All nine countries that developed new coordination mechanisms with the support of Spotlight Initiative included representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination on these mechanisms.**⁵⁴



Across **9** countries,

multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms now include **representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination**

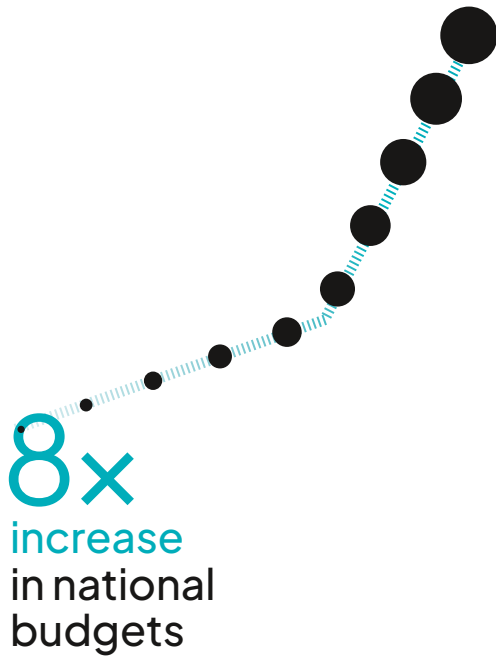
⁵⁴ The nine countries are: Argentina, El Salvador, Grenada, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Nigeria and Papua New Guinea. In Grenada, in particular, the coordinating mechanism's structure has been developed, with the mechanism expected to be formed in 2022.

Status of multi-stakeholder national coordination mechanisms (2021)				
	Established at the highest level	Composed of relevant stakeholders	With a clear mandate and governance structure	With annual work plans
Grenada				
Guyana	●	●	●	
Haiti				
Jamaica				
Kyrgyzstan				
Papua New Guinea	●	●	●	●
Tajikistan				
Timor-Leste	●			
Trinidad and Tobago	●	●	●	
Argentina	●	●	●	●
El Salvador	●	●	●	●
Honduras	●	●	●	
Mexico	●	●	●	●
Liberia	●	●		
Malawi	●	●	●	●
Mali	●	●	●	●
Mozambique	●	●	●	●
Nigeria	●	●	●	●
Uganda	●	●	●	●
Zimbabwe	●	●	●	●

RESULT: More countries engaging in gender-responsive budgeting activities to eliminate violence against women and girls and increasing budget lines for this work

Gender-responsive budgeting helps ensure that programmes and services that address violence against women and girls are adequately financed and are monitored for full implementation. **In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes saw a 32 per cent increase in national resources invested to eliminate violence against women and girls.** On average 0.67 per cent of the national budgets of Haiti, Liberia,

Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Timor-Leste and Uganda were dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. **Since the beginning of the Initiative, allocations to end violence against women and girls have increased eight-fold, with 70 per cent of targeted countries maintaining or increasing budget allocations to ending violence against women and girls.** In the Pacific region, the Spotlight Initiative supported the costing of efforts to mainstream gender in their plans and programmes in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Solomon Islands, as well as assess the impact of violence against women and girls.



to address violence against women and girls since the start of Spotlight Initiative

During the 2021 reporting period, 16 countries prioritized gender-responsive budgeting-related activities, including in **the Caribbean Regional Programme, Argentina, Haiti, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Liberia, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zimbabwe**. Other Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the capacity of ministries and civil society actors to monitor government budgets and advocate for dedicated resources for gender equality. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative in **Niger**, for example, engaged 110 deputies in the National Assembly in capacity building, supporting knowledge development related to gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming. This capacity building resulted in a resolution signed by parliamentarians that ensured that gender would be accounted for in the country's plans, budgets and policies.

In **Haiti**, the programme is developing capacity-building tools, such as guides to support training for ministries in gender-responsive budgeting, and a methodological tool for monitoring and reporting on the national or subnational gender budgets, supporting gender-responsive budgeting within the budget and state reform processes. Civil society actors are critical to monitoring national budgets and to ensuring that efforts to end violence against women and girls are adequately costed and funded. As such, Spotlight Initiative programming in many countries supported civil society organizations' and women's rights advocates' training in gender-responsive budgeting as a key strategy for institutional strengthening, and ensuring the needs of marginalised communities were reflected, including in **Jamaica, Liberia, Timor-Leste and Uganda**. Taken together, **913 parliamentarians, 2,639 government officials and 885 women's rights advocates** were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and are, as a result, able to better advocate for the allocation of resources for ending violence against women and girls.

Complementing gender-responsive budgeting efforts, Spotlight Initiative also advocated for national resourcing of plans and programmes to end violence against women and girls. As a result, in 2021, **68 per cent of national programmes developed with support of the Initiative include proposed financial allocations by national or local governments for gender equality or ending violence against women and girls (10 per cent higher than in 2020)**.⁵⁵ Similarly, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported advocacy for dedicated budget lines within national budgets to advance gender equality and eliminate violence against women and girls. The government of **Liberia**, for example, committed USD 380,000 in the draft financial year 2022 national budget to support institutionalizing gender-responsive budgeting in nine ministries. In **Uganda**, 15 gender-based violence shelters were supported in the national budget with USD 154,600 dedicated to refurbishing local gender-based violence shelters in Amudat, Arua and Terego districts. Additionally, the programme in Uganda strengthened the capacity of 29 officials from 11 ministries, departments and agencies and 149 local

⁵⁵ 23 of the 34 national programmes developed (68%) in 2021 with support of Spotlight Initiative include proposed allocations by national or local governments for gender equality or ending violence against women and girls.

district government officials to better mainstream the issue of gender-based violence in plans and budgets. As a result, the Kampala district allocated capital for community mobilization and norms-change related to gender-based violence in the financial year 2021/2022 budget. In **Papua New Guinea**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the establishment of the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat and, as a result of collective advocacy, the national budget allocated USD 1.4 million for the National Secretariat programming. By increasing the commitment of national actors to ending violence against women and girls – and reflecting this in national budgets – Spotlight Initiative is supporting the sustainability of efforts to end violence against women and girls.

68% of dedicated and multi-sectoral programmes developed in 2021 include a proposed allocation of funds



Case Study:

The power of Spotlight Initiative’s technical assistance, United Nations coordination, and advocacy for gender budgets

Timor-Leste saw a drastic reduction in funding dedicated to gender equality, from 0.6 per cent of the budget (USD 10.4 million) in 2019 to 0.1 per cent of the budget (USD 1.4 million) in 2020. To respond to this, Spotlight Initiative engaged a gender expert to support advocacy in parliament for greater funding for women’s human rights and ending violence against women and girls. Due to this advocacy, a 247 per cent increase in the budget was seen from 2021 to 2022. Specifically, 12.18 per cent (or USD 203,784,892) of the 2022 state budget was allocated to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion, as a result of advocacy from Spotlight Initiative partners and other partners such as the UNDP team from the Portuguese-speaking African countries (UNDP-PALOP) team, who supported a gender analysis of budgets. This underscores the importance of Spotlight Initiative’s technical assistance, as well as UN Reform and coordination across multiple United Nations agencies to leverage their strengths.

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

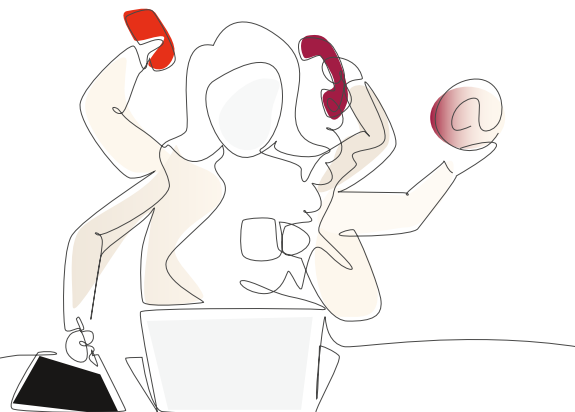
Spotlight Initiative placed a focus on raising awareness and strengthening the capacity of decision-makers in key institutions – including ministries, the judiciary, village leaders and local police – on the issue of violence against women and girls, improving their ability to prevent and respond to it. **In this context, with the support of**

nine Spotlight Initiative programmes, 5,415 key government officials, including 3,420 women, strengthened their capacities to develop and deliver programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

In 2021, training and capacity building of duty bearers occurred in many Spotlight Initiative programmes including the **Latin America Regional Programme, Belize, Nigeria, Liberia, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago**. In **Nigeria**, for example, capacity building

Over 800 parliamentarians and 2,000 staff of human rights institutions

are better able to advocate for, draft, strengthen and implement legislation on ending violence against women and girls, gender equality and non-discrimination



interventions focused on training 128 state police officers, the staff of human rights institutions, the justice sector, and prosecutors to investigate and respond to sexual violence and gender-based crimes against women and girls. Concomitantly, standard operating procedures integrating service provision for sexual violence or violence against women and girls and harmful practices were also developed, and referral pathways in Lagos State were strengthened, in collaboration with the Lagos State Office for Disability Affairs. In the **Latin America Regional Programme**, a joint action plan to train health personnel in preventing gender-based violence and ensuring human rights resulted from a

dialogue between the Ministries of Women and the Ministries of Education and Culture of the subregion of Central America.

Through the **Caribbean Regional Programme**, six countries made progress in strengthening the capacities of leaders in the Gender Bureaux and their awareness of violence against women and girls, including, specifically, family violence and its connections to women's economic rights. In 2021, consultations were held with gender machinery leads in, for example, **Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago**. Consultations revealed a strong request to better understand the links between violence



©Spotlight Initiative Tajikistan

Since 2019,

59 training institutions for public servants in twelve countries

integrated gender equality and VAWG
in their curriculum



against women and girls and economic rights, with programmes planning to conduct capacity-building sessions as well as strengthen programming in 2022 to address this.

Spotlight Initiative also targeted training institutions and universities involved in the education of decision-makers and civil servants across its programmes, including in **El Salvador, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**. These efforts included the design of specific curriculums focused on the elimination of violence, harmful practices and discrimination, the integration of key case-studies within syllabuses, and the inclusion of experts, activists and survivors of violence in training processes. **In 2021 alone, 35 institutions involved in the training and certification of civil servants and service providers added the issue of violence against women and girls to their curriculum with the support of Spotlight Initiative and a total of 59 institutions across 12 countries have added this issue to their curriculum since 2019.** In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, the Initiative supported a team of gender experts to develop a training of trainers

on gender mainstreaming and the prevention of gender-based violence for university lecturers. University staff from Arabayev Kyrgyz State University and International University of Kyrgyzstan, as well as representatives from the Social Development Department under the Ministry of Social Security and Migration and other experts on gender attended the training. Following it, many participants expressed their intent to integrate the prevention of gender-based violence into their universities' curriculums. In addition to "pre-service" training efforts, the Spotlight Initiative also provided a wide-range of "in-service" programmes, allowing current civil servants and decision-makers to strengthen their capacities to end violence against women and girls. Across ten Spotlight Initiative programmes, **a total of 5,733 key government officials have increased their knowledge and capacities on human rights and gender-equitable norms and on attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination. Since the beginning of the Initiative, close to 15,000 civil servants have been trained using this "in-service" training approach.**

COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE

Nearly
130 million people

were reached through campaigns in
at least **29 languages**



Pillar 3: Prevention

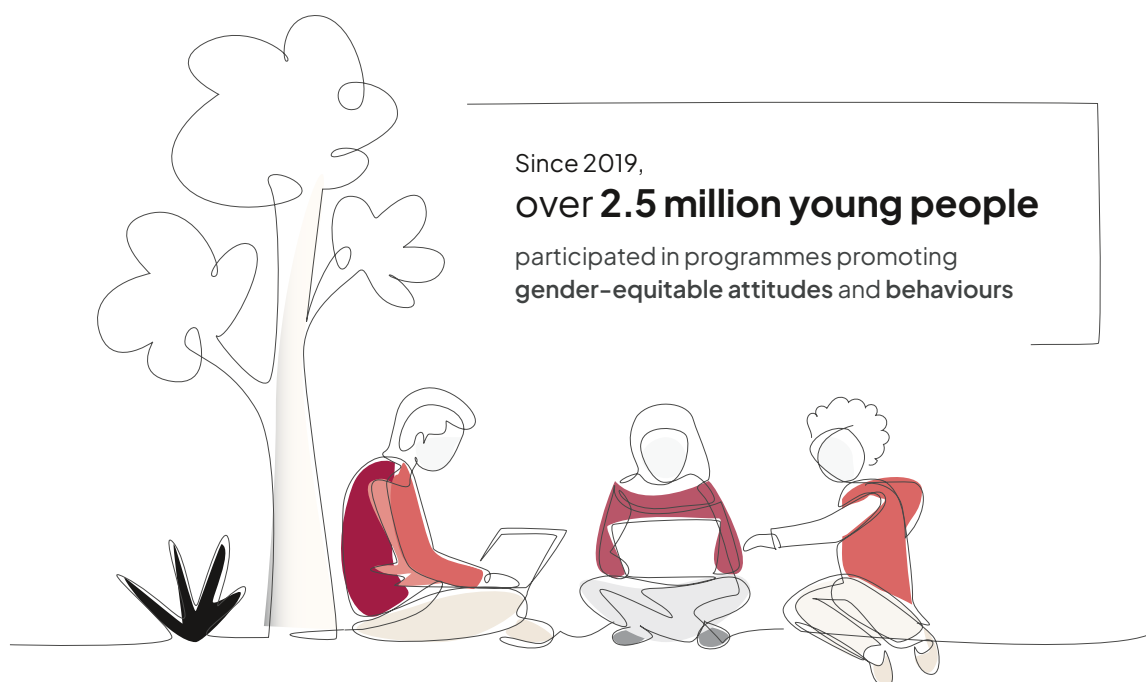
Gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices.

Shifting social norms and behaviours is a long-term change effort that often has a non-linear trajectory. This is because at the heart of behavioural change is the need to shift deeply entrenched beliefs, attitudes, and practices that may find support in different communities or contexts. This is why Spotlight Initiative places a focus on addressing the underlying systems and structures that perpetuate violence and reproduce stereotypes, biases and discrimination. **With support from Spotlight Initiative, 60 per cent of targeted countries (five more countries than in 2020) have at least three**

evidence-based, transformative, comprehensive prevention strategies or programmes that are focused on uprooting the drivers of violence against women and girls, and a total of 5733 key government officials, including 3793 women, demonstrated increased knowledge of, and ability to advance, human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination.

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

- Developing curriculums to educate and spread norms of equality
- Influential public campaigns and engaged media to better contribute to ending violence against women and girls
- Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviour, including by engaging men and boys, traditional leaders, parents and youth peers



RESULT: Developing curriculums to educate and spread norms of equality

One of the most important first steps to changing social norms is producing tools designed to educate and raise awareness of violence against women and girls and harmful practices, and resources that promote the importance of gender equality. Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **the Caribbean and the Latin America regional programmes, Argentina, Belize, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Mali, Malawi, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu**, engaged in diverse efforts to build curriculums and learning tools that raise awareness for a variety of settings, including in- and out-of-school settings, in communities, in religious spaces, at home, in businesses, and in government agencies. For example the **Latin America Regional Programme** collaborated with PROMUNDO and the non-governmental organization “*Cultura EME – Salud de los Hombres*” to systemize efforts to work with male aggressors to end violence against women and girls, documenting programmes that were working in order to inform future curriculum development and programme efforts. During the reporting period, with Spotlight Initiative support, over 1.2 million young people – including **604,218 girls** – were reached through in- and out-of-school programmes that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, helping them exercise their rights, with more than 2.5 million young people reached since

the beginning of the Initiative. Spotlight Initiative programmes also contributed to strengthening comprehensive sexuality education curricula by ensuring these are in line with international standards, including in **Argentina, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Uganda, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe**.

The **Caribbean Regional Programme**, for example, focused on the integration of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in the formal school curriculum in alignment with international standards. In addition, out-of-school guidance for the Caribbean was adopted and the Caribbean Toolkit for civil society organizations was developed to ensure that marginalized youth and those most vulnerable have access to this information. The Spotlight Initiative in **Belize** worked with the Belize Family Life Association, increasing the number of young people, both boys and girls, who engaged in comprehensive sexuality education awareness-raising through peer education, using the comprehensive sexuality education manual to train 80 community-level peer educators, particularly in rural communities. In 2021, these community-level comprehensive sexuality education trainers reached 328 out-of-school youth and 51 teachers and social workers, who then promoted gender-equitable norms and attitudes and had better awareness of reproductive rights and how to end violence against women and girls.



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Through a subregional partnership with COMMCA/ SICA (Consejo de Ministras de la Mujer de la región Centroamericana – Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana) and el Consejo de Ministerios de Educación y Culturas (CECC), the **Latin America Regional Programme** supported the integration of women’s human rights in the education system across Central America. In coordination with the Education and Women’s Ministries of Central America, a capacity development strategy was developed. Titled the Women’s Human Rights Program for pre-primary and primary levels, the strategy covers the member countries of Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA), and has reached over 40 directors and teachers in schools across seven countries. Integrating women’s human rights into curriculum is expected to contribute to more equal societies free of violence against women and girls.

Working with a model of peer education, Spotlight Initiative in **Nigeria** reached 20,921 women and girls and boys and men through 14 youth networks through schools. Participants learned more about their health and dignity and how to develop healthy and respectful relationships, and were linked to health services related to reproductive health and sexual violence and violence against women and girls. In **Jamaica**, in order to shift attitudes that perpetuate

harmful sexual and gender norms, Spotlight Initiative has made a concerted effort across Pillars 2, 3 and 4 and beyond to develop the capacity of frontline service providers and civil society organizations by including the issue of violence against women and girls in service providers’ training curriculums as well as the Health and Family Life Education curriculum. This was further strengthened by concrete advancement of the revision of laws that increase penalties for offences against women and children under Pillar 1, specifically. These collective, comprehensive efforts support an environment that is conducive to the holistic protection of women and girls and to ensuring sustainability of efforts.

Operating in tertiary education and through religious institutions, Spotlight Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** supported the development and implementation of gender-transformative curriculums for professors in three universities’ legal departments as a mechanism to educate college students and professors on the prevention of violence against women and girls and how to respond to it. In addition, the Initiative also worked with *madrassahs* (religious schools) to integrate modules on positive masculinities into their curricula.

RESULT: More influential public campaigns and engaged media to eliminate violence against women and girls

The Spotlight Initiative leverages the media (for example, radio, printed publications and social media) through targeted behavioural-change campaigns. Building from evidence, campaigns aim to reach a diverse set of audiences with messages about the importance of equality, and how to recognize and respond to violence against women and girls. **Over the course of 2021, 157 campaigns were launched across 24 countries, reaching more than 128 million people (more than the population of Mexico or Japan and twice as much as the population of France) with locally designed messages and behaviour-change methodologies, in at least 29 different languages.** In 2021, Spotlight Initiative campaigns were launched in **the regional programmes of the Caribbean and Central Asia and Afghanistan**, as well as in **Belize, Ecuador, Guyana, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste and Trinidad and Tobago**, and contributed to raising awareness of violence against women and girls as a violation of human rights, challenging harmful social norms and practices. Spotlight Initiative programmes leveraged a variety of different public events and holidays to spread campaign messages, for example timing campaigns with the 16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women and Girls. In **Ecuador**, a prevention campaign called **#EseTipoNo** was launched, and reached over two million people, raising awareness of femicide, and challenging harmful social norms that violate women's human rights and rights to safety.

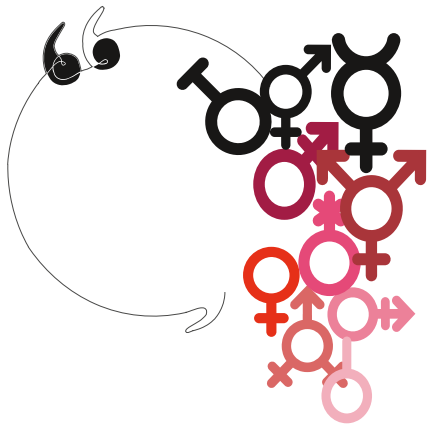
The Spotlight Initiative programme in **Nigeria** leveraged social media, television and radio call-in shows as a means to communicate awareness of violence against women and girls during COVID-19 and generated significant attention. Radio jingles were produced on gender stereotyping and transforming negative norms of gender discrimination in local languages, indirectly reaching over four million people. In **Guyana**, a Spotlight Initiative partner launched the *"Efe Taka Mata Kopa"* (Change It Up) campaign to educate the community on how to keep violence against women and girls out of the community through behaviour change. Launched in a local language, the campaign enjoyed greater circulation and improved resonance. In **Belize**,

Spotlight Initiative made significant progress in 2021, forging partnerships between the Government and civil society organizations and supporting the development of the country's first National Social and Behaviour Change Communication Strategy. Developed to improve coordination among, and uptake of, the multiple campaigns and programmes designed to shift social norms and behaviours, the strategy details evidence-based prevention campaigns and programmes, and outlines shared national messages and prevention interventions.

Over the reporting period, many Spotlight Initiative programmes also engaged religious communities through their campaigns, such as in **Afghanistan**, and **Nigeria** and through the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**. In **Afghanistan**, for example, the Initiative partnered with legal experts to discuss religious law and its links with the protection of women in a number of television and radio sessions, reaching over 21,000 men, women and children. While the impact of the sessions are not fully known and it is likely to not be continued in the future under the Taliban, generally, ensuring such perspectives are reflected in religious law is critical to public discourse and awareness around women's rights and gender equality.

Alongside the work to promote community mobilization, and the effort to challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence, these campaigns contributed to raising awareness, promoting discussion and social-norms change, and increasing knowledge of services and laws. While it is difficult to capture the full impact of these campaigns, across 19 countries, **Spotlight Initiative programmes noted that close to 2.8 million women and girl survivors of violence reported an increased knowledge of quality essential services and longer-term recovery services.**

Using other creative communication strategies to reach youth, Spotlight Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** saw further impact from their game, "Spring in Bishkek", which aims to educate players and increase awareness of and prevent early marriage. The game saw a significant increase in downloads in 2021, 161,269 times with 3,096 users, receiving a rating of 5.0 out of 5.0. Evidence from review meetings suggests that three girls acted to prevent marriage



SINCE THE START OF THE INITIATIVE

610 news outlets

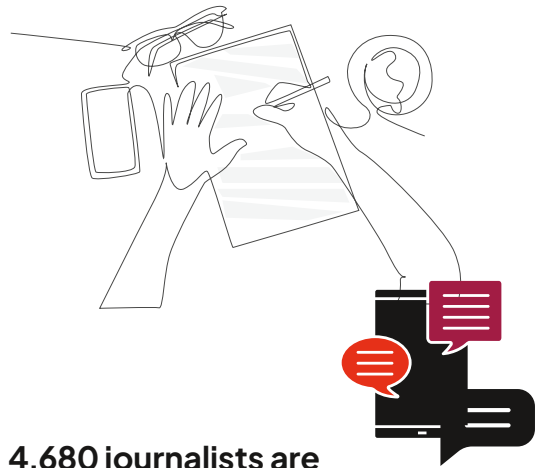
adopted standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting

after playing the game, and anecdotal evidence suggests some girls felt a stronger sense of autonomy and a greater voice, feeling their perspective had been heard.

Spotlight Initiative also acknowledges the central role of journalists and their contribution to public discourse and the potential of this group to change existing narratives so that they are more favourable about those who uphold and advance women's rights and gender equality. **Through the support of six Spotlight Initiative programmes in 2021, 134 news outlets have peer-validated news and media standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting. They join more than 600 media houses engaged by the Initiative that committed to better reporting on violence against women and girls.**⁵⁶

Eight Spotlight Initiative programmes also organized trainings for journalists, and nearly 5,000 journalists are now better equipped to sensitively report on concepts related to gender, gender equality and violence against women and girls. These trainings also contributed to the development of 1,089 news stories across various media channels (print, online and broadcast). Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, and Uganda,**

⁵⁶ For example, see this [story](#).



4,680 journalists are better equipped

to sensitively report on concepts related to gender, gender equality more broadly and violence against women and girls

among others, focused on enhancing responsible reporting from a gender-responsive and equality lens. For example, in **Uganda**, Spotlight Initiative, together with partners, developed “A Guide for Media on Gender-Sensitive Gender-Based Violence Reporting” to strengthen gender-responsive reporting and address issues of violence against women and girls without stereotyping. As a result of training media and journalists, the vast majority (70%) reported better knowledge of concepts related to gender and gender-based violence, and most (65%) increased their reporting and writing on issues related to violence against women and girls in the country and community. A significant success was seen with the Northern Uganda Media Group, which discouraged violence against women and girls through their channels. They also offered free air time for leaders to discuss women's rights, providing a critical platform for narrative-shifting public conversations.

RESULT: Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviour, including engaging men and boys, traditional leaders, parents and peers

To shift gendered norms, attitudes and behaviours to promote equality and prevent violence, Spotlight Initiative programmes used the behavioural change and programming principles set out below:

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



ACROSS PROGRAMMES, COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION EFFORTS DIRECTLY REACHED OVER

2,000,000 community members

through dialogues and interpersonal conversations

Behavioural-change research has shown the power that influential leaders, and people that share similar characteristics, can have to the process of change. In addition, for norms to change towards greater equality, the community must be involved, and social influence is a critical part of a normative change process. This is why significant funding for Spotlight Initiative is dedicated to this Pillar, given its centrality to sustainable structural, institutional and community change.

Spotlight Initiative programmes employed a number of strategies to shift social norms, including engaging the broader community, as well as parents and traditional leaders, and using peer-to-peer training or mentoring programmes. Grounded in community engagement, and with **Spotlight Initiative support, over 1,400 villages and communities across 17 Spotlight Initiative programmes established advocacy platforms to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours.** Aimed at transforming collective norms and stereotypes and promoting behaviour change, community mobilization efforts – including through community dialogues – reached more than **2 million community members in 2021, with nearly 4.5 million community members participating in community dialogues since the start of the Initiative.**

In **Mozambique**, for example, community dialogues or meetings to spread information to end violence against women and girls supported over 13,000 people to access legal knowledge on service options related to gender-based violence through the Institute for Legal Assistance and Representation. In **Belize**, over 2,000 women, girls, men and boys regularly attended community programmes promoting gender equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including sessions on family violence resulting in increased awareness of and advocacy for protection and access to services.

Peer-to-peer mentoring was used as a strategy by many Spotlight Initiative programmes, including **the Safe and Fair** programme and programmes in **Malawi** and **Uganda**. In **the Safe and Fair** programme in **Cambodia** and **Thailand**, peer educators were trained on safe migration, financial literacy and

issues of trafficking and violence against women, which they shared with 1,897 potential, current and returnee migrant workers in 2021. The programme was seen as a success as it was reported that the knowledge gained from the peer networks allowed many returnee migrants to decide to stay in their community instead of emigrating.

All stakeholders, including the primary perpetrators of violence and allies in the fight to end violence, must be meaningfully engaged to shift social norms. For that reason, Spotlight Initiative engages in substantive work with men and boys, and traditional and influential leaders, including in the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, Argentina, Belize, Ecuador, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda.**



WITH SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE SUPPORT,

1,402 villages and communities

developed advocacy platforms for the prevention of violence

Building collective power and shifting community norms through safe space mentorship

In **Malawi**, a model of creating safe spaces for girls paired with mentoring yielded significant transformative results and shifts in social norms and practices in communities. In 2021, the safe space mentorship sessions reached over 12,000 girls and raised awareness on violence against women and girls, reproductive health and rights and harmful practices like child marriage. These sessions also supported the girls' access to resources and services. Significant results were reported for these mentorship sessions and safe spaces. For example: 1600 girls avoided unwanted pregnancy through accessing family planning; 959 girls returned to school; 682 girls got help after experiencing sexual and gender-based violence, and 480 girls and young women reported cases of domestic violence to their mentors or authorities.

The collective power of girls and young women to demand cultures of justice, equality and accountability has been evidenced through changes at the community level, as well (in addition to individual level changes in girls' lives). For example, the safe space programme made a significant impact on community reporting of gender-based violence cases: 3 per cent of all cases were reported by girls and young women in safe space mentorship programmes.

Safe space girls also held 48 meetings with traditional leaders to address issues of inequality and abuse in their community. In the Mzimba district, safe space girls banded together and were successful in advocating for the arrest and prosecution of an abusive chief. This example shows the importance of empowering girls with information, access to resources and collective power to build protective networks from backlash and stigmatization and establish external allies in the local and national communities that Spotlight Initiative supports.



Over
1.3 million men and boys were educated on:

Non-violent
conflict
resolution



Positive
masculinity



Respectful
family relationships
and parenting



In 2021, over 1.3 million men and boys attended community programmes and gender transformative activities – in community centres, schools and other relevant spaces – to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, and address violent masculinities. In nine Spotlight Initiative programmes, this was done through the formation of 62 men and boys’ networks, which actively challenge harmful beliefs and practices and promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls.



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As mentioned, many Spotlight Initiative programmes engaged traditional and influential leaders, including public figures and religious leaders, to end violence against women and girls in 2021, including in **the Pacific Regional Programme, Afghanistan, Guyana, Liberia, Nigeria, and Uganda**. In **Nigeria**, for example, traditional faith leaders announced the abolition of female genital mutilation in Ndiebor Amadi, a community in Abakaliki local government area of Ebonyi State. In addition, the traditional ruler of Kurudu passed an order criminalizing violence against women and girls in any form, and noted that prosecution would take place in alignment with laws and perpetrators would be handed over to the police. These outcomes were achieved through critical awareness-raising and advocacy initiatives supported by Spotlight Initiative, national partners and other agencies.

Similarly, in **Afghanistan**, the programme engaged 280 religious leaders in trainings on ending violence against women and girls and early marriage in their communities, with an emphasis on their roles as key community influencers in addressing these issues.⁵⁷ These efforts, spearheaded by traditional leaders and

⁵⁷ These leaders made a commitment to reducing violence against women and girls and child marriage in their communities by, for instance, integrating these messages in community-wide prayers, thus amplifying their reach and elevating their positioning at this level.



©Spotlight Initiative in Niger

partners, have led to more meaningful engagement of members of civil society, and have created spaces for women's rights and grassroots civil society organizations to convene safely and participate in discussions on ending violence against women and girls. Similar work was done in **Liberia**, where Spotlight Initiative supported traditional leaders to leverage their positions as "custodians of culture" in raising awareness and stimulating transformative change at the community level. In **Guyana**, Spotlight Initiative and civil society organization partners worked with faith-based leaders and sporting bodies to fight violence against women and girls. The Initiative supported the work of the civil society organization Meroundoi Inc. to draft a diversity, inclusion and equity policy with zero tolerance for violence against women and girls for the Guyana Football Federation and Guyana Cricket Board, contributing to a significant cultural step forward towards a new norm. In the **Pacific Regional Programme**, Spotlight

Initiative partnered with the Pacific Conference of Churches to create safe spaces for children and enhance the role of church members and leadership to be advocates to end violence against women and girls. In 2021, through this partnership, a Safe Church Policy and checklist was drafted to ensure safe spaces and training modules were developed which were designed to shift norms towards greater equality and non-violence.

Overall, in 2021, 6,733 traditional and religious leaders were engaged and mobilized as allies to better advocate for the implementation of legislation and policies on ending violence against women and girls and promoting women and girls' rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, with support from the Spotlight Initiative. Since 2019, more than 15,000 traditional and religious leaders have participated in Spotlight Initiative programming.

Spotlight Initiative programmes also engaged parents in responsible parenting programmes with the aim of decreasing family violence and reducing spousal abuse in, for example, **Belize, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan,** and **Vanuatu**. In **Jamaica**, parenting programmes, led by Spotlight Initiative partners, shared positive, gender-responsive parenting techniques and non-violent forms of discipline to reduce family and domestic violence. Programmes also included important strategies for better communication, and identifying power imbalances, thereby promoting positive and transformative masculinities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that shifts were seen in gender roles and stereotypes, that power imbalances were recognized and addressed, and that more attention was given to communication between parents and children, with respect for children's autonomy improving following the programme. In **Kyrgyzstan**, Spotlight Initiative and partners used the Gender Action Learning System approach to train 35 women champions and 25 men champions to use the

“happy diamond family”, a tool that allows analysis of the family and relationships. After participating in the programme, the champions expressed increased awareness of violence, noticed changes taking place in their family relationships and found themselves questioning gender stereotypes that underpin inequalities and violence. Finally, in **Belize**, the extreme shock of two hurricanes coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic led to tension in many homes. Spotlight Initiative engaged parents and children, including those with disabilities, in parenting programmes that addressed gender norms, biased attitudes and family violence, and offered critical mental health support and food assistance, including referrals to other services. Through this process, the programme found that parents were more willing to speak about family violence when their basic humanitarian needs have been met, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive, adaptable approach rooted in the specific context.



Pillar 4: Services

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

The provision of high quality, timely and accessible services that address the range of physical, psychological and material impacts of violence, is key to ending the cycle of violence faced by women and girls worldwide. While there is often commitment by government, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and activists for such services, essential services often struggle with funding, staffing,

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

- Increased access, availability and awareness of essential quality services to address the consequences of violence against women and girls
- Strengthened quality of coordinated essential services for survivors through the expansion of the one-stop comprehensive care centre model and improved referral pathways.
- Expanded institutional infrastructure for improved service provision, integrating a rights-based approach into standard operating procedures, guidelines and governing bodies
- Deepened capacity across government, civil society, duty bearers and service providers, to provide quality essential support services for women and girl survivors of violence



HEALTH



JUSTICE AND
POLICING



SOCIAL
SERVICES

2,329,199

women and girl survivors

of violence have increased knowledge of quality essential services

capacity, coordination and implementation, leaving many women and girls without access.

In 2021, under Pillar 4, Spotlight Initiative programmes continued to improve the availability and accessibility of essential services. Programmes focused on ensuring services are rights-based, survivor-centred, and adequately address the needs of marginalized communities. The Initiative also invested in strengthening the capacity of service providers to address forms of violence often overlooked, and ensure services are of high quality for all women and girls, including those traditionally left behind. All programmes continued to flexibly respond to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, supporting efforts to adapt services for continued accessibility.

RESULT: Increased access to, availability of and awareness of essential quality services to address the consequence of violence against women and girls.

Recognizing that access to quality services is essential to facilitate long-term recovery for survivors of violence, Spotlight Initiative programmes globally – including in **Argentina, Guyana, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago and Uganda** – are prioritizing service delivery across sectors including health, justice, social, police and economic. This has been critical as levels of violence rise: **as noted above, there has been a 35 per cent increase in cases reported to the police across Spotlight Initiative programmes compared to last year.**

In 2021, there were

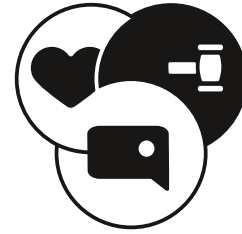
100,000

more cases of VAWG reported to institutions than in 2020, including over

70,000

more reported to the police

CASES REPORTED TO THE POLICE INCREASED BY 35% COMPARED TO 2020



MORE THAN

630,000

women and girl survivors of violence received services, with support from Spotlight Initiative

In 2021, more than 630,000 women and girls accessed services that were directly funded and supported by Spotlight Initiative, with 1.6 million reached since the start of the Initiative. Notably, this number does not include women and girls who accessed services that benefitted from Spotlight Initiative-supported protocols and methodologies, or services staffed by providers trained by the Initiative. Including these significantly raises the numbers of women and girls reached: analysis undertaken by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, including through a modelling study produced in collaboration with Dalberg, suggests that the number of women and girls benefitting from improved services could be in the tens of millions per year (the Dalberg study estimates an overall reach of more than 70 million for the duration of the Initiative – [Chapter 8](#) and [Chapter 10](#) have more detail on this).

Services focused on addressing the full range of harmful practices and violence experienced by women and girls, including those from marginalized communities: increased access to essential services has been reported across Spotlight Initiative programmes. For example, **Spotlight Initiative in Malawi** facilitated the reporting and follow-up of 36,439 cases of SGBV cases, including 709 child marriages of which 430 were annulled and the girls

re-enrolled in school. This represented an 87 per cent increase in the number of reported cases compared to 2020. In **Haiti**, the programme’s communication and sensitization efforts around support services for survivors, as well as the promotion of emergency phone numbers for protection, led to a doubling in the number of women and girls seeking assistance from 2020 to 2021; and in **Zimbabwe**, the programme’s combined interventions – the community-based shelters model, the gender-based violence remote service delivery model and the gender-based violence community-based surveillance system – reached 51,099 gender-based violence survivors (20,140 women and 30,959 girls), the highest number of survivors reached since the programme began. Similarly, in **Uganda**, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund grantee, WONETHA, supported women and girl sex workers in their human rights advocacy, including for access to public health services. As a result of their mobilization, the health-seeking behaviour among women and girl sex workers increased by nearly 28 per cent from 2020, with nearly 1,000 women and girl sex workers accessing HIV/AIDS testing, family planning services and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. An increase in reporting violence cases faced by women and girl sex workers to the police was also witnessed.

Spotlight Initiative programmes also embraced innovation, finding creative and gender-appropriate approaches to improving access. **Spotlight Initiative in Grenada** introduced two-way video systems in court, ensuring survivors do not have to come face-to-face with their aggressors. The **Jamaica Spotlight Initiative programme**, in collaboration with the civil society organization Eve for Life, developed the “Hope” (Helping Our People Emerge) app. This app provides information on human rights, legal advice, support services and instruction on accessing these services. The app was validated by representatives of marginalized communities, and has a special focus on underserved communities, including women living with HIV, women and girls with disabilities, LGBTQI+, sex workers, cohabitating teenage girls, pregnant women and teenage mothers. In collaboration with the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, the **Guyana Spotlight Initiative programme** developed the “iMatter.gy” digital online platform, which provides gender-based violence survivors

and persons at risk of gender-based violence with an additional option for seeking support by serving as a central online portal for members of the public, providing current information on available gender-based violence essential services, relevant laws and policies, information and resources, and by including links to the national 914 Gender-Based Violence Hotline service.

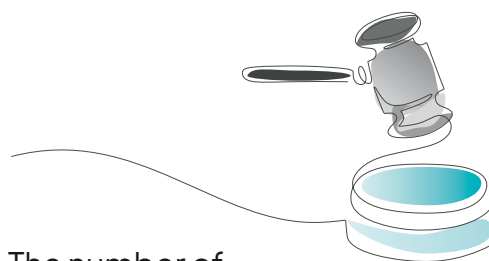
Spotlight Initiative has been investing in and supporting the legal and justice sector to deliver high quality services, as well. The Initiative has been delivering direct technical assistance to the justice sector and to the police to improve procedures, streamline processes and train key actors in the systems, with the aim of ensuring greater accountability of perpetrators. Since 2019, a large part of the more than 50,000 civil servants trained through the programmes are involved in the justice system (judges, prosecutors, police officers, forensics officers).



©Spotlight Initiative Mozambique

Programmes have also supported the revisions of referral pathways and court protocols in more than ten countries, introducing state-of-the-art approaches, aimed at reducing trial delays and improving the experience of survivors in the justice system, particularly for women and girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination. **As a result of all these efforts, data provided by 15 country programmes show that the number of convictions of perpetrators of violence has more than doubled over the last year. In total, since 2019, close to 10,000 perpetrators have been brought to justice, with the support of the Initiative.** While this number may appear low (more than 30,000 cases have been reported in these countries over the same period), barriers to conviction are enormous (tampered evidence, victims withdrawing their report under pressure, cases dismissed or dropped on technicalities as well as agreements between parties or their families to avoid trials), underscoring the significance of this figure.

Throughout Spotlight Initiative programmes, attention to the principle of leaving no one behind has been prioritized. Programmes worked to ensure those with HIV+, as well as those who are LBGTQI+, people with disabilities, immigrants, and migrant



The number of **convictions of perpetrators** of GBV **more than doubled** compared to 2020 **x2**

In 2021, there were nearly 5,000 convictions

workers could access quality services addressing their needs. For example, the **El Salvador** programme worked with hospital networks to improve and expand the provision of services for women and girl survivors of violence, including the strengthening of care services for trans women (more information on this can be found in the box below), and disabled women, whose specific needs are often overlooked.



©Fabion Jerrick/UNDP

Likewise, in **Argentina**, the Initiative expanded help hotlines for hearing impaired and non-Spanish speakers; and in **Belize**, the Initiative worked with the Government of Belize and civil society organizations to roll out the Mobile Women Centres model, which provides essential services to women and girls in traditionally hard-to-reach rural communities, as well

as other groups of women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of violence. **Since the start of the Initiative, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the design of 60 strategies to better address the needs of women and girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination in service delivery.**

Case Study:

Supporting the trans community to access care in El Salvador – Central to ensuring rights-based, inclusive health

The Spotlight Initiative in **El Salvador** has successfully channelled the principle of leaving no one behind in their delivery of services to the trans community: a community who have been traditionally excluded from accessing these services. In partnership with the Association of Transgender, Transexual and Transvestite Women, the programme strengthened capacities of the Dike+ Clinic, which provides access to low-cost medicine and medical and psychological health services to trans people. In providing unprecedented support to trans women organizations, the programme helped ensure *all* women have their needs considered, and opened a new window of opportunity for the trans population to champion their rights. Further, grants provided by the Initiative successfully supported efforts to enrol the Dike+ Clinic as a recognized Transgender Health and Sexual Medicine Clinic within the framework of the Superior Council for Public Health.

RESULT: Strengthened quality of coordinated essential services for women and girl survivors of violence through the expansion of the one-stop comprehensive care centre model and improved referral pathway systems

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes including those in **Argentina, Belize, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria,** and **Zimbabwe** continued to build and expand the one-stop centre model for comprehensive care to women and girl survivors of violence. These centres centralize all essential services, such as health, legal and psychosocial support, making them more accessible for women and girls, and underserved populations, such as indigenous communities, people with disabilities and rural communities, in particular. In **Mali**, Spotlight Initiative unveiled ten one-stop

centres in 2021, which supported a total of 896 survivors. To drive demand, the programme engaged national civil society organizations and international non-governmental organizations to raise awareness about the centres in target communities. To ensure sustainability, all ten centres have been transferred to government ownership. The **Mozambique** programme's one stop centres, known as Integrated Assistance Centres provided essential services to 599 (525 women and 74 men) survivors of violence in 2021.



©UNFPA Mozambique

Weak referral systems pose a major obstacle to accessing the essential services required to facilitate the recovery of women and girl victims of violence. Therefore, in 2021 Spotlight Initiative programmes, including those in **Belize, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mali, Nigeria** and **Trinidad and Tobago**, continued to strengthen referral pathway systems, in order to remove barriers to access. In **Tajikistan**, the programme supported service providers across education, health and social sectors to establish referral pathways providing mental health services, with an emphasis on accurately matching girls' presenting needs to evidence-based treatment. Multi-sectoral support teams were established in pilot districts, with clear standard operating procedures that detailed the actions required at each level, and procedures for managing referrals within and between partners. Likewise, in **Honduras**, through participatory mapping of essential services across target municipalities, the programme developed referral pathways for the health, justice and protection services, creating an integrated referral system through which women and girl survivors of violence **could access comprehensive essential services**.

RESULT: Expanded the institutional infrastructure for improved service provision, integrating a rights-based approach into standard operating procedures, guidelines and governing bodies

An institutional infrastructure that governs and guides implementation, accessibility, and acceptability is foundational to quality support services. The essential services package (ESP) outlines the necessary set of essential and quality multisectoral services for all women and girl survivors of violence. The Spotlight Initiative continues to use the essential services package as a reference guide, while also strengthening the required essential services package delivery coordination mechanisms. Throughout the reporting period, the Initiative mobilized the expertise of a wide range of partners to provide technical assistance to governments and civil society in essential services package delivery.

Working with government, civil society organizations, service providers, community members and feminist activists, Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Afghanistan, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica,**

Liberia and **Trinidad and Tobago**, as well as the **Safe and Fair** programme, supported the development of essential services' standard operating procedures, guidelines, protocols, communities of practice and governance frameworks. Additionally, Spotlight Initiative programmes including those in **Argentina, Belize, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica** and **Papua New Guinea** continued to support the generation of evidence and research to strengthen the institutional infrastructure and guide service improvements for women and girl survivors of violence across sectors.

As of 2021, **80 per cent of target Spotlight Initiative countries developed their national guidelines and protocols in line with the essential services package**.⁵⁸ For example, **Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu**, working with the Ministry of Health, created a core group of clinicians across relevant health sectors, to develop the Gender-Based Violence Health Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). The standard operating procedure provides the foundation for the health system's approach to capacity building for health workers on survivor-centred clinical response and improved referral system pathways. In **Nigeria**, the programme supported the establishment of the Presidential

Special Investigation Panel on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence to enforce the rights of women and girls by forcing law enforcement and justice sectors to thoroughly investigate and prosecute cases heard before the panel.

RESULT: Deepened capacity across government, civil society, duty bearers and service providers to provide quality essential support services for survivors

Across 22 Spotlight Initiative programmes, a total of 22,595 government service providers improved their knowledge of and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services and to integrate responses to violence against women and girls into other sectors' services, amounting to more than 50,000 service providers trained since 2019. Spotlight Initiative programmes including in **Belize, Grenada, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago** and **Zimbabwe** continued to invest in multisectorial capacity building to strengthen the design, delivery and quality of essential services for women and girl survivors of violence.

Case Study:

Transforming women and girls from service users to solution holders in Kyrgyzstan

Working with a national team of experts, Spotlight Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** adapted design thinking and user journeys to transform women and girls from “target beneficiaries” or “service users” to “solution holders” or “new norm shapers,” empowering survivors to lead the development of high-quality services that are accessible, acceptable and available to all gender-based violence survivors. Spotlight Initiative in Kyrgyzstan offered a space for a range of stakeholders – including survivors, civil society partners and service providers – to jointly connect, learn, explore and co-create new approaches to ending violence against women and girls and service delivery. As a result, the programme increased the capacity of 309 (226 women and 83 men) service providers (health, law enforcement, social workers, lawyers and crisis centres) and civil society activists and organizations on survivor and user-centred service delivery both at the strategic and service delivery levels. This innovative practice is further discussed in [Chapter 9](#).

⁵⁸ The countries are: Argentina, Belize, El Salvador, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Uganda, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe, Guyana has commenced the development of the national guidelines but the process has not yet been completed.



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In **Trinidad and Tobago**, for example, the programme supported efforts to ensure high quality service provision by law enforcement. Strengthening law enforcement response has consistently been cited as one of the most challenging issues when responding to violence against women and girls, where a positive initial experience with police is crucial for survivors of violence to carry a case forward. Therefore, the Initiative supported the review of police standing orders and other relevant legislation around sexual and domestic violence to create a training programme and tool kit on gender-responsive policing. The tool kit covers gender-responsive police investigations; prevention; intersectionality; survivor-centred approaches; promoting positive masculinities; coordination; institution-building; and emerging issues, such as online and ICT-facilitated violence against women and girls, and will strengthen the ability of these key service providers to ensure responses to violence against women and girls are rights-based. In **Afghanistan**, the programme improved access to gender-based violence services for adolescent girls by developing the Adolescent Girls' Toolkit. Subsequently, the programme delivered comprehensive training for frontline workers, including social workers, Child Protection Action Network members, health workers and mobile health teams in the use and implementation of the toolkit,

ensuring they are better equipped to effectively respond to the rights and needs of adolescent girls experiencing violence.

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, the Spotlight initiative in **Argentina** strengthened the capacity of members of the Bar Association to serve women with disabilities, girls and adolescents, as well as indigenous women in the targeted provinces. Likewise, the programme adapted the curriculum of related courses to ensure future graduating lawyers would sustain the advances made in serving survivors facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Similarly, the programme also trained railway personnel, as part of a project to create a dedicated rail car to serve as a safe space for women and girl travellers in a municipality with high rates of femicide.



Pillar 5: Data

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

Spotlight initiative prioritizes the collection, analysis and dissemination of quality data to provide a robust evidence base on the current state of violence against women and girls, including contributing factors and trends. The Initiative facilitates the use of this data to develop appropriate and context-specific interventions, legal frameworks and resourcing aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

Throughout 2021, COVID-19 lockdowns and movement restrictions continued to heighten levels of violence against women and girls, leading to what some countries are referring to as the “second pandemic.” The crisis motivated a deepening commitment by Spotlight Initiative programmes to close existing data gaps through the availability of reliable and internationally comparable data

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

- Developing new, and strengthening existing, systems to collect data by identifying gaps and supporting innovative solutions to better capture data on violence against women and girls
- Generating reliable and comparable data on violence against women and girls, across sectors, with an emphasis on marginalized groups
- Strengthening data ecosystems through comprehensive improvements to the entire process of generating, sharing and using data on violence against women and girls
- Improving data disaggregation on violence against women and girls and advanced its use
- Guiding robust research on the attitudes, behaviours and norms related to violence against women and girls

on violence against women and girls. Under Pillar 5, Spotlight Initiative programmes engaged in a wide range of interventions to build holistic and comprehensive data systems, including: original research; developing or strengthening tools and platforms to collect and report data; training data



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A GROWING DATA ECOSYSTEM

75%
of targeted countries

have publicly available data on intimate partner violence, reported on a regular basis



users at all levels to collect and analyse data; and the strategic use of data to inform decision-making, advocacy and programme design.

RESULT: Developing new, and strengthening existing, systems to collect data by identifying gaps and supporting innovative solutions to better capture data on violence against women and girls

High quality data on prevalence, incidence, scope and underlying or contributing causes for violence against women and girls is essential to design and advocate for the large-scale social, cultural and political changes required to ensure all women and girls can lead a violence-free life.

Assessments of the current state of data on violence against women and girls, including identifying data gaps and needs, underpinned programmes' efforts in Pillar 5, as did a focus on the development of systems to collect and analyse administrative data. **With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 62 percent of targeted countries have improved systems to collect administrative data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices, disaggregated to better reflect multiple forms of discrimination and in line with international standards, across different sectors.** The **Tajikistan** programme assessed the current state of data collection on violence against women and girls through a participatory review and mapping of existing administrative data and through identification of data gaps and procedures. The programme collaborated with key stakeholders

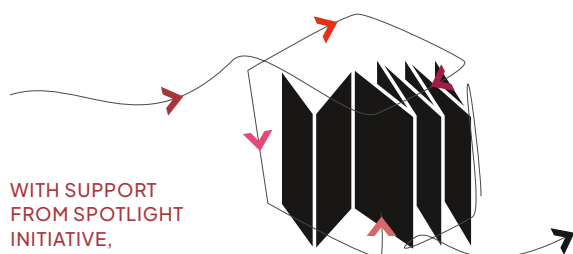
including the Agency on Statistics, and civil society organizations, to revise and harmonize tools and instruments used for the production, collection, monitoring and analysis of data related to violence against women and girls with a view to creating a unified mechanism of collection of data on violence against women and girls across government agencies. An analysis of how current data could be better utilized for monitoring and decision-making in **Timor-Leste** generated evidence proving that ending violence against women and girls is not only an issue for achieving SDG 5 (gender equality), but also for the achievement of other Sustainable Development Goals, as violence against women and girls affects health, nutrition and education outcomes (amongst others).

Spotlight Initiative programmes, including the **Africa Regional Programme**, and programmes in **Argentina, Kyrgyzstan** and **Uganda**, successfully developed innovative data collection and analytical tools to improve the collection, analysis and use of data. Innovative approaches focused on increasing quality and contextualization of data through mobilizing a wide range of stakeholders beyond just statistics offices, including government personnel in key decision-making positions, civil society and survivors of violence. Programmes also generated original knowledge products, including in **Mexico, Zimbabwe** and in **the Safe and Fair** programme to capture key evidence for use in advocacy, behaviour-change efforts and awareness-raising. For example, the **Ecuador** programme generated stories on victims of femicide through a participatory process of social cartography. The stories made visible the lives lost

and supported advocacy, awareness-raising and calls for reparations to the victims' families. The Spotlight Initiative partnered with the InfoSegura project and finalized the development of a Violence against Women and Girls Index in **Honduras**.⁵⁹ This tool provides a mechanism to measure violence against women and girls and monitor the changing national landscape of violence against women and girls. The Index will be presented to the new Government to strengthen decision-making. Other notable examples of the programmes' data collection efforts include the **Latin America Regional Programme**, which used big data to develop a study on online reactions and exchanges related to violence against women and girls, before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico.⁶⁰ To showcase the results, an interactive dashboard was designed and launched.⁶¹ The results and analysis will drive the design of future Spotlight Initiative Latin America regional activities in 2022.

RESULT: Generating reliable and comparable data on violence against women and girls, across sectors, with a focus on marginalized groups

Strategic efforts were made to generate reliable and comparable data, in line with international standards, on violence against women and girls by programmes across the Initiative, including in **El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Malawi, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste**. To date, **17 national statistics offices have developed, adapted and contextualized methods and standards to generate national-**



17 countries

developed methodologies to produce national level data on violence against women and girls

⁵⁹ The 2021 Honduras Spotlight Programme Report, page 60.
⁶⁰ The 2021 Latin America Spotlight Regional Programme Report, page 52.
⁶¹ The 2021 Latin America Regional Programme Report, page 52.

level prevalence and incidence data on violence against women and girls, with support from the Spotlight Initiative. This year alone, a total of 364 national statistics officers (161 women and 203 men) strengthened their ability to produce data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, harmful practices and incidences.

Multiple Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Argentina, Malawi, Mali, Papua New Guinea and the Africa Regional Programme**, made progress in 2021 in generating nationally comparable and robust datasets on the prevalence of violence against women and girls. In **Guyana**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative supported the training of various stakeholders in data collection, reporting and analysis. As a result, significant progress was made toward generating robust datasets, with data systems expected to be completed in 2022. In **Argentina**, the Initiative partnered with the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity to conduct a **survey** on the prevalence and incidence of violence against women and girls. Data was collected in 12 provinces, reaching 12,134 women aged 18 to 65 from 27 localities. This was a momentous achievement, as the **first survey of its kind, making data concerning violence against women and girls available**. The results of the survey showed that 28.3 per cent of the women interviewed have experienced violence at some point in their lives, with approximately 3 out of 10 women experiencing sexual and/or physical violence. Similarly, **Belize** now has access to globally comparable data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, including family violence, through the completion and launch of the **Spotlight Initiative Belize baseline study**. The baseline study provided validation of civil society and grassroots organizations' work at the community level and an opportunity for civil society to design interventions that meet the gaps where government resources are shorthanded. Finally, the **Africa Regional Programme** produced dedicated **country profiles** on child marriage for six countries in which the Initiative operates: Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. These captured incidence and trends on child marriage, improving the availability and accessibility of data on child marriage.

Spotlight Initiative in **Nigeria** scaled up reporting on violence against women and girls from 6 to 36 states in 2021, aiding the national coordination and response to violence against women and girls by making timely data available at all levels for decision-making through

the Gender-Based Violence Data Hub⁶² led by the Ministry of Women Affairs. In 2021, 5,684 cases of gender-based violence were reported on the platform, including: fatal cases 172; closed cases 254; open cases 1,113; and convicted perpetrators 33.

National Level Data on Violence Against Women and Girls Type of data disaggregation by programme

	Argentina		El Salvador		Honduras		Latin America RP	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
1) Income	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○
2) Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3) Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
4) Ethnicity	●	●	○	○	○	●	○	○
5) Disability	●	●	○	○	○	●	○	○
6) Geographic Location	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
7) Forms of violence	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○

	Malawi		Nigeria		Uganda		Zimbabwe	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
1) Income	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●
2) Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
3) Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
4) Ethnicity	○	○	●	○	●	●	○	○
5) Disability	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	○
6) Geographic Location	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	●
7) Forms of violence	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●

	Belize		Pacific RP		Papua New Guinea		Africa RP	
	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021
1) Income	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●
2) Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
3) Age	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
4) Ethnicity	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●
5) Disability	○	○	●	●	○	○	○	○
6) Geographic Location	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●
7) Forms of violence	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	○

- 2020
- 2021
- 2021 > Milestone
- 2020–2021 did not achieve Milestone

62 2021 Nigeria Spotlight Programme Report, page 42.

Overall, 75 per cent of countries in which Spotlight Initiative programmes supported efforts now have publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on female genital mutilation and intimate partner violence.⁶³ Of the countries in which Spotlight Initiative programmes supported efforts, 58 per cent have publicly available data on child marriage and femicide. Data on family violence as well as trafficking was also publicly available and regularly reported in 50 per cent of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries.

RESULT: Strengthening data ecosystems through comprehensive improvements to the entire process of generating, sharing and using data on violence against women and girls

To ensure the data ecosystem maximizes the use of evidence and data on violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **the Africa and Latin America regional programmes** and in **Ecuador, Malawi, Nigeria** and **Tajikistan**, aimed to strengthen the entire data ecosystem on violence against women and girls. They did this through comprehensive improvements to the process of generating, sharing and using data including: systematic assessments of existing data; improving information systems and platforms; capacity building on the collection, management and strategic use of data and by creating safe and innovative channels for the sharing and dissemination of data on violence against women and girls.

Taking advantage of the expansion of data digitization, Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **the Africa Regional Programme** and in **Argentina, Nigeria** and **Niger**, supported the development or strengthening of digital platforms and information systems to improve the generation and use of data. In 2021, **El Salvador** and **Niger** established a dedicated violence against women and girls information management system (IMS) at the national level, which can measure the number of women and girl victims or survivors of violence that have received quality, essential, and multisectoral

services.⁶⁴ Moreover, the **Africa Regional Programme** supported the strengthening of the African Union Commission regional data and research gender observatory and scorecards platform, in order to ensure quality, inclusive and periodic reporting of violence against women and girls and sexual and reproductive health and rights by member states and CSOs. With the support of Spotlight Initiative, programmes in **Argentina, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea**, and **Zimbabwe** are working to establish and improve their national violence against women and girls information management systems as well.

Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi** made software enhancements on the data collection system RapidPro, increasing the number of data collectors reporting from roughly 10 per cent to 95 per cent in 2021.⁶⁵ Over 17,000 cases of violence were reported to police and documented in RapidPro in 2021, representing a 55 per cent increase when compared with the same period in 2020. Similarly in **Mozambique**, the Initiative collaborated to develop InfoViolência, a software used to register and manage cases of violence against women and girls, provide evidence to enhance the quality of services, and improve access to justice for survivors. This is the first successful initiative in that country to digitize and systematize data on violence against women and girls. Likewise, an online case management database in **Papua New Guinea** is being piloted to assist the Police Family and Sexual Violence Unit track cases of violence against women and girls.

Central to improving the violence against women and girls data ecosystem was the systematic training of government departments and civil society organization partners, as well as data collectors and enumerators and data users across sectors. Capacity building in data literacy, production, management and use was prevalent throughout the Spotlight Initiative. The **Guyana** programme, for example, held ten virtual and in-person workshops, training 122 participants in data collection on violence against women and girls and their analysis and use from

63 The list of countries (reporting that “yes” they have publicly available data on IPV) are the following: Argentina, Belize, Ecuador, El Salvador, Pacific RP, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Safe and Fair, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Uganda, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

64 The 2021 El Salvador Spotlight Programme Report, page 43 and the 2021 Niger Spotlight Programme Report, page 11.

65 The 2021 Malawi Spotlight Programme Report, page 32.

across varying agencies and ministries, regional administrations, Amerindian village councils and civil society organizations. The **Latin America Regional Programme** developed a course jointly with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) to train participants to better measure the prevalence and incidence of gender based-violence, and in the implementation of public policies to address this. The course strengthened the skills and expanded the knowledge of government officials and civil society activists from about 20 countries in the region on theoretical and methodological processes of measuring gender-based violence against women, including femicide. Spotlight Initiative in **Mexico**

delivered training on the management and analysis of geostatistical information on violence against women and girls through an International Forum on Statistics on Violence against Women and Girls. More than 300 participants gathered daily to hear opportunities and perspectives from speakers from across the continent (Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico and the United States), partner institutions and civil society. **Since the start of the Initiative, over 12,500 individuals, including government personnel and women's rights advocates, were trained to collect, analyse and disseminate prevalence and incidence data, with a focus on women and girls facing intersecting forms of discrimination.**

Case study:

Taking the temperature on the Government's commitment to addressing gender-based violence in Nigeria

The National Gender-Based Violence Barometer, developed by the Spotlight Initiative, measures the success of government commitments on gender-based violence response at the local, state and national levels.⁶⁶ The goal of the barometer is to serve as a digital tool that provides a clear picture of the state of gender-based violence in the country, updated regularly through the collection of data on gender-based violence milestones across the 36 states, monitoring actions and progress towards meeting each state's target of becoming a gender-sensitive state. Through the accountability tracking barometer, states with similar challenges now share lessons learned or identify areas for collaboration. The comparative analysis between states serves as a validation of progress and is stimulating a competitive spirit between communities. Donors and development partners now use the data provided in the accountability tracking barometer to track the impact of their work and identify new partnerships, and gender-based violence actors across sectors use it in a national drive toward building back better post-COVID-19.

⁶⁶ 2021 Nigeria Spotlight Programme Report.

RESULT: Deepening efforts for data disaggregation on violence against women and girls

In adherence to the principles of leaving no one behind, and combatting all forms of discrimination, Spotlight Initiative actively advanced the systematic use of data disaggregation on violence against women and girls. The systematic disaggregation of data by populations and type of violence is central to accurately tracking rates of violence against women and girls. Without disaggregation, specific populations, particularly members of marginalized groups, tend to be left behind.

In 2021 with the Spotlight Initiative's support, **Malawi** gathered official, internationally comparable and disaggregated data on sexual violence and violence against women and girls, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights data from all six districts in which the Initiative works, with over 2,000 cases already recorded in their database. This follows the standardization of data collection tools and the establishment of the Gender-Based Violence Observatory Hub, hosted by the National Statistics Office. Similarly, in **Grenada**, the programme will pilot a data collection system for quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, family violence and

femicide to be collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes in Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique. The **Ecuador** programme will pilot the Single Registry of Violence to record data on victims and aggressors, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic self-identification, sex-generic conditions, level of education, as well as type of violence.

RESULT: Guiding robust research on social perceptions of attitudes, behaviours and norms related to violence against women and girls

Spotlight Initiative recognizes that cultural norms, practices and beliefs underpin the propagation of violence against women and girls, and gender inequality more broadly. As such, Spotlight Initiative programmes prioritized research into specific attitudes, behaviours and norms in relation to violence against women and girls in order to generate critical data and information to inform policymaking and programming. One example is the Caribbean Model of Cultural and Behavioural Change which is currently being developed under the facilitation of the **Caribbean Regional Programme**. Working with the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, the Caribbean Male Network and the Caribbean Alliance of National



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Psychological Associations, the research applied a lifecycle approach to identify and analyse the norms, practices and systems that enable and perpetuate the intergenerational cycle of family violence, paying particular attention to men's behaviour through the course of their life. This model will serve as a conceptual framework across the region, supporting future family violence prevention strategies that target behaviour-change interventions for men and boys. The **Latin America Regional Programme** published **eight multidimensional studies** on violence against women and girls, which discussed, inter alia, femicide/feminicide in contexts of high social vulnerability, multidimensional poverty, human trafficking, and the disappearance of women and girls. Studies also highlight information on the collection, analysis and use of data on violence against women and girls, and access to justice for survivors from a feminist perspective. Covering 16 countries in the region, the studies feature a variety of case studies and provide targeted recommendations to public servants, civil society, academia and the UN system on effectively addressing violence against women and girls through an intersectional approach. Launched through a webinar series called "A multidimensional look at violence against women and girls including femicide/feminicide", the series reached over 1,200 individuals from government, civil society, and academia, and was met with a positive reception.

The **Niger** Spotlight Initiative programme conducted a national survey on the magnitude and determinants of violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19.⁶⁷ The results showed the overall lifetime prevalence of violence against women and girls is 29 per cent with disparities by region and sex (38.2% for women and 16.3% for men). The main determinants of violence against women and girls are region and place of residence, literacy and standard of living. In relation to norms and female empowerment, 42 per cent of respondents say they think girls are ready to marry after 18 (an encouraging 2% increase from the last poll) and 72 per cent reported positive views on women carrying condoms. The polls provide a basis for community dialogue, while giving the Spotlight Initiative team an evidence base from which to focus

future behaviour-change efforts under Pillar 3. The **Latin America Regional Programme** supported eight national surveys, conducting 9,600 interviews in eight countries (Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico). The survey provided data on social perceptions of violence against women and girls and femicide. The results showed that verbal abuse and femicide are perceived as the most commonly occurring forms of violence against women and girls, while control over women's lives was perceived as more acceptable than other forms of violence against women and girls. Further, LGBTQ and older women are groups perceived as less likely to experience violence. Through the **Africa Regional Programme**, the **ACT Framework** (Assess and Ascertain, Consider and Context, Track and Triangulate) was rolled out in Eritrea, to measure and track changes in social norms regarding female genital mutilation.⁶⁸ The framework will establish baseline indicators for child marriage and female genital mutilation social and behaviour change. The ACT survey results will inform programme design to change beliefs and norms that reinforce the community adoption of these harmful practices.

Adhering to the principles of leaving no one behind, the **Jamaica** programme completed an assessment of the causes and impacts of violence against women and girls and the services that support survivors of violence.⁶⁹ Rural women's groups, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, professional women, university women and women from the LGBTQ community participated in the assessment to better understand the varied experiences women have with violence. Results showed that some women within the aforementioned groups viewed physical abuse as normal behaviour within relationships, with this belief more prevalent in inner-city communities and rural areas, as well as amongst women with lower educational attainment. Findings from the study will be used to strengthen the capacity of community and state institutions to better respond to the diverse needs of vulnerable groups, support women's rights and empowerment, and inform Spotlight Initiative's programming going forward.

67 The 2021 Niger Spotlight Initiative Programme Report.

68 The 2021 Spotlight Africa Regional Programme Report.

69 The 2021 Jamaica Spotlight Programme Report, page 62.

AMPLIFYING ACTIVISTS' VOICES

Over
1,000 local
and grassroots women's
rights organizations

reported having greater
influence and agency in 2021



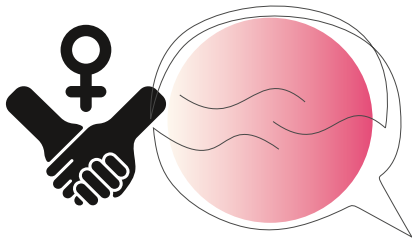
Pillar 6: Women's Movements and Civil Society

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

Spotlight Initiative's commitment to civil society organizations, especially feminist and women's rights organizations and movements, led to the expansion of the Initiative's Theory of Change in 2017 and the inclusion of Pillar 6. Through Pillar 6, Spotlight Initiative prioritized direct support to women's rights and feminist organizations and movements, and in particular grassroots organizations (in addition to weaving civil society support, partnership and collaboration through all outcome areas).

The main results achieved in this Pillar include:

- More women's rights organizations and civil society organizations having influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls, especially through increased engagement within official policy and planning processes and accountability mechanisms
- Supporting detailed mappings of women's movements and civil society organizations, as well as their actions, including of their civic space and capacity needs, in order to strengthen their ability to advance their work in ending violence against women and girls.
- Fostered cross-regional cooperation, coalition building and joint advocacy for deepened connection among civil society organizations, strengthened knowledge exchange and networking
- Strengthened women's rights organizations and movements at the local level
- Resourced and strengthened capacities of young feminist activists
- Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women's rights organizations



IN 2021,

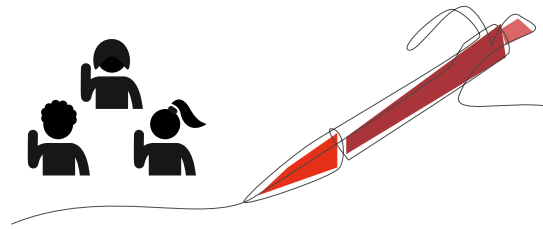
210 official dialogues were held

with the meaningful participation of government, civil society, women's rights groups, and representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

RESULT: More women's rights organizations and civil society organizations having influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls, especially through increased engagement within official policy and planning processes and accountability mechanisms

Historically and presently, diverse feminist, women's rights and social justice movements have been at the forefront of progressive change, challenging intersecting supremacies (including colonialism, racism, sexism, able-ism and neoliberalism, among others) and imagining alternatives. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative supported the coordinated efforts of civil society organizations to end violence against women and girls through participation in official dialogues and processes and via shadow reports and accountability mechanisms.

Through Spotlight Initiative-supported training on accountability mechanisms, women's rights groups, among others, were better supported to engage with **social accountability mechanisms** and influence approaches for prevention and response to violence against women and girls and gender equality more broadly across programmes, including in **Belize, Haiti, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria** and in **the Africa**



IN 2021,

184 jointly agreed recommendations to end violence against women and girls were developed

through multi-stakeholder dialogues that included representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

Regional Programme. In **Guyana**, work to support public accountability mechanisms started in 2021 and is slated to continue in 2022. In **Mozambique**, the programme trained women's rights groups (mainly local associations and community-based organizations) to strengthen their knowledge on existing accountability mechanisms on violence against women and girls (family forums, community courts, extra-judiciary courts) and provided support for these groups to increase their lobbying and advocacy actions. In **El Salvador**, the programme strengthened the leadership of a group of six transgender women to develop the necessary skills to monitor the justice system in the face of acts of violence and discrimination based on their gender identity.

In partnership with the **UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund)** and FACT Zimbabwe, a local civil society organization, 200 self-identified women sex workers in three regions were trained on human rights, social accountability, advocacy and social mobilization. Those trained formed groups and collectively advocated with local leaders for action around sexual violence and unfair treatment by the police. Group members have reported that being part of collectives and acquiring knowledge of their rights

increased their confidence to report violence against them and pursue cases of violence through the justice system. The **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund** and Spotlight Initiative grantees initiated steps to establish or increase the use of social accountability mechanisms to plan, monitor and engage in prevention and policy interventions for ending violence against women and girls. For example, the grantee Moyo Foundation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo successfully developed and strengthened a consultation framework with 50 delegated members (including 27 women) 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 managed and referred 70 cases of gender-based violence on minors and 35 cases of domestic violence to the competent authorities. **Overall, since the start of Spotlight Initiative, over 2,000 women's rights groups and relevant civil society organizations increased their use of citizen audits, shadow reporting and other accountability mechanisms to advocate for ending violence against women and girls. Moreover, with Spotlight Initiative support, over 1,000 local and grassroots women's rights organizations and relevant civil society organizations reported having more influence and better agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls across programmes.**⁷⁰

RESULT: Supporting detailed mappings of women's movements and civil society organizations, including civic space and of their capacity needs, to strengthen their ability to advance their work to ending violence against women and girls

Detailed mappings of the existing civil society landscape – including the capacity of civil society organizations to operate within the civic space – were jointly developed with civil society to build upon and strengthen existing initiatives, amplify critical grassroots knowledge, and ensure that Spotlight Initiative programmes reached traditionally left behind communities and rights holders. For



©Spotlight Initiative Uganda

instance, the Spotlight Initiative **Africa Regional Programme** supported an assessment of the status of civic space in Africa.⁷¹ The assessment examined interconnected themes, including: policymaking efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls; African Union instruments used to end violence against women and girls, their ratification status, domestication and implementation; and the status of capacity-building efforts and available tools for data on violence against women and girls specifically. The numerous findings of the assessment allowed both the Africa Regional Programme and civil society to work toward a more enabling legal and policy environment in which civil society can operate, and better advocate for legislative and policy changes.

70 Including in Spotlight Initiative programmes in Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe, as well as the Africa Regional Programme, Pacific Regional Programme, and Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme.

71 The 2021 Africa Regional Spotlight Programme Report, page 9.

In addition, capacity mapping of local civil society organizations enabled Spotlight Initiative teams to identify specific gaps and ensure capacity-building efforts were relevant, contributing to a more robust civil society across countries. For instance, in **Honduras**, in partnership with a civil society organization, the Spotlight Initiative carried out a participatory training needs-assessment in 16 indigenous communities, identifying gaps. Local women and women's networks took part in this process. As a result, Lenca indigenous women's networks strengthened their management capacities and their ability to engage in participatory gender-responsive budgeting, and improved the design and implementation of their own programmes.

In **Mexico**, in collaboration with the Civil Society National Reference Group, a broad mapping of women's movements and networks in the states of Chihuahua, Mexico State and Guerrero was carried out. The findings led to the publication of a report on the current panorama of feminist networks in Mexico, which made it possible to better understand the complex dynamics of these networks and their capacity needs. As a result, and in partnership with the College of Mexico, an institutional strengthening plan that supports feminist grassroots organizations with technical tools to sustain their efforts to ending violence against women and girls is being implemented.

In **Mali**, five networks⁷² made up of more than 250 civil society organizations have been set up and each one has developed an action plan for advocacy to eliminate violence against women, following capacity building for members on the concepts of gender and gender-based violence, advocacy, communication and resource mobilization, which will be implemented during Phase II. The Civil Society Reference Group held a National Day of Commitment that mobilized thousands of people, including traditional and religious leaders, traditional communicators, civil society organizations, local elected officials and government technical services in the Segou region to show their support for the programme's actions, especially in favour of the adoption of a law against gender-based violence.

72 The 2021 Mali Spotlight Programme Report, page 33.

RESULT: Fostered cross-regional cooperation, coalition building and networking among civil society organizations to strengthen knowledge exchange and joint advocacy

Efforts to strengthen and support coordination among civil society organizations and movements continued to face barriers given severe restrictions in movement due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, Spotlight Initiative programmes were quick to adapt, supporting platforms that required minimal internet bandwidth, including communities of practice, that contributed to strengthened networks and improved knowledge exchange.

For example, Spotlight Initiative programmes contributed to the development of knowledge hubs across multiple programmes, including in the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, **Kyrgyzstan** and **Papua New Guinea**. The **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** made significant progress towards establishing a virtual knowledge platform to facilitate remote knowledge and best practice exchanges as well as joint advocacy for gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and ending sexual violence and violence against women and girls. The platform is expected to serve as a regional gender equality and women's empowerment mechanism for governments and non-state stakeholders, including civil society organizations and feminist activists in Central Asia. In **Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative hosted the National CSO Forum on Gender Equality and Human Rights, bringing 100 participants from five provinces into conversation about the roles and challenges facing civil society. Panel discussions featured EU representation and leading civil society organization representatives and development partners. In **Afghanistan**, the Initiative established formal partnerships with five local civil society organizations for the implementation of community-led initiatives to address violence against women and child marriage. Despite the shrinking of their civic space for participation (particularly post August 15, 2021), the civil society organizations continued to be a critical point of engagement for the community, listening to the needs and concerns of women and girls. Additionally, a community of practice



©Spotlight Initiative in Samoa

was established, which offered a safe platform for these civil society organizations to engage and share strategies, challenges and lessons on community-led initiatives, a crucial platform for these groups to advocate with the de-facto authorities, eventually allowing women's organizations to resume their operation in early October 2021.

The Initiative also contributed to fostering and strengthening spaces for cross-regional cooperation, coalition building and joint advocacy. For instance, the **Latin America Regional Programme** partnered with the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA), a network of indigenous women's organizations across Latin America that prioritizes resistance against violence against indigenous women in its advocacy agenda. The alliance contributed to improved knowledge of, and visibility on, violence against indigenous women and girls in the region. It also led to the production of guidelines that can be used in public policies and services for survivors to ensure an inclusive and intercultural approach. The **Caribbean Regional Programme** partnered with the Caribbean Family Planning Affiliation to launch an independent sexual and reproductive health and rights observatory. Built into the roadmap of the sexual and reproductive health and rights observatory is the meaningful partnership with other civil society organizations

(focused on women, youth, migrants, those with disabilities and the LGBTQI+ community) and actors such as community networks, regional advocates, gatekeepers and other influential actors through regional consultation meetings, community dialogue and joint partnerships. In 2022, the sexual and reproductive health and rights observatory will support various advocacy initiatives and help furnish them with evidence-based materials to strengthen their advocacy and policy reform strategies.

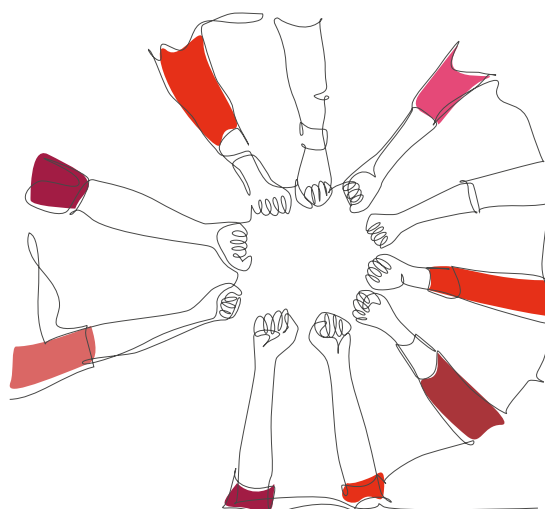
In **Timor-Leste**, the programme partnered with *Rede Feto*, a women's umbrella network of 46 member organizations, and participated in a virtual Ending Violence against Women Forum. This space was an opportunity for a range of stakeholders from the Government and civil society to identify best practices and challenges in the field of ending violence against women and girls, and build alliances across sectors and groups. Moreover, in Cameroon, a **Spotlight Initiative-UN Trust Fund grantee** (the Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Africa) organized networking and capacity-building workshops using the **SASA! methodology** to engage over 200 stakeholders as community change-makers and activists, including religious leaders, health workers, men, civil society and community-based organizations, businesspeople, chiefs, journalists and police officers. A coalition was created with

various stakeholders, including 50 civil society and community-based organizations, 15 women's rights groups, 15 journalists and five traditional leaders. The coalition was very well received by the community, and seven civil society and community groups adopted the SASA! methodology as a strategy to advocate for the prevention of violence against women and girls in their communities.

RESULT: Strengthened women's rights organizations and movements at local levels

Facilitating collaboration and networking, knowledge exchange, and organizational capacity building, Spotlight Initiative worked across programmes to strengthen movement-building and lay the groundwork for cross-movement collaboration. In 2021, progress was made to reinforce the institutional capacity and organizational strength of civil society organizations, engaging with feminist advocates, women human-rights defenders, and civil society organizations at all levels. **Overall, 1,291 women's rights groups, networks and relevant civil society organizations engaged in capacity-strengthening activities, with a total of 1,184 women's organizations reporting strengthened ability to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on eliminating violence against women and girls across 22 Spotlight Initiative programmes.**⁷³

In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative worked to strengthen women's movements capacity in the country, contributing to the sustainability of the movements following the end of the Spotlight Initiative. With support from Spotlight Initiative, the National Union of Women with Disabilities conducted a workshop for 75 leaders from five District Associations of Women with Disabilities. More specifically, 194 girls living with disabilities were mentored and, as a result, exhibit higher levels of self-esteem, with some now engaged in small businesses and financial savings groups. Additionally, over 70 girls living with disabilities aspire to political positions in future elections, a promising sign for



1,184

local and grassroots women's organizations

were supported to **structure and expand their activities** to end violence against women and girls

gender equality in political leadership and civic engagement.

Spotlight Initiative also provided support to local women's rights organizations to bolster community-based coalition and (cross) movement-building. **With support of Spotlight Initiative programmes, a total of 326 civil society organizations – 135 representing youth and 191 representing other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination – across 12 countries were able to join up with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society to deepen work to end violence against women and girls.**⁷⁴ The **Pacific Regional Programme**, for example, contributed to women's movement-building in the region by supporting diverse civil society organizations operating in cross-sectoral areas, including women-led and feminist organizations at the grassroots level. This created a favourable environment for feminist organizations to

⁷³ Africa Regional Programme, Argentina, Belize, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

⁷⁴ The 12 countries are: Argentina, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Liberia, Marshall Islands, Nigeria, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe.

advocate for gender equality and women's rights. In 2021, through a partnership with DIVA for Equality, an 18-month intersectional advocacy capacity-building initiative was launched as a hub for feminist, grassroots and women's rights organizations' engagement and networking in the region.

In **Nigeria**, a coalition of civil society organizations was also created – the Network against Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls (NGBWG) – to continually raise the public's awareness of sexual and gender-based violence as a rights violation, and to advocate for an end to sexual violence and violence against women and girls. The coalition is now involved in strengthening and amplifying the voices of women's movements to address sexual violence and violence against women and girls in the country. The **Safe and Fair** programme also

strengthened the partnerships and capacity of trade unions and migrant worker associations, as well as community and women's networks in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam to organize and network women migrant workers and to provide referral services in situations where women migrant workers experience violence. As a result of these efforts 3,395 women migrant workers were organized into trade unions, workers' associations and groups during the reporting period. In **Papua New Guinea**, through the support and engagement of civil society organizations, nine community action groups were established to network and jointly advocate for an end to violence against women and girls in their communities, including one provincial action group composed of Spotlight Initiative and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund civil society partners.

Case Study:

Creating more inclusive movements – Reflecting women's diverse lived experiences

Spotlight Initiative grantees of the **UN Trust Fund** worked to create more inclusive cross-movements that reflect the wide diversity of women's lived experiences. For example, a group of four active UN Trust Fund grantees in **Argentina**, one of which is funded under the Spotlight Initiative, achieved ground-breaking progress in terms of advancing women's sexual and reproductive rights. These grantees were part of a coalition of 80 women's rights organizations in Argentina that, through awareness-raising campaigns and political advocacy, promoted the adoption of two important pieces of legislation: on 24 January 2021, the Senate in Argentina adopted Law 27610 on Access to Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy and, in a later development, the Senate adopted another landmark piece of legislation, amending Law 26130 on Regulation of Surgical Contraception. Through this amendment, **for the first time, the forced or non-consensual sterilization of women living with disabilities is prohibited in Argentina, a breakthrough in protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights, bodily integrity and human rights.**



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RESULT: Resourced and strengthened the capacities of young feminist activists

Young feminist activists and youth-led networks are often the drivers of innovative practices and cutting-edge activism. Yet, they often remain marginalized and underfunded as they are usually shut out from traditional philanthropic processes. Supporting and strengthening the advocacy work and coalition-building of young activists is key to ensure long-lasting social change to bring about feminist realities. Resourcing young activists also means compensating them for their time and expertise.⁷⁵

As a fund that aspires to implement according to feminist principles, Spotlight Initiative is committed to supporting young activists and networks, centring their needs and knowledge in its programming. Needs-based and youth-targeted capacity strengthening and training were carried out in several programmes. For instance, in **Haiti**, Spotlight Initiative supported the establishment of meeting spaces and intergenerational dialogues to facilitate exchanges between the pioneers of the Haitian feminist movement and young women leaders of emerging organizations. A total of 120 people, mostly women leaders of organizations, students and representatives of youth movements actively participated in the exchanges. Many leaders of the feminist movement participated and young feminists were able to engage meaningfully with the

history of the vast feminist movement in Haiti and learn from their achievements and roadblocks. As a result, young women leaders were better equipped to pursue their advocacy work, building on and further expanding previous social gains.

The **Africa Regional Programme** supported the establishment of a young women’s network with the participation of 58 young women from Kenya, Gambia and the United Kingdom diaspora. Workshops and sessions were held on female genital mutilation with over 60 diaspora change-makers from the African Diaspora Women’s Network and the End Female Genital Mutilation European Network, along with policymakers and other influencers. Through the network and trainings, the young women were better supported to launch a social action project in their communities, intensifying the impact of an intervention to abandon female genital mutilation.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, the Initiative partnered with the Trinidad Youth Council (TYC) and embarked on a three-phase project, targeting young people and youth-led organizations, and by extension those working in interventions aimed at ending violence against women and girls. The project consisted of the development of a Gender-Based Violence Facilitator’s Manual and accompanying Youth Advocacy Workbook, the launch of a youth advocates programme with training based on the gender-based violence manual, and the launch of an

⁷⁵ Resourcing Girls and Young Activists through a Pandemic | May 2021. Purposeful Fund. <https://wearepurposeful.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/WTS-Report-FINAL.pdf>

art competition for primary and secondary schools to raise awareness of gender-based violence. The anticipated result is that youth activists will be better equipped to effectively respond to gender-based violence and gender injustices.

Critical funding was also channelled to young activists and youth-led civil society organizations to support their advocacy and efforts towards ending violence against women and girls. In **Mali**, the programme trained young local activists on legislation and on technical aspects of gender-based violence prevention and response. Activists were also given small grants to organize mini caravans in their own communities – strengthening the ability of young activists (both women and men) to build a strong base of allies to advocate nationally for improved legislative frameworks. Similarly, in **Nigeria**, small grant recipients played a fundamental role in building the capacity of groups of young people, people living with disabilities and people facing other forms of intersecting discrimination to advocate for gender equality. With enhanced capacities, these groups were able to better advocate for equitable gender representation at decision-making levels and contributed to advocacy for the passage of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition law in Adamawa State. They also engaged with key government officials and legislators to demand accountability on gender equality, gender-sensitive budgetary allocations, and equitable representation of qualified women and persons living with disability at decision-making positions in Adamawa state and the Federal Capital Territory. Finally in **Honduras**, through the **UN Trust Fund** and Spotlight Initiative partnership, the grantee Centro de Estudios de la Mujer and its partners strengthened the capacities of adolescent Indigenous girls in six secondary schools to recognize and claim their human rights. The project mobilises women’s rights organisations to build networks that support Indigenous women and girls to gain knowledge and skills to prevent and address violence, particularly against Indigenous girls. Twenty-seven young students participated in six webinars aimed at raising young women’s awareness about the diversity of technological resources and to the dangers they may face online. As a result, young women felt motivated to participate in decision-making spaces in their communities and take on decision-making positions in student bodies.

RESULT: Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women’s rights organizations

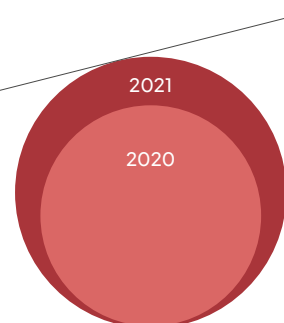
As underscored multiple times in this report, progressive civil society organizations and diverse women’s and feminist movements have led, and continue to collectively lead, transformative work to advance gender equality and end violence against women and girls. Yet, their work is consistently and egregiously under-resourced and underfunded. The COVID-19 pandemic and its disastrous economic consequences further exacerbated the pressure, particularly on grassroots organizations, with many struggling to exist or shutting completely.

Complementing funding to young feminists and the small-grants efforts noted above, Spotlight Initiative scaled up core and flexible funding to civil society organizations more broadly, particularly women’s rights organizations and grassroots community-based organizations. As of December 2021, Spotlight Initiative allocated approximately USD 179 million to civil society organizations, of which USD 144.5 million has been delivered. Of the delivered funds, 78 per cent reached national and local organizations, and 72 per cent was invested in women’s organizations, crucial for sustained activism and movement-building. **Chapter 5** has more information on this topic.

USD 179 million allocated to civil society organizations so far

(49% of activity funds)

ADDITIONAL
USD 33 MILLION
IN 2021



Strengthening grassroots organizations through funding: A sustainable way to support drivers of change in Afghanistan and Nigeria

In **Afghanistan**, the Spotlight Initiative programme supported the new Women Protection Centre Trust Fund (WPC TF), a new multi-donor, multi-stakeholder mechanism to promote sustainable, coordinated, strategic and efficient funding as well as to ensure quality service provision in women protection centres across Afghanistan. This trust fund is a unique mechanism that allows resources to be pooled and supports smaller and one-off contributions from diverse donors to ensure comprehensive and quality provision of services to survivors of violence in a coordinated and sustainable manner. Through its capacity-building component, this mechanism supports smaller and less established women's rights organizations to access funding and provide services dealing with violence against women and girls. The WPC TF will continue to grow, as fundraising efforts continue, with the ultimate goal of having one women protection centre in each province of Afghanistan, with quality services across the women protection centres in line with international standards.

Spotlight Initiative's partnership with local and grassroots organizations in **Nigeria** provided opportunities to strengthen their capacities for advocacy on issues of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Through grants allocated to these organizations, at least two platforms of local and grassroots organizations were established in each state and included representatives of persons, especially women and girls, with disabilities and other intersecting forms of discrimination. Through these platforms, at least 15,000 direct participants have benefitted from second-chance education opportunities and livelihood support to minimize their vulnerabilities to sexual violence and violence against women and girls, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights violations.

The Initiative has also committed to channelling 10 per cent of the overall regional envelope for each of the five regional programmes to civil society grant-giving programmes. Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) helped mobilize resources to reach smaller and grassroots feminist organizations and to support women's movements in **Africa** and **Latin America**, as well as in **Haiti**, **Afghanistan**⁷⁶ and **Papua New Guinea**.⁷⁷ Overall these two Trust Funds have allocated USD 36.7 million in civil society grants to address violence against women and girls. As of December 2021, the UN Trust Fund and Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

jointly delivered USD 33.6 million⁷⁸ to civil society organizations, 79 per cent of which has supported national and grassroots organizations and 94 per cent of which has supported women-led women's rights and feminist organizations.

Overall, Spotlight Initiative continues to exceed its set commitments of funding civil society organizations more broadly, and specifically local organizations including those led by and serving marginalized groups. More information and detailed analysis on Spotlight Initiative's commitments to and funding of diverse civil society organizations can be found in [Chapter 5](#) and [Annex C](#).

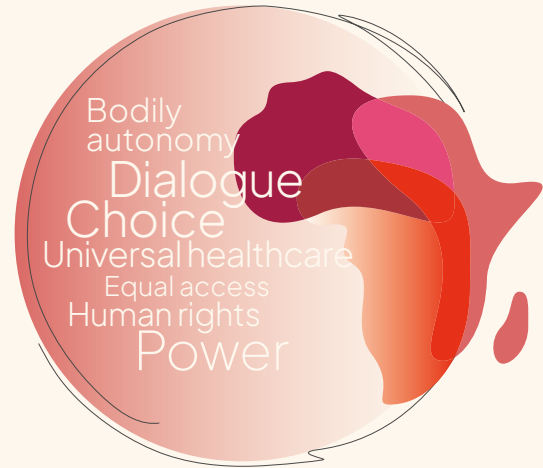
⁷⁶ In Afghanistan, due to the Taliban takeover in August 2021, the Partnership Cooperation Agreements and implementation was paused until January 2022.

⁷⁷ The civil society grant-giving programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and the Pacific are integrated as a Pillar 6 in their respective Spotlight regional programmes.

⁷⁸ USD 24 million by the UN Trust Fund and USD 9.6 million by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

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

Advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) is fundamental to the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls and the achievement of gender equality and women's rights more broadly. Reflective of this, Spotlight Initiative committed to allocate USD 100 million to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights in its programmes in Africa. With an emphasis on integrating sexual and reproductive health and rights into broader programming to eliminate violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative programmes in Africa worked to reflect sexual and reproductive health and rights in (national) policies and programmes, strengthen sexual and reproductive health and rights services, build capacity on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and raise awareness through education and dialogue. Programmes worked inter-sectionally, affirming the sexual and reproductive health and



Funding for **sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Africa**

Allocated USD 116 million

TARGET USD 100 MILLION



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rights of marginalized groups, including those living with disabilities, members of the LGBTQI+ community, sex workers, and people living with HIV.

The overall budget allocation for sexual and reproductive health and rights work in Africa is close to USD 116 million, well beyond the 100-million target. In aggregate, the largest share of sexual and reproductive health and rights spending was allocated under Pillar 3 on prevention and norm change at 28 per cent and Pillar 4 on services at 31 per cent, with work focusing on raising awareness through education and information, shifting attitudes, and improved accessibility to quality sexual and reproductive health and rights services. The Initiative's commitment to the advancement of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights is demonstrated through its range of comprehensive interventions, as detailed below.

Laws, policies and plans

To ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights is sustainably reflected in programmes and policies, Spotlight Initiative lobbied for sexual and reproductive health and rights to be integrated into national plans and policies and supported the development of protocols and standards across sectors. In **Liberia**, for example, working with the health sector, the programme developed a Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Integrated Services Manual, equipping health centres to more effectively promote sexual and reproductive health and rights. Similarly, in **Uganda**, Spotlight Initiative supported the development of the National Compendium of Gender-Based Violence, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Harmful Practices for Service Providers. Distributed across 14 districts, the compendium supported the standardization of care.

In **Zimbabwe**, Spotlight Initiative drafted the Standard Operating Procedures for Termination of Pregnancy and collaborated with the Adult Rape Clinic and the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, training 114 nurses, medical doctors, clinical officers, social workers, prosecutors and police officers to effectively foster and uphold sexual and reproductive health and rights in their work. Finally, in **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative

supported the development of the Gender and Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy in higher education. Adopted by 22 universities, the policy institutionalizes a systematic response to sexual and gender-based violence and improves sexual and reproductive health and rights in higher learning. The policy outlines referral pathways available at individual institutions in cases of sexual assault or harassment, facilitates access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services, including family planning and HIV services, and prohibits discrimination against women who are pregnant. As such, the policy has led to strengthened capacities of higher learning institutions to adequately tackle violence against women and girls and has contributed to considerable awareness-raising on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including on the rampant sexual harassment of students and discrimination faced by women who are pregnant.

Capacity building

In addition to the development of plans and policies, Spotlight Initiative strengthened the capacity of a range of stakeholders to comprehensively advance sexual and reproductive health and rights. Across its programmes in Africa, the Initiative facilitated trainings and distributed awareness-raising materials integrating the principle of leaving no one behind. In **Malawi**, for example, over 1,000 marginalized women and girls – including women and girl sex workers, people with disabilities, and those living with HIV – received training to more effectively advocate for and advance their own sexual and reproductive health and rights. In **Uganda**, Spotlight Initiative supported the development of the Human Rights-Based Compliant Ordinances and By-laws on Alcohol or Drug Abuse, Violence against Women and Girls and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Women with Disabilities through three forums organized across the country. With the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the Uganda Human Rights Commission, the Initiative supported training of local government officials, strengthening a human rights-based, intersectional approach to addressing violence against women and girls, sexual and reproductive health and rights and alcohol and drug abuse. In **Liberia**, Spotlight Initiative trained nearly 1,000 teachers across 331 schools, improving their awareness of and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights educational

materials. These efforts subsequently reached over 10,000 young people.

Supporting the sustained engagement of cultural and traditional opinion leaders, trainings were also held with traditional and faith-based leaders across programmes. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative trained chiefs on sexual and reproductive health and rights, leveraging this key partnership to raise awareness of and better advance sexual and reproductive health and rights. Similarly, in **Uganda**, the programme engaged with the Council for Traditional Leaders (COTLA), facilitating space for ongoing conversations on integrated approaches to addressing gender-based violence, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Existing dialogues on child marriage were leveraged as a strategic entry point for broader discussion on sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Education and information on sexual and reproductive health and rights

Spotlight Initiative recognizes that access to education and information is critical to further sexual and reproductive health and rights and prioritizes it in

its programmes. For example in **Mali**, the programme conducted knowledge-exchange sessions on the integration of Adolescent and Youth Reproductive Health Education at the secondary school level, while in **Niger**, via outreach to 200 schools, the programme shared sexual and reproductive health and rights information and further raised awareness on menstrual hygiene management in particular. At the same time, in Niger, Spotlight Initiative lobbied with the Government to institutionalize *Clubs de santé scolaires* (CSS – school health clubs). Six school health clubs were established, as were five infirmaries (with materials to build capacity to communicate on sexual and reproductive health and rights), promoting adolescent sexual and reproductive health within education settings. In **Nigeria**, the programme integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights into second-chance education, reaching over 15,000 learners, and, in **Uganda**, Spotlight Initiative used an innovative *edutainment* platform, developing a sexual and reproductive health and rights quiz on a mobile application to reach a wide audience with information on sexual and reproductive health and rights.



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In addition to in-school settings, mentorship opportunities and out-of-school programmes offered a safe space for adolescents and youth to gain important information on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Spearheaded by 454 young mentors, Spotlight Initiative-supported out-of-school programmes in **Mozambique** reached more than 40,000 youth and were an effective way of raising awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights in this population.

Integrated access to services

The Spotlight Initiative promotes a survivor-centred, integrated approach to access to services, including in maternal health and the treatment of obstetric fistula. On the latter, the Initiative robustly resourced obstetric fistula care services across programmes, improving availability in **Nigeria** and **Liberia**, for example, where the programme supported 37 obstetric fistula survivors with services, including obstetric fistula surgeries, strengthening access to critical sexual and reproductive health and rights care. In **Malawi**, economic and social components were incorporated into sexual and reproductive health and rights services, deepening a multi-pronged approach.

As maternal and neonatal health are integral to furthering sexual and reproductive health and rights, Spotlight Initiative carried out a range of activities in support of maternal and neonatal health. Through the programmes in **Liberia**, **Mali**, **Niger** and **Nigeria**, for example, maternity waiting homes and delivery rooms were either built or refurbished to enhance obstetric services, improving access to maternity home facilities, and deepening discussion and exchange on family planning and contraceptives. In **Nigeria**, maternity waiting homes were supported in Sokoto state in response to high maternal mortality rates and to address the delays that contribute to preventable maternal deaths. In **Malawi**, nearly 50,000 women and girls accessed sexual and reproductive health and rights services in 2021, an almost 100 per cent increase from the previous year (2020).

One-stop centres can often provide a more holistic approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights and addressing violence against women and girls with improved continuity of care, making these

more convenient and accessible for many women and girls. Spotlight Initiative supported one-stop centres and clinics across programmes in Africa, including in **Nigeria**, where 1,280 women and girl survivors of sexual violence accessed one-stop centres, receiving critical sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services. “Young Moms” clinics have been scaled up in high-burden and hard-to-reach local government areas in **Nigeria** as well, expanding antenatal care for pregnant adolescents. The Initiative also supported five existing youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health centres, reaching young people with critical adolescent sexual and reproductive health information and services including family planning and HIV testing; 31 young women received obstetric care at birth.

To promote inclusive universal health care, Spotlight Initiative in **Uganda** advocated for equitable health services that would address the sexual and reproductive health and rights needs of adolescent girls and young women, in the development of universal health coverage. To address some of the intersecting discrimination faced when seeking services in **Zimbabwe**, the Initiative supported a hotline service that was accessed by marginalized populations such as sex workers and men who have sex with men.

Data

Finally, programmes advocated for the inclusion and availability of more sexual and reproductive health and rights data. The programme in **Malawi** supported data systems, trained service providers and conducted a poll related to the access and quality of services for sexual and reproductive health. In **Uganda**, the programme supported the Uganda Bureau of Statistics to include indicators on sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence by conducting training and pre-testing of the data tools.

6.4 Responding to Challenges to Advance Results

As detailed above, in 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes collectively contributed to efforts to end violence against women and girls, with progress and achievements across the Initiative's six Pillars. As the Initiative saw critical successes, programmes also faced challenges in their implementation, with teams creatively adapting to continue to deliver for women and girls. The sections below highlight some unique challenges that emerged across the Initiative. This is not a comprehensive overview of programmatic, technical or contextual challenges faced, but rather focuses on more specific and less-discussed challenges from which the Spotlight Initiative can learn and accelerate results. Text boxes capturing the mitigating measures put in place by Spotlight Initiative follow the descriptions of challenges.

6.4.1 Programmatic Challenges

Implementing as a demonstration fund for United Nations development system reform

The inter-agency nature of the Spotlight Initiative is complex, as UN Country Teams have to adapt to the new way of working in line with UN Reform and gradually transition to better coordinated processes and programming. Yet the last few years have shown that the more transformative and comprehensive results of this inter-agency model have made the investment in time and resources to adjust to UN Reform worthwhile. Notably, the mid-term assessments of early 2021 conducted a survey of more than 700 stakeholders (government, civil society, the European Union and United Nations), and more than 90 per cent of stakeholders identified the Spotlight Initiative as contributing to more integrated, more efficient and better coordinated UN Country Teams. **The mid-term assessment exercise found that the countries that were the most effective in delivery and scored the highest, were those that aligned best with the principle of UN Reform, a strong indication that this new way of working is key to the Spotlight Initiative model and its results.**

Even so, Spotlight Initiative programmes have continued to face certain difficulties in fully

transitioning to delivering under UN Reform. The broader United Nations system is still in the process of adapting rules and procedures to facilitate a standard set of operating procedures to support inter-agency work. Spotlight Initiative teams continue to seek out context-specific solutions in order to undertake joint operations and programming. In some programmes, Spotlight Initiative teams committed to undertaking joint work and programme management but had to plan for longer time frames, given the different sequencing of agency-specific procedures, as required steps and expected timelines did not always align across agencies to facilitate the timely launching of processes and the signing of contracts, for example.

Despite the ongoing challenges, the United Nations, the European Union, and partners, reported in 2021 that Spotlight Initiative's commitment to inter-agency coordination under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator allowed the Initiative to strengthen partnerships, including with grassroots and local organizations, and expand the reach of programme interventions among marginalized communities. [Chapter 4](#) has more information on the results of inter-agency coordination, as does the overarching results section above. Lessons learned relating to UN Reform are captured in [Chapter 8](#).

Identifying and building capacity for Spotlight Initiative teams and partners

By 2021 the majority of Spotlight Initiative programmes had completed recruitment; however, challenges in ensuring sufficient capacity within teams and with implementing partners required ongoing attention. Many programmes had to re-advertise for positions, consultancies, and implementing partners due to a limited applicant pool, which resulted in longer timelines for activities and partnership-building than initially estimated. Moreover, staff turnover and long periods of vacancy for particular positions likely contributed to lower implementation rates, especially given the importance of key staff members to take forward inter-agency programme management and coordination in the spirit of UN Reform. In certain programmes, significant acceleration of implementation coincided with the period following the entry of Spotlight Initiative coordinators and other key staff into programme countries.

Mitigating the challenges:

Implementing inter-agency practices for streamlined programming and sustainable results

Across programmes, Spotlight Initiative teams convened regular inter-agency meetings and used or developed common tools and templates to facilitate joint work. Several programmes continued to use joint standard operating procedures to harmonize functioning and programming across agencies, to clearly delineate roles within Spotlight Initiative teams and with programme partners, and to advance programmes' commitments to more coherent, joined-up ways of working. Other programmes held dedicated workshops or working groups to guide joint work on specific processes such as annual reporting or launching joint calls for Expressions of Interest for CSO selection, as with the **Africa Regional Programme**, and to improve coordination in a more ongoing manner, such as in **Mozambique**. In Mozambique, the team conducted a workshop to operationalize implementation under UN Reform and developed a roadmap to guide efforts to adapt the programme accordingly. Crucially, the Resident Coordinator exercised leadership by playing a key role in building consensus from senior management across agencies and Pillars, which is expected to ensure cohesive and meaningful adoption of the roadmap in service of better coordinated programming.

Moreover, some programmes have found that implementing in a more connected way across agencies has contributed to more effective risk management in relation to programme partners. In Belize, the team implemented a joint approach to capacity building for implementing partners on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, which has become a critical part of the United Nations' support to partners. As a result, the programme has been able to work with government institutions and civil society organizations to review their internal processes and strengthen compliance with core standards.

These practices enabled programmes to learn from the challenges of implementing a new way of working and to ultimately streamline programming and programme management to more effectively deliver results as one United Nations.

This shift indicated that slower progress earlier in the year was due to the absence of this critical coordination function. Other challenges related to programme capacity in 2021 included:

- Working jointly and coordinating effectively on recruitment and procurement processes – in line with UN Reform – requires more time and human resources than employing agency-specific processes, as teams must coordinate roles and collaborate on documents, including terms of reference.
- Given that the level of capacity varies across implementing partners, programmes need to dedicate time and resources to mapping capacity needs, developing different capacity-building plans for different partners, and monitoring progress against implementation targets.
- For regional programmes, the limited availability of experts who are qualified and interested in undertaking work with a complex regional scope required teams to revise procurement plans and adjust activities.
- Because of Spotlight Initiative's use of English as the primary working language, linguistic barriers at times prevented otherwise qualified applicants from carrying out projects and interventions for Spotlight Initiative. Within programme teams where few people speak English natively, additional human resources are required for communication, reporting and technical inputs.

- In order to follow the principles of participation, local ownership and leaving no one behind, Spotlight Initiative programmes work with local and grassroots organizations. However, these partnerships may require programmes to adjust their methods of engaging civil society and spend

additional time in order to reach a diverse range of organizations, build long-term capacity, and meaningfully support partners while also balancing the importance of reaching programme targets and implementing on time.

Mitigating the challenges:

Strengthening programme and partner capacity

In order to mitigate challenges with programme capacity, Spotlight Initiative teams adopted existing measures within internal United Nations agency systems to strengthen human resources as well as external measures to build the capacity of implementing partners. For example, in **Guyana**, the programme utilized existing United Nations roster systems to identify qualified personnel when calls for proposals were unsuccessful. In **Malawi**, the programme conducted trainings on gender- and disability-sensitive monitoring and reporting, which improved the level of understanding among implementing partners about the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change – critical for comprehensive and transformative interventions across the programme. The Malawi team is currently planning trainings on financial management to address the low absorption rates by implementing partners.

Across programmes, the hands-on role of the UN Resident Coordinator significantly helped teams identify solutions and monitor progress against mitigating capacity-related challenges. In Timor-Leste, the team reported that regular meetings with the Resident Coordinator to discuss programme status enabled the team to more quickly and efficiently decide and act on the necessary adaptation measures.

Securing and maintaining government engagement

In line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, national governments are an essential partner to the United Nations at the country-level. Within these partnerships, United Nations programmes facilitate impartial relationships and secure commitments to continue programming and sustain progress. Spotlight Initiative programmes follow this approach, working closely with governments as strategic partners at the highest level, including with Heads of States, in order to secure government buy-in and sustainability of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. Though programme experiences with governments are generally positive, certain challenges related to long-term government engagement emerged in 2021:

- In some countries, Spotlight Initiative programmes had to contend with political instability, conflict or transitions, which in certain cases effectively paused work with governments as partners were focused on election periods or emergency response, or as new government partners entered office and required teams to invest in relationship-building anew. As a result of these shifts and the mitigating measures that teams took in response, the implementation of certain activities, primarily under Pillars 1 (reforming laws and policies) and 2 (strengthening institutions), took longer than initially planned.
- Aligning programme timeframes with national agendas and government workplans is often difficult, which can limit the level of coherence and effectiveness of joint interventions with the government.

- Even where teams have built strong working relationships with government counterparts who have the political will to support Spotlight Initiative, bureaucratic processes can slow down and even prevent meaningful partnership, for example, where little delegation of authority hinders smooth and timely decision-making.
- High levels of political polarization, both within government and between government and civil society, can undermine a cohesive government commitment to the Spotlight Initiative.
- Occasionally, a government partner will resist a high number of requests for engagement and participation and consequently pauses partnership efforts for a period of time.
- Exchanges between government and civil society are critical to advancing local and national ownership and sustainability and to elevating the role of civil society in the elimination of violence against women and girls. However, some programmes have had difficulty increasing the level of engagement between government and civil society, especially where there is significant distrust and political sensitivity.



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Meaningfully engaging civil society

The Global, Regional and National Civil Society Reference Groups have been a primary mechanism for civil society engagement, including monitoring of Spotlight Initiative. In November 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat conducted a global survey to measure and track Reference Group engagement. In total, 127 Reference Group members from 27 National, Regional and Global Reference Groups

in all Spotlight Initiative regions participated in the survey. These surveys are held twice a year and help inform the biannual Civil Society Regional Forums that allow United Nations teams and Reference Groups members at national, regional and global levels to exchange experiences, challenges, practises and lessons related to meaningful and inclusive engagement. The November 2021 Civil Society Reference Group Forums focused on practical solutions to overcome identified challenges.

Mitigating the challenges:

Solidifying and strengthening government partnerships

Securing engagement with new government actors can slow implementation as teams dedicate needed time to building a strong partnership and, in some cases, adjust programming based on the priorities of the new administration. Yet it can also provide a unique opportunity to advocate for the importance of eliminating violence against women and girls, when new governments are open to hearing how Spotlight Initiative can advance national priorities. In **Mozambique**, for example, the programme worked with a new administration to incorporate eliminating violence against women and girls within national response and prevention efforts following natural disasters, given the administration's interest in providing assistance to those affected by climate change.

For some Spotlight Initiative programmes, focusing government partnership at the local level has limited the impact of national political transitions on programming. In **Niger**, implementing activities at the community level with previously contracted government partners allowed the programme to continue delivering even as a restructuring of ministries following national elections resulted in a significant slowdown of administrative functions.

Other programmes have been successful in integrating contingency plans within government workflows to minimize disruptions to Spotlight Initiative interventions. In **El Salvador**, the Initiative coordinated with national institutions to develop sustainability strategies in order to secure the commitment of government counterparts to maintaining key actions related to the Spotlight Initiative even during transitions. In **Samoa** and **Vanuatu**, assigning government focal points to be responsible for advancing work with Spotlight Initiative has improved communication flows during transitions and resulted in more successful activities despite limited capacity.

In order to foster the participation of civil society in efforts to engage government in the elimination of violence against women and girls, programmes have deferred to the expertise of civil society organizations to identify the most effective modality for engagement. The **Pacific Regional Programme**, for instance, learned that youth sometimes felt uncomfortable openly sharing their experiences in government and United Nations office spaces, so the programme handed over management of certain activities to a civil society partner who could more effectively engage youth in "safe spaces".

Reflecting on the survey results, the issues raised during the Civil Society Regional Reference Group Forums, as well as exchanges with Spotlight Initiative teams and Reference Group members themselves, the following challenges arose in 2021:

- National and local civil society organizations continue to face challenges **accessing United Nations funding due to United Nations procedures**, including complex proposal templates and short deadlines. The Civil Society National Reference Group in **Trinidad and Tobago** has voiced concern over the onerous procurement processes, which vary across

United Nations agencies and serve as a barrier to effective grassroots engagement. The team in **Jamaica** recognized that the process for many organizations to apply for and establish partnership agreements is cumbersome and may exclude grassroots organizations from applying for and receiving funding. In some cases, civil society organizations, particularly small ones, were not familiar with United Nations processes, which resulted in either few or low-quality applications. In other cases, civil society organizations had the expertise and connection to local communities but lacked the absorption capacity required by the United Nations to deliver on larger grants.

Key figures from the Civil Society Global Reference Group survey (November 2021)

- Around 54% of respondents declare that they are actively engaged in realizing the key objectives of the Reference Group and about 80% shared that they are able to provide meaningful feedback, inputs and suggestions to the Spotlight Initiative programme team
- Approximately half of the respondents declared that their role on the Reference Group is clear
- Around 82% of Reference Group members have submitted a budgeted workplan or are in the process of developing one
- Respondents are split in how they perceive the communication channels with other Reference Groups (national, regional and global). Of the respondents, 37.8% felt communication was weak, 34.6% modest and 27.6% strong
- 40% of respondents reported that communication with the National, Regional or Operational Steering Committees was modest, while 31.4%, of respondents reported that the communication was weak, and 28.4% felt communication was strong

A [summary and analysis](#) of the survey is available.

- Greater coordination and increased transparency are needed for civil society advisory mechanisms to be effective and influential, including strengthened communication with Spotlight Initiative teams and steering committees.
- More inclusive and meaningful engagement of Civil Society Reference Group members is needed in strategic and decision-making spaces for members to fulfil their mandate to guide, advise and hold Spotlight Initiative accountable to its commitments. The key underlying challenge here is the lack of trust between Spotlight Initiative teams and Civil Society Reference Group members, which ultimately inhibits close collaboration.
- The absence of compensation for the time, work and expertise provided by Civil Society Reference Group members also impedes their participation from being fully impactful.
- Limited physical access to communities and rights-holders has created complexities for implementation in some countries. Access to target communities was constrained due to geographical and environmental factors, such as rainy seasons, migration during dry seasons, or long distances travelled on poorly constructed roads. The COVID-19 pandemic also made physical meetings and movement challenging, with work shifting to online spaces. Moving to virtual spaces has posed a challenge to participation in some activities for groups with limited internet access, while also allowing a broader reach of other activities through radio and television broadcasting.
- There is a possibility of a conflict of interest in the monitoring role of the Civil Society Reference Group members when their organizations serve as implementing partners.

Mitigating the challenges:

Fostering further civil society engagement

The feedback received from programme teams and Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG) members through regional calls and consultations informed the decision to develop a Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement of Reference Groups, in close collaboration with civil society and the European Union in 2020, which has informed engagement in 2021.

To support meaningful engagement and foster mutual accountability, Reference Group members are represented in coordination and Pillar technical working groups in several programmes including in **Belize, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Timor-Leste** and **Zimbabwe**. This allows them to advise continuously throughout programme implementation. To support the meaningful engagement of the Civil Society Reference Group in the programme, foster mutual accountability and strengthen partnerships in **Malawi**, two representatives of the Civil Society Reference Group were nominated (along with representatives of the European Union) to join the Coordination Team, which meets on a monthly basis. Members of the Civil Society Reference Group also participate in quarterly Pillar coordination meetings, where the Civil Society Reference Group members are assigned to Pillars based on their expertise and experience. In **Kyrgyzstan**, a number of recommendations from Civil Society Reference Group members were taken into consideration while developing the Phase II proposal, for example, on integrating activities to increase awareness of duty bearers on the Istanbul Protocol. To mitigate the risk of excluding groups due to COVID-19 restrictions for in-person meetings, most programmes provided data credits and equipment to facilitate online participation.

Reference Groups have been instrumental in advocacy and policy change. In **Papua New Guinea**, the Civil Society Reference Group made a submission to the Special Parliamentary Inquiry on Gender-Based Violence. Out of the 71 outcome statements, 2 were quoted recommendations from the Civil Society Reference Group and acknowledged by the Special Parliamentary Committee. In **Belize**, in collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative team, the Civil Society National Reference Group and other relevant civil society organizations, a position paper will 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.

The Spotlight Initiative Civil Society Reference Groups were utilized as mechanisms for civil society engagement in addressing violence against women and girls in the broader United Nations system, beyond the Spotlight Initiative. In **Samoa, Vanuatu** and **the Pacific Regional Programme**, it was decided to expand the scope of the Reference Groups to a more holistic mandate. In **Samoa**, the Civil Society Reference Group facilitated community consultations for the United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) and they were consulted by the Government as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for Samoa and had the opportunity to contribute to the initial phase of development of the National Prevention Framework. These practices pave the way for the sustainability of the Civil Society Reference Group going forward.

In **Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria**, and **Zimbabwe**, the Civil Society Reference Groups played a critical role in the programmes' roll out of the participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy. For example, in **Nigeria**, the Reference Group was able to produce an independent scorecard that described how the project implementation fared in 2021. Similarly, they produced six reports from the joint monitoring visit to the six programme target states with corresponding recommendations for action. [Chapter 8](#) has more about the Reference Groups' engagement in monitoring and evaluation.

To mitigate the risk of conflict of interest, specific guidance was issued for all Spotlight Initiative programmes to put in place concrete measures. In several programmes such as **Belize, Haiti and Jamaica** a clause was included in the Code of Conduct for members that are implementing partners to recuse themselves when the Civil Society Reference Group evaluates or issues recommendations on an intervention in which they are involved.

The Reference Groups have been a central partner in coordination, knowledge transfer and capacity-strengthening activities. The **Latin America Regional Reference Group** established a coordination mechanism for the Civil Society Reference Groups in the Latin America region (Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico). The groups exchanged relevant information, analysis and lessons learned on the implementation of 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”, which will be launched in 2022.

6.4.2 Technical Challenges

Though there were widespread gains in the work to end violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative faced unique technical challenges, with common patterns emerging across regions. Spotlight Initiative programmes addressed these challenges by skilfully adapting technical programming to ensure women and girls continued to be served. Common technical challenges are elaborated below.

Well into its second year, the **COVID-19 pandemic**, continues to disproportionately impact the most marginalized women, girls and communities (in **Belize**, for instance, various strains of COVID-19 delayed community interventions in marginalized and indigenous communities). **School closures** were widespread and, despite innovative adaptations for remote learning and service delivery, women and girls experienced barriers to access. For example, in **Mali**, the training of teachers and integration of reproductive health in school curriculums slowed. Though remote education is extensive, the shift to virtual programming created a digital divide as those from marginalized groups were often excluded, as highlighted by programmes in **Jamaica** and **Timor-Leste**. COVID-19 unleashed a learning crisis on the African continent, with the **Africa Regional Programme** addressing school closures that disrupted millions of students.

The already strained health system faced challenges providing essential services, including for sexual and reproductive health and rights, such as contraceptives, due to delays within supply chains as highlighted by the **Caribbean Regional Programme**. The **Pacific Regional Programme** experienced significant challenges due to intersecting crises of COVID-19 and natural disasters, halting activities such as the development of standard operating procedures for a clinical response on sexual and gender-based violence for health workers. For the **Safe and Fair** programme, providing services to women migrant workers and operating shelter services to survivors of violence against women and trafficking became more complex and took longer because COVID-19 protocols require multiple testing and longer quarantine measures. Fatigue from virtual participation was also noted particularly in **Grenada** and the **Safe and Fair** programme where, as activities increasingly moved online, it became more challenging to keep stakeholders engaged.

Despite scaling up efforts, **child marriages** continued to be a barrier to ending violence against women and girls. Spotlight Initiative programmes worked directly with change actors such as traditional leaders and community members to address this. Child marriages increased in **Malawi** and, due to political instability, child marriages rose in **Afghanistan** and in **Ethiopia as identified by the Africa Regional Programme**, where

they were previously in decline. As part of the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Legal Review in Central Asia, experts from **the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** were initially unsure whether to address religious marriages (given that states in the region are secular and do not operate under multiple legal systems). However, since early marriages have been linked to the widespread practice of religious marriages, the programme navigated this nuance and was able to reach an agreement to comprehensively address the harmful practice.

Securing support at community and national levels to address ending violence against women and girls has been a challenge in certain contexts. Some Spotlight Initiative programmes were confronted with challenges, including a lack of support or delays from stakeholders at the national level, primarily from politicians and justice representatives.

On the latter, in **Nigeria**, members of the Nigeria police force were indicted, on several reports, for perpetuating violence, including sexual violence. This has discouraged survivors from reporting cases. Restrictions from COVID-19 also impeded access

to justice in **Uganda**, where the closure of courts delayed pending cases.

Governments, as duty bearers, are critical to ensuring sustainability and ownership of results, and shifts in political priorities that result from changing governments can slow the momentum previously built around ending violence against women and girls. For example, initial opposition from religious leaders in **Mali** against a draft law on ending violence against women and girls slowed progress towards adopting the law. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative experienced some resistance from community members who misconstrued the objectives of the Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence curriculum, and believed it would teach young girls how to fight against community members. Similarly, parents and community members in **Haiti** were not initially supportive of setting up the Girl Space, designed to facilitate positive mentorship activities. The Initiative also faced backlash in **Uganda**, where solar lights installed to help prevent violence against women and girls in refugee settlements were vandalized. Having support from stakeholders from the beginning is integral to successfully champion long-term



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efforts to end violence against women and girls. Garnering this initial level of support was a challenge in **Kyrgyzstan, Niger and Nigeria**. Spotlight Initiative in **Zimbabwe** faced initial challenges in gathering support from private sector stakeholders, who were slow to recognize the extent to which sexual violence and violence against women and girls pervades their respective workplaces.

Some Spotlight Initiative programmes had difficulty **obtaining robust, quality data**. For instance, national capacity to measure prevalence and conduct studies on violence against women and girls remains weak in Central Asia, as highlighted by the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**. There is also a limited availability of research institutions capable of handling complex regional studies focused on gender overall. Spotlight Initiative in **Mali** faced challenges with the statistical production of quality data on ending violence against women and girls,

and in **Nigeria** it had challenges reporting data at the subnational level.

While there were major gains across programmes, a common challenge, particularly across the **Pacific, Caribbean and Central Asia and Afghanistan regional programmes**, was finding **sufficient technical expertise** to drive efforts for ending violence against women and girls through Spotlight Initiative. In **Grenada**, demands for technical coherence grew as Spotlight Initiative partners, such as government and civil society, needed support in navigating the complexities of programming for ending violence against women and girls. Experts specifically trained in ending violence against women and girls are critical, beyond having a general background or experience working on gender more broadly – the Initiative in **Tajikistan** faced difficulties in finding expertise for either.



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Mitigating the challenges:

Evidence-based adaptations

Faced with these technical challenges, Spotlight Initiative programmes implemented several mitigating measures. Programmes across the board were able to pivot and develop innovative solutions to address violence against women and girls. This has included ensuring that women and girls had access to lifesaving essential services through remote service delivery (in the face of COVID-19) and careful in-person provision through following safety protocols and providing personal protective equipment. For instance, the **Safe and Fair** programme has been rapidly responding to evolving needs throughout the pandemic through several initiatives. The programme has shared information on available services for women migrant workers who have experienced violence, through civil society organizations closest to those being served, kept shelters and hotlines in ASEAN countries active, ensured quarantine centres have protocols in place to protect women and girls and enhanced the capacities of frontline workers to safely use technology for remote service provision. In **Papua New Guinea**, as is the case across many other Spotlight Initiative programmes, the Initiative purchased internet and data packages to support information-sharing amongst focal points for violence against women and girls and their partners in order to facilitate continued learning and adaptation on ending violence against women and girls through the evolving situation.

Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi** also worked to mitigate technical challenges. In particular, the Initiative garnered community support and implemented sustainable interventions to withdraw girls from child marriages. To mitigate resistance from community members for launching the Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence curriculum, the Initiative conducted intensive and systematic community mobilizations prior to the launch, which included community volunteers and groups of mothers. This helped community members understand the objectives of the Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence curriculum and dispel myths while addressing fears. Additionally, to ensure efforts to end child marriage are sustainable, Spotlight Initiative in Malawi **provides economic, educational and psychosocial support for girls withdrawn from child marriages in order to break the cycle of dependence and eliminate the risk of them returning to the marriages**. An orientation with **110 head teachers** was conducted to equip them with skills on how to better support these girl students.

By identifying the potential linkages between religious marriages and child marriages, the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** used the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Legal Review as an opportunity to advocate for an end to child marriages. Efforts to end child marriage in Central Asia are often countered with the argument that religious marriages are legitimate. Including religious marriages as part of the legal review was paramount as it reiterated that ending child marriage is at the centre of **Article 5 in CEDAW**. The Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme also drew on a good practice from Uzbekistan whereby an agreement was reached that religious clerics require an official marriage registration to officiate a religious marriage. Spotlight Initiative collaborates closely with faith leaders to end child marriages and address challenges to this, and the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme highlights the strength of these partnerships through the process of its legal review.

To increase access to justice in **Nigeria**, Spotlight Initiative is strengthening gender-responsive budgeting to secure sustainable funding for cases of violence against women and girls and to train law enforcement officers on prevention and response efforts. To address challenges with reporting on data, national-level dialogue has opened the opportunity to set up a Data Dashboard for national gender-based violence data. In **Uganda**, digital kiosks offered legal services through Spotlight Initiative's support and waivers were given to enable quality data collection.

In **Kyrgyzstan**, extensive planning was conducted to revise indicators, ethical protocols and data sharing policies, and in **Guyana**, the Initiative is proposing to train approximately **6,000 officers** (the entire police service in Guyana) through the COPSQUAD initiative (an initiative of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security) to ensure continuity and sustainability of access to justice.

Furthermore, to address gaps in technical expertise, several programmes such as the **Pacific Regional Programme**, **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** and **Grenada** worked alongside civil society and other national and regional partners to engage in capacity development. For example, the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** provided capacity-building activities to equip youth-led organizations with gender-based violence prevention tools.

6.4.3 Contextual Challenges

Operating in insecurity

In 2021, some Spotlight Initiative programmes faced a uniquely difficult or deteriorating security situation, requiring a thorough reassessment of programme operations, management and interventions.

In **Afghanistan**, for example, Spotlight Initiative had to halt much of programme implementation following the Taliban's rise to power until the team could identify a feasible path forward that protected the security of programme staff, partners and rights holders. Moreover, the migration of women's rights activists, civil society leaders, non-profit staff and many other Afghans seeking security outside of the country has left a vacuum in services and response, which Spotlight Initiative may need to help address in order to make progress in expanding access to services for survivors of violence and protecting the rights and well-being of women and girls. The Taliban's position on the preservation of women's rights has so far been ambiguous. Furthermore, while political statements in support of the right to education for young women were made, the country witnessed an about-face, and implementation stalled.⁷⁹ In recent months, there has been an increase in levels of political intimidation, protection risks and killing of women in the public sphere, particularly women human rights defenders and peacebuilders, women journalists and judges, thereby shrinking human rights spaces for women. Efforts continue to be urgently needed to ensure

that the gains made on women's rights are not rolled back and rights are protected and promoted. This will require high-level engagement and support to ensure the safety of personnel and rights holders.

The **Africa Regional Programme** has identified how political and economic instability are disrupting services and rolling back progress made towards ending violence against women and girls, including harmful practices. In Ethiopia, while child marriage and female genital mutilation had been declining, the current insecurity and violence across several parts of the country pose a serious challenge to the progress made. Similarly, the political disruptions and insecurities in parts of Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Niger, and Sudan are posing a challenge to the provision of prevention and protection services against harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

In **Haiti**, the rise of kidnapping, armed gang violence, and rape in Port-au-Prince has slowed down the implementation of activities related to prevention and services in affected areas that have become inaccessible. Moreover, as a result of this insecurity, road access has been restricted in the south of the country, where two Spotlight Initiative departments are located. Spotlight Initiative has consequently faced difficulty monitoring and coordinating interventions in these areas. The climate of political tension and institutional dysfunction was not conducive to mobilizing political actors to work towards strengthening the legal, political and

⁷⁹ Foreign Policy, March 29, 2022 "[Taliban Reversal on Girls' Education Ignites World's Anger](#)"

institutional frameworks integral for the prevention and response to violence against women and girls.

In **Myanmar** (covered by the **Safe and Fair** programme), the escalation of armed conflict, combined with political instability, has produced an insecure environment that has required Spotlight Initiative to limit programming and has delayed the signing of partnership and personnel contracts given security concerns. Parliamentarians, political leaders, prominent social workers, journalists and artists were arrested.

In **Nigeria**, escalating insecurity in the south-eastern region amidst the ongoing incarceration of the leader

of the Indigenous People of Biafra, a separatist organization, led the Government to institute sit-at-home directives and shut down transportation and commerce. As a result, the Spotlight Initiative needed to reassess how to implement planned interventions in target states located within the region.

In **Uganda**, the Kisoro District experienced an influx of people fleeing conflict and violence from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, putting mounting pressure on Spotlight Initiative to immediately support women and girl refugees who are survivors of, or at risk of, violence.

Mitigating the challenges:

Adapting programming and programme management to deliver despite insecurity

It is evident that during a crisis, displacement or natural disaster, the risk of violence against women and girls increases. The adaptability of Spotlight Initiative to such contexts highlights the Initiative's work across the peace-development-humanitarian nexus. The Initiative has and will continue to work to eliminate violence against women and girls while addressing the basic human needs of women and girls in countries that are also facing conflict and humanitarian crises.

In 2021, across programme contexts, but especially in situations of significant insecurity, the "do no harm" principle has guided programme planning in order to ensure that the safety and security of personnel, partners, and rights holders are prioritized. Teams have undertaken programme criticality assessments where needed to determine whether activities are feasible and under what conditions, while following all United Nations security measures. Teams have also consulted with national stakeholders, EU Delegations and the European Union in Brussels, the United Nations agency headquarters, and the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to identify how to advance implementation when and where possible.

Each Spotlight Initiative programme has worked to mitigate the challenges of an insecure operating context based on their respective needs and opportunities. In **Afghanistan**, the team has modified interventions wherever possible and adjusted language to minimize sensitivities and engage directly with de facto authorities at the provincial level. The team has also held twice-weekly monitoring calls with civil society organizations on risks and the feasibility of resuming interventions. Moreover, the team has provided capacity-building training for implementing partners that have a strong track record and presence on the ground, supporting them to be more resilient to threats and have continued advocacy with the de facto authorities to raise their awareness about the importance of services to end violence against women and girls. The **Africa Regional Programme** is strategically monitoring the political situation at the country level while ensuring alternative ways of engaging stakeholders, including, in particular, government partners in Ethiopia, Guinea, Mali and Eritrea.

In **Haiti**, where violence has prevented access to certain communities by humanitarian and development actors, Spotlight Initiative has supported the networks built by civil society partners that collect and share information, facilitate assistance to survivors, mobilize local women's organizations, set up remote support services for survivors through WhatsApp and other technological platforms, and continue conducting educational activities on violence against women. This example is further evidence of the unique value that civil society partnership brings to programming for the elimination of violence against women and girls and the critical need to centre civil society experiences and expertise within programmes. In **Myanmar**, the **Safe and Fair** programme adopted the UN Country Team engagement guidelines and accordingly paused engagement with the Government. The team has prioritized engagement of, and partnerships with, civil society organizations and women's networks in order to continue implementing activities to protect the rights and safety of women migrant workers. In **Nigeria**, the team has engaged security agencies and adjusted travel and implementation plans to conduct activities during weekends, when transport is safer and more feasible. Furthermore, the team has utilized online platforms to continue engagement with community-based organizations. In **Uganda**, the team implemented the Refugee Response Plan, which includes infrastructural support to gender-based violence shelters. The team also conducted a rapid gender assessment to inform interventions and provided support with the provision of mental health and psychosocial support minimum services packages and dignity kits.

COVID-19 adaptations

Though programmes faced a difficult global environment in which to operate, Spotlight Initiative programmes delivered for women and girls, achieving significant results, as described above in the results sub-section. In addition to contexts of insecurity described above, COVID-19 continued to present challenges, though programmes nimbly adapted, and, in some cases, identified new possibilities for work to end violence against women and girls.

Spotlight Initiative programmes leveraged their partnerships with government and civil society to ensure that the elimination of violence against women and girls was reflected in national COVID-19 response and recovery efforts as well, and to elevate the issue of violence against women and girls on national political agendas. Where successful, these efforts will be critical in facilitating national ownership and sustaining efforts to end violence against women and girls. Moreover, efforts to adapt programmes to the COVID-19 context increased the Spotlight Initiative's overall capacity; strengthened partnerships, especially with civil society organizations at the frontlines of the pandemic; and strengthened the Initiative's resilience.

Though some teams have gradually transitioned back to working from the office in 2021, many continue to work remotely, which has required an ongoing commitment to ensure (and, where necessary, to fund) technological access and capacity among staff and partners. Fortunately, most staff who were unable to enter programme countries due to border closures in 2020 have since been able to enter, which has improved internal communication and helped ensure sufficient staffing within programme teams.

In certain regions, such as the Caribbean and Pacific, the COVID-19 pandemic was relatively well contained in 2020 with comparatively fewer cases and deaths than in Europe and North America. However, in 2021, the rise of variants, compounded by the ongoing impacts of exponential spread of the virus, produced significant waves of cases and deaths for the first time in these regions. As a result, Spotlight Initiative programmes have continuously assessed their workplans, produced COVID-19 response plans, and reprogrammed funds to ensure that implementation can continue and sufficiently respond to the changing context.



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More specifically, the following COVID-19-related challenges impacted Spotlight Initiative implementation in 2021:

- Globally, the status of women's rights and level of gender equality has regressed significantly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, while violence against women and girls and harmful practices have increased. This climate has continued to make the work of the Spotlight Initiative more challenging and more necessary.
- Given restrictions on travel and large in-person gatherings, and the risk of infection even where restrictions are not officially in place, programmes have delayed, adjusted or cancelled activities across Pillars. Moreover, changes in restrictions throughout the year have made it difficult to follow workplans, as some governments tighten and then loosen restrictions. These actions have extended the timeline for activities, which has created a ripple effect of delayed work with implementing partners, which have also needed more time to reassess their ways of working.
- The postponement of certain interventions until COVID-19 waves and restrictions eased led to a period of more frequent and intense engagement with rights holders and partners once interventions became feasible again, which threatened to overburden Spotlight Initiative teams, programme partners, and communities.
- Although the transition to virtual meetings and activities has enabled programmes to largely continue implementation in the new COVID-19 context, certain interventions and partner engagement could not be carried out via remote modalities because of limited internet connectivity and access by some implementing partners and government partners. Moreover, fatigue with virtual meetings and events and a preference for in-person interventions have led to disengagement and lower participation by some programme partners and rights holders.
- Because the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted supply chains, certain programmes have faced difficulty in procuring supplies and equipment, including those necessary to improve the quality of essential services.

Mitigating the challenges:

Adapting to the ongoing COVID-19 context

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative built on its initial progress in shifting funds and programming to adapt to the COVID-19 context.⁸⁰ All programmes continued to assess their workplans and budgets to ensure comprehensive COVID-19 adaptations and certain programmes, including **Grenada**, updated their COVID-19 response plans based on contextual changes in 2021 and lessons learned in 2020.

Across programmes, Spotlight Initiative continued to prioritize efforts to prevent violence, protect and expand access to services for survivors, and support the work of civil society and women's movements, particularly in addressing the specific needs of women and girls traditionally left behind. At the global level, Spotlight Initiative continued to advocate for increased funding to civil society and government partners to ensure the continuation of frontline services to women and girls and it contributed to visibility for programmes and partners undertaking this work.

Each Spotlight Initiative programme identified mitigating measures to the pandemic tailored to the national or regional context. However, certain actions emerged as common mitigation strategies across programmes, including:

- Adopting virtual or hybrid models of engagement for meetings, events and programme interventions, including establishing platforms for virtual trainings in order to continue strengthening a rights-based approach in the context of prevention of violence against women and girls and COVID-19
- Shifting away from traditional, in-person activities and towards locally accessible multimedia campaigns to both prevent COVID-19 and change harmful social norms, to spread comprehensive sexual education, and to expand knowledge on available services (including sexual and reproductive health services) through channels such as radio, television, instant messaging and social media
- Ensuring that the elimination of violence against women and girls was well integrated into COVID-19 response plans and actions, while also identifying opportunities to strengthen partnership with governments and civil society through national COVID-19 response and prevention efforts, with a view to ensuring the sustainability and resilience of programming
- Revising health guidelines to ensure the continuation of essential health services during the pandemic, in order to contribute to delivering quality and coordinated essential services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health, despite the disruptions of COVID-19
- Regularly monitoring and communicating with implementing partners to identify any challenges to particular activities in order to quickly adjust the implementation modality or reprogramme funds as needed
- Revising activities and workplans to take into account the economic and financial impacts of COVID-19 on women and girls
- Undertaking capacity-building efforts to help enable programme partners, especially local and grassroots civil society organizations, to adapt to the new way of working in the COVID-19 context
- Improving the IT capacity of institutions and service providers to guarantee data gathering and to allow citizens greater access to services in parallel with undertaking COVID-19 prevention measures.

⁸⁰ In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative reprogrammed more than **USD 21 million across all five regions** in order to quickly pivot to addressing violence against women and girls within COVID-19 response.

Responding to natural and climate crises

Natural disasters and climate crises – including hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and flooding – also impacted the context in which programmes worked in 2021. In the aftermath of these crises, many Spotlight Initiative programmes were unable to reach certain populations and had to contend with disrupted access to services for many women

and girls. Moreover, similarly to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, certain government and civil society partners were stretched thin by response efforts and humanitarian needs in the wake of climate crises. As a result, these partners had limited time and capacity to continue engaging with Spotlight Initiative, which often resulted in longer timelines for interventions and partnership efforts that threatened to set back the programme's implementation.

Mitigating the challenges:

Responding to natural and climate crises

In the face of climate-related and natural disasters, Spotlight Initiative programmes advanced efforts to systematically incorporate the elimination of violence against women and girls into local and national emergency response plans. Moreover, programmes turned to government partners and implementing partners for institutional knowledge and lessons learned in order to adapt existing or planned activities to respond to contextual changes and ultimately protect gains made before disasters struck.

In **Jamaica**, for example, the hurricane season, which was also accompanied by heavy rains, delayed programme implementation and by doing so accentuated the importance of climate-resilience programmes. Consequently, Spotlight Initiative supported the strengthening of national and subnational local sustainable development plans that incorporate strategies to prevent violence against women and girls as well as strategies to assist women farmer cooperatives and livelihood projects to reduce violence against women and girls post-disaster. In **Malawi**, the screening of a documentary on the sexual exploitation of girls and how climate change exacerbates this violence was attended by the First Lady. This provided an opportunity for the Spotlight Initiative to help leverage high-level political engagement to advocate for the importance of a cross-sectional response to both climate crises and violence against women and girls. In **Mozambique**, tropical storms and cyclones significantly affected remote areas and disrupted service provision. In addressing these challenges, the Spotlight Initiative relied on mobile clinic brigades as a mitigating measure to ensure continued service provision and delivery.

Amplifying the Work: Communications and Visibility Results

This chapter presents communication and visibility results for 2021. It opens with an overview of the communication objectives and focus in 2021, followed by the Spotlight Initiative's global communication reach, and finally closes with examples on how Spotlight Initiative communications challenged gender stereotypes and raised awareness.

7.1 Overview

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

The year 2021 marked the third full implementation of Spotlight Initiative's country and regional programmes in Africa, ASEAN and Latin America, and the second year of programmes in Central Asia and Afghanistan, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

It was also a pivotal year for the global movement for gender equality, as two Generation Equality Forums were organized by the governments of Mexico and France to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to mobilize for the future. (The 25th anniversary was originally planned for 2020, but was delayed a year due to COVID-19). As noted previously, the EU is the co-leader of the Action Coalition on GBV.

Under its biannual communications and visibility action plan, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat prioritized expanding and consolidating its umbrella **#WithHer campaign**, improving national, regional and global communications capacity, and increasing strategic global advocacy to change the culture of violence against women and girls.



Based on an online opinion survey of 346 respondents from more than 90 countries, **54%** indicated they had been aware of Spotlight Initiative

84% The Spotlight Initiative had an **84% brand positivity rating**

Of the respondents,

- 70%** had **basic knowledge** of violence against women and girls
- 71%** had **accurate knowledge** of the Initiative's geographic coverage
- 33%** **correctly identified** Spotlight Initiative's programming areas

As a new brand, Spotlight Initiative aims to increase its relevance and presence among its intended audiences, namely, young people, cultural and political influencers and the general public. Based on an online opinion survey of 346 respondents⁸¹ from more than 90 countries, 54 per cent indicated they had been aware of the Spotlight Initiative. Of the respondents, 70 per cent had basic knowledge of violence against women and girls, 71 per cent had accurate knowledge of Spotlight Initiative's geographic coverage and 33 per cent correctly identified Spotlight Initiative's programming areas. **Spotlight Initiative had an 84 per cent brand positivity rating**, with social media being the main channel to receive information about Spotlight Initiative. When compared to 2020, all the measured indicators were approximately within the 4 per cent range, meaning that the public perception and brand of Spotlight Initiative has held steady.

⁸¹ Respondents were from diverse sectors, including: 24 per cent from non-governmental organizations, 15 per cent from the private sector, 9 per cent from academia and 31 per cent from other sectors. For a full report, see [here](#).

Communications and visibility in 2021

Highlights: 1 January–31 December

1,450 media outlets 3.6 billion reach 121 countries
3,800+ articles

Spotlight Initiative specific articles were published in more than 1,450 media outlets, including The Washington Post, The Independent, Yahoo News, El Pais, the Associated Press, ABC News, Clarin, Infobae, Euronews, the Bangkok Post, ReliefWeb, Deutsche Welle, Milenio (MX), The Guardian (NG), etc.



130,000
website sessions



15,000
YouTube channel views



27,000
engagements

1.4 million
impressions



36,000
engagements

5.9 million
impressions



8,400
engagements

5.2 million
impressions

7.2 Global Reach: Spotlight Initiative Analytics

7.2.1 Global Website

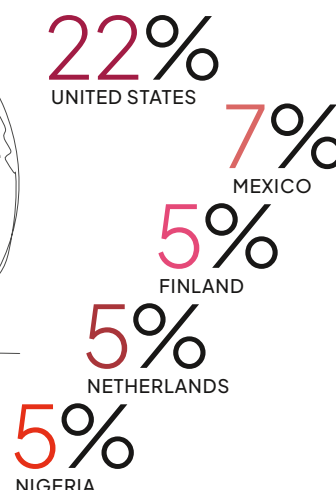
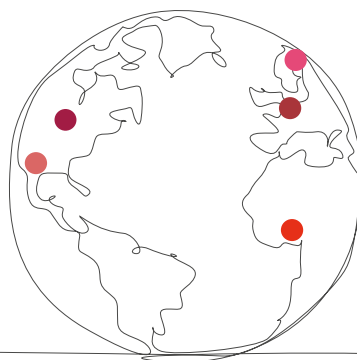
In 2021, the [Spotlight Initiative global website](#) published more than 100 news stories, press releases and publications in five languages (English, French, Spanish, Russian and Portuguese). This year, country and regional programme communications officers were able to share local stories directly to their programme page, thanks to improved website functionality, ensuring content was timely and relevant to local audiences.

The number of site sessions grew by more than 16 per cent, to 130,500, and the average session duration increased significantly, growing from 1:35 to 1:41. The global site's audience was located predominantly in the United States (22 per cent), Mexico (7 per cent), the Netherlands (5 per cent), Nigeria (5 per cent) and Finland (5 per cent) – a result consistent with previous years.

Increased collaboration with Recipient UN Organizations' communications teams led to the publication of Spotlight Initiative stories across multiple United Nations platforms, including the websites or newsletters of UN News, UN Women, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Coordination Office. This expanded Spotlight Initiative's visibility with audiences both within and beyond the United Nations family.

In terms of content, efforts were made to grow the profile of Spotlight Initiative's work with women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. This included publishing an interview with a disability rights campaigner from **Uganda**; a profile of women and girls with disabilities who are completing second-chance education programmes in **Nigeria**; a story on a rural woman with albinism who has become one of the most successful farmers in her community in **Mozambique**; an article on work to prevent elder abuse and violence against elderly women in **Trinidad and Tobago**; interviews with indigenous activist filmmakers in **Honduras**; a story on violence prevention training sessions in indigenous communities in **Argentina**; a human

The number of site sessions grew by more than 16%, to 130,500, and the average session duration increased significantly, growing from 1:35 minutes to 1:41 minutes



The global site's audience was located predominantly in the United States (22%), Mexico (7%), the Netherlands (5%), Nigeria (5%) and Finland (5%) – a result consistent with previous years

interest story on work with HIV-positive women and girls in **Mozambique**; and coverage of the humanitarian efforts led by **Timor-Leste's** LGBTI community in the wake of Cyclone Seroja.

The website content also aligned with key thematic moments on the United Nations calendar, including **International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**, **International Women's Day**, **International Day of Rural Women**, and the **Generation Equality Forum**. It continued to highlight Spotlight Initiative's work across all six Pillars in the 25+ countries and five regions where the Initiative is implementing, while centring the voices of survivors of violence against women and girls and activists through human interest stories.

7.2.2 Social Media

Social media remained the most effective way to communicate and spread the messages of Spotlight Initiative in 2021. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat focused on online communications activities and events in order to overcome the challenges posed by COVID-19 travel and in-person meeting restrictions. This included a special focus on engaging social media influencers and media networks to promote messages on the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Spotlight Initiative developed diverse online activations of its flagship digital engagement campaign on ending violence against women

and girls (**#WithHer**). With the participation of international content creators, United Nations leaders and civil society partners, the campaign reached more than 146 million users on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. At the country level, the campaign was adapted to local contexts and supported by United Nations and European Union representation, along with the voices of civil society activists and women and girl survivors of violence.

Spotlight Initiative's social media presence kept growing in 2021. The Initiative now counts more than 50,000 fans and almost 13 million impressions across **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**. This represents important expansion among audiences (with English accounts): from 2020 to 2021, audiences increased 77.6 per cent on Facebook; 16.7 per cent on Twitter; and 129.7 per cent on Instagram. On these platforms, Spotlight Initiative shared human interest stories, video interviews, articles and publications daily.

More influencers joined the **#WithHer Talks**, a series of social media-based conversations around violence against women and girls featuring celebrities and influencers. The **third episode** was a discussion between an activist and a survivor and certified trauma-involved life coach on what survivors can do to rebuild after trauma. The **fourth episode** was hosted by Miss Universe Belize during the **16 Days of Activism** campaign and aimed to highlight the ways social influencers can use their platforms to address violence against women and girls. A renowned radio journalist from Barbados hosted the **fifth episode**



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where she interviewed Spotlight Initiative partners and advocates on their work to eliminate violence against women and girls in the Caribbean region. Adding to its existing **Twitter** account in Spanish, the Secretariat also launched new social media accounts (**Facebook** and **Instagram**) that aim to reach the public based in Latin America. Spotlight Initiative gathers almost 15,000 fans on these accounts, which are being administered by Spotlight Initiative communications colleagues working in the region.

From January to December 2021, the Spotlight Initiative published more than 1,000 posts (text, photos, and videos created in-house) across all its platforms (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram). The Initiative gained 16,000 new followers. On Twitter, the number of followers has increased by 16 per cent compared to the previous year, to reach almost 19,000 individual followers. The **annual activity on Twitter** also recorded nearly 1,500,000 impressions and nearly 27,000 engagements. On Facebook, the number of fans has increased by 78 per cent compared to the previous year, to reach almost

28,000 individual fans. The **annual activity on Facebook** also recorded almost 6 million impressions and more than 36,000 engagements. On Instagram, the number of followers has increased by 130 per cent compared to the previous year, to reach more than 5,000 individual followers. The **annual activity on Instagram** also recorded more than 5 million impressions (189 per cent growth compared to the previous year) and more than 8,000 engagements (46 per cent increase).

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative video catalogue has expanded this past year. The Secretariat has shared more content on its **YouTube channel** to make all global and locally produced videos available to the public. The Spotlight Initiative YouTube channels can now count more than 90 videos and 873 subscribers (more than a 20 per cent increase). In a year, the channels recorded more than 82,000 impressions.

7.2.3 Media Coverage

Spotlight Initiative engaged in extensive media coverage this year, raising the visibility of violence against women and girls. This was particularly important given the significant increases in violence experienced during COVID-19 and ensuing lockdowns. In total, more than 3,800 Spotlight Initiative-specific articles and stories were published by 1,450 media outlets across 121 countries, with an estimated reach of more than 3.6 billion readers.⁸² Stories were published in top-tier media outlets including: The Washington Post, The Independent, Yahoo News, El País, the Associated Press, ABC News, Clarin, Infobae, Euronews, the Bangkok Post, ReliefWeb, Deutsche Welle, Milenio (MX) and The Guardian (NG) to name a few. This [media report](#) highlights the media coverage over the year.



A number of op-eds in high-profile publications helped Spotlight Initiative reach a broader mainstream audience in 2021. In April, Mexican actress and United Nations Global Advocate for the Spotlight Initiative, Cecilia Suárez, wrote an [op-ed](#) on the rising levels of femicide and the need for



©Spotlight Initiative

positive forms of masculinity and accountability from men and boys. The piece was published in *El País*, one of the world's most widely read Spanish language newspapers, with more than 65 million readers across its editions and more than 110,000 subscribers, amplifying this critical conversation.

In June, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres published his own op-ed in *The Independent* calling for global solidarity to end the shadow pandemic of violence against women and girls in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the article, he used Spotlight Initiative's 2020 key results as evidence that change is possible with substantial and sustained investment, highlighting Spotlight Initiative's success to the news outlets more than 18 million monthly readers.

On 19 November, Spotlight Initiative launched '[Rising to the challenge](#)', its impact report for 2020–2021 at the noon press briefing of the Spokesperson of the United Nations Secretary-General. The highly visual 30-page report illustrates the Initiative's signature results towards ending violence against women and girls in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, on which this year's results build and further contribute to.

⁸² Meltwater media keyword search (1 Jan–31 Dec 2021). Raw data of all media hits available [here](#).



©United Nations

“

“The European Union is financially supporting a programme that we are managing in the UN, the Spotlight Initiative, which aims, to fight violence against women and girls. And that programme is by far the largest programme in the world with these objectives. Just to give you an example, thanks to this programme, [in 2020] 650,000 women victims have been supported all around the world. Eighty-four new laws have been enacted in different countries, exactly to protect women and girls in relation to violence. And if one looks at the number of convictions of perpetrators, we have seen an increase of 22 per cent, which means the programme covers everything from support to victims to enhancing legislation, acting with judicial systems, with the police forces, and at the same time sensitizing especially men and boys to make sure that they have a proper approach to masculinity. So, it’s a wide-ranging set of initiatives that has been very effective in a moment in which, unfortunately, violence against women and girls is increasing.”

– Antonio Gutierrez

The Secretary-General’s speech can be seen in this [video](#).

UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore and Head of the EU Delegation to the UN Ambassador Olof Skoog launched the report and took questions from members of the United Nations press corps. [Read more](#) about the event. While in Brussels in June, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres previewed Spotlight Initiative's signature results highlighted in the report during a television interview with Euronews Brussels Correspondent Stefan Grobe.

7.3 Raising Awareness and Challenging Gender Stereotypes through Spotlight Initiative Communications

Spotlight Initiative communication campaigns aim to challenge existing gender stereotypes and raise awareness on the importance of gender equality and ending violence against women and girls. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every aspect of programming and communications, including efforts to change the attitudes and mindsets that perpetuate violence against women and girls. Many events continued online instead of in person in 2021. One positive outcome of this shift, however, has been the ability to reach a much larger audience online. Another has been the increased role and relevance of influencers to reach audiences online.

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

Diverse country-level examples of communication activities showcase how the Spotlight Initiative made critical shifts to online and remote awareness-raising activities and the differences that these shifts made. For example, in **Belize**, Miss Universe Belize Iris Salguero used the #WithHer Talks format to discuss her own experience of gender-based violence with her 22,000 Instagram followers and to engage other Belizean influencers in a discussion of how they can use their platforms to address violence against women and girls. In **Argentina**, Spotlight Initiative teamed up with the Argentina National



©Spotlight Initiative

Sports Secretariat to launch a social media campaign called **#NoEsNormalEsViolencia** (It's not normal, it's violence) inviting all sports clubs to share and amplify messages focused on violence against women and girls in sports during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

In **Nigeria**, Spotlight Initiative collaborated with the production company behind one of the country's most watched TV sitcoms, "Papa Ajasco," to create 13 special episodes that explore themes around violence against women and girls. These episodes highlight issues such as rape, battery, child abuse, early marriage, female genital mutilation, HIV and the culture of silence with the aim of promoting discussion and bringing about positive change. The series is watched weekly by millions of people in Nigeria and across Africa, as well as online.

In ASEAN, the **Spotlight Initiative's Safe and Fair** programme worked with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) of Cambodia on several social media campaigns. One campaign promoting helplines and the services available to women experiencing violence during COVID-19 lockdowns reached 47,052 people on social media. The Safe and Fair programme also supported the Ministry of Women's Affairs' 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign, which reached a further 16,145 users on social media.

7.3.2 Events and Launches

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, Spotlight Initiative collaborated with Rise, a civil rights accelerator, on an art exhibit at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. **“What Were You Wearing?”** invites United Nations visitors and diplomats alike to observe the outfits worn by sexual assault survivors at the time of their attack, bringing to attention the barriers to justice faced by survivors of sexual violence. The title of the exhibit subverts the phrase, “What were you wearing?” which is commonly used to blame survivors for the crime perpetrated against them. The outfits were contributed by a survivor from each of the five United Nations regional groups (African states, Asia-Pacific states, Eastern European states, Latin America and Caribbean states, Western European and other states). By showing the diversity of sexual assault survivors, the exhibit illustrates both the pervasiveness of the problem and the fallacy of victim-blaming. “What we were wearing did not cause the attack; only our perpetrators caused the attack. What we were wearing is irrelevant,” said Amanda Nguyen, CEO and Founder of Rise.

Senior women leaders

Despite continued travel restrictions, Spotlight Initiative was able to bring together senior United Nations women leaders for a **television-style panel** in December to discuss violence against women and girls. The round table focused on the “invisible emergency” of gender-based violence and the panel included Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, UNFPA Executive Director Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNODC Executive Director Ghada Waly, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore, UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous and UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women Reem Alsalem. It was moderated by Melissa Fleming, head of the UN Department of Global Communications. The video was published to UN Web TV’s 2.14 million subscribers and has been viewed more than 2,500 times on YouTube.

Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls and the Generation Equality Forum

Spotlight Initiative’s partnerships with the Group of Friends and the Generation Equality Forum contribute to visibility on, and awareness of, the importance of ending violence against women and girls in order to progress on sustainable development and peace at a global level. **Chapter 4** has detailed information on the activities of these two strategic partnerships.



©Rafik Photography/Spotlight Initiative Niger

7.3.3 The #WithHer campaign

In its second year of existence, Spotlight Initiative's flagship digital engagement campaign — **#WithHer** — grew in size, impact, reach and visibility. New activations of the campaign focused on curating online conversations among cultural influencers and securing financial support for frontline women's organizations working to end violence against women and girls. The campaign reached more than 146 million users on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram in 2021. A milestone "call to action" for the #WithHer campaign was launched in 2021. In partnership with the UN Foundation, the **WithHer Fund** was launched in December as a new funding vehicle to provide resources directly to grassroots women's organizations working to end violence against women and girls in their local communities. Individual philanthropists, corporate foundations, private sector companies and the **general public can now donate money** to support local grassroots women's organizations. More information on the fund is available in **Chapter 5**, and briefly, in **Chapter 4**.

#WithHer talks

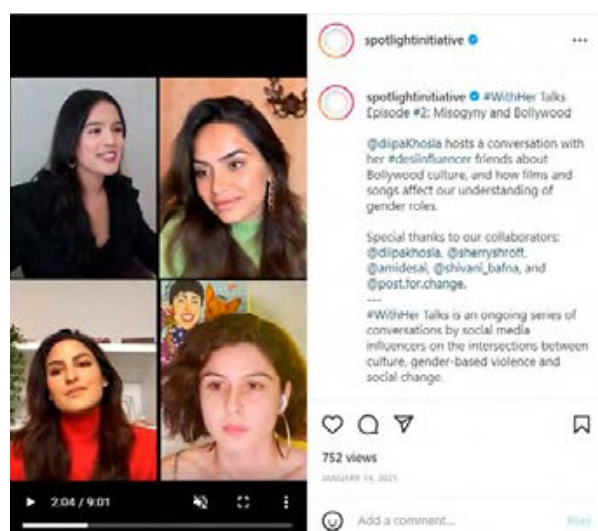
Three episodes of #WithHer Talks — Spotlight Initiative's web series of influencer conversations on the intersections between culture, violence against women and girls and social change — were released in 2021. The objective of the talks is to create

a vehicle for social media influencers to maintain creative control, have real life conversations with their friends and engage their followers on an issue that affects one in three women and girls worldwide. New episodes in 2021 tackled topics such as **overcoming shame, Belizean beauty queens** and a conversation about **violence against women in the Caribbean**. Content is hosted on both Spotlight Initiative's and influencers' social media accounts.

Global advocates and influencers

Through the **#WithHer campaign** and its **Culture Change Commitment**, Spotlight Initiative continued its emphasis on the importance of working closely with public figures who have the power, influence and platforms to help create a global culture free from violence. From current United Nations Global Advocates Cecilia Suárez and Siya Kolisi to potential new allies, Spotlight Initiative explored new opportunities with influencers to reach new audiences.

In addition to sharing Spotlight Initiative messages and content to her millions of followers on social media, as mentioned previously, United Nations Global Advocate for Spotlight Initiative Cecilia Suárez penned a powerful op-ed in El Pais explaining that to end violence against women and girls and femicide, men and institutions must promote a different concept of masculinity.





©Amanda Voisard/UN Women

“Gentlemen, it is time to ask yourself: what does it mean to be a man? Why represent only one form of masculinity? What are they afraid of? What hurts them? I often see men broken because they do not meet the model that society prescribes, but above all, because they do not have tools, not even basic ones, to see themselves in a different light that allows them to connect with their fragility and doubts. There is no map for tenderness, crying, softness, no way to free oneself from the yoke of being the strong provider. Brothers, you and only you have the power to deconstruct and rebuild what it is to be a man. Ask yourself questions, be disturbed by what is going on, go to therapy, find circles of support, be brave enough to experience other ways of existing.” [\(Read more\)](#)

– Cecilia Suárez

“

“It has to be men and not just women telling boys these things, and in turn that means that men have got to stick around and be good fathers to their children. Anyone can father a child, but bringing up that child properly is a very different matter. Fathering a child is biology, and too often in our country that comes with abuse too: a man who has sex with a woman because he can rather than because he cares for her and loves her, and when she has a baby he’s not around to support her and help raise the child... I’m proud to be a UN Global Advocate for the Spotlight Initiative aiming to eliminate all violence against women and girls. Women have suffered too much and too long. Let’s be the generation of men to break this attack on women.”⁸³

– Siya Kolisi

©Courtesy of Siya Kolisi



⁸³ Siya Kolisi, *RISE*, (London, United Kingdom, HarperCollins Publishers, 2021).

Ms. Suárez echoed her message about creating a new idea of masculinity during **her intervention** at the high-level ‘**Power to Transform: Men stepping up to end violence against women**’ at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris. “We have to educate ourselves as adults... in order for our children to learn differently, for girls to know that they are entitled to equality, and for boys to know that there’s space for everyone at the table,” she said.

In an interview with **Harper’s Bazaar**, Ms. Suárez also spoke about her work with Spotlight Initiative, describing how COVID-19 was making “visible” the global pandemic of violence against women and girls.

United Nations Global Advocate Siya Kolisi **also spoke** at the high-level Generation Equality Forum Paris event, where he spoke about the need for men to be accountable and act to prevent violence against women and girls. “I am going to make sure that I set a great example for my son and for my brother,” he said. “I will not only tell them how to live but also show them how to live.” Mr. Kolisi also released his official autobiography titled ‘RISE’ in 2021. In page 260 of the book, he delves into his passion for dispelling myths around male vulnerability and masculinity and for ending violence against women and girls.

7.3.4 Communication for Development (C4D) Activities

Over the course of the year, several programmatic interventions were positively influenced by contributions from the Spotlight Initiative’s communications officers. A few country examples are shared below.

In **Malawi**, the communications team supported the development of 23 episodes of a radio soap opera on violence against women and girls in partnership with the National Initiative for Civic Education (NICE), an organization that specializes in communication for development. The episodes aired three times a week on national radio and nine community radio stations for three months. The Spotlight Initiative communications team identified the need to develop the programme in order to reach rural communities, which often have a higher prevalence of violence against women and girls

but limited access to services and justice. These communities are regular radio listeners, with the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation reaching over 50 per cent of Malawi’s population. The communications team engaged the National Programme Coordinator, Technical Coherence Specialist and Recipient UN Organizations to train a group of actors, producers and script writers on Spotlight Initiative and its work. The actors and production team were trained in different thematic areas of violence experienced by women and girls to ensure that the soap opera was accurate, that the messages were sensitive and targeted, and that the series reflected the lived reality of communities.

Moreover, in **Mali**, the 52-episode TV series “Danse Inlassable” or “Don ni Dongoma” was produced and officially launched on 6 February 2021, thanks to the funding and support of the Spotlight Initiative. The design and filming process was led by the National Programme against Gender-Based Violence and content from all episodes was reviewed by the Spotlight programme team and the European Union. The series covers themes such as child marriage, girls dropping out of school, female genital mutilation, rape and sexual violence, and trafficking, among other themes, and aims to act as a catalyst for sparking community-wide exchanges on these topics as well as challenging gender stereotypes in Mali and beyond. Following the great success of Season 1, the design and production of Season 2 are scheduled to be carried out in 2022.

In ASEAN, the **Safe and Fair** communications team supported C4D work with journalists and media professionals to counter the negative stereotypes and terminology that inform reporting on women migrant workers, in turn fuelling a culture of discrimination and violence. Forty-eight media professionals attended a webinar on gender-sensitive reporting and migratory-inclusive language. Safe and Fair then expanded a series of media sensitization workshops to Indonesia, Malaysia and Viet Nam through partnerships with industry

organizations such as the Alliance of Independent Journalist (AJI) Jakarta, and the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development (AIBD). More than 150 journalists were directly trained on gender-sensitive reporting in 2021, while even more were reached by Safe and Fair’s complementary knowledge product “**Media-friendly glossary on migration: Women migrant workers and ending violence against women (EVAW)**”.



Safe and Fair partnered with the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) Jakarta to organize an exhibition titled “Moving Together in Diversity, Inclusivity and Resilience to Eliminate Violence against Women Migrant Workers”. The exhibition showcased reportage on the plight of Indonesian women migrant workers and was part of the ILO’s side event at the Human Rights Festival. ©ILO-UN Women/Wahid

Knowledge Management, Evaluation, and Lessons Learned

Spotlight Initiative has placed significant attention and investment on ensuring that evaluation findings and lessons learned across programmes are drawn out, shared and fed back to enhance programming. This chapter provides insight into what these activities have yielded over the past year. The chapter begins with an overview of the knowledge management activities in 2021 and then shares key lessons learned – both cross-cutting and Pillar-specific – related to coordination and management. This is followed by evaluation findings from the mid-term assessments and a note on the thematic evaluation commissioned in 2021.

8.1 A Dedicated Focus on Global Knowledge Management to Strengthen Learning and Evidence-Based Programming

8.1.1 2021 Knowledge Management Activities

Spotlight Initiative serves as a knowledge platform, identifying best practices and lessons learned, promoting innovation and advancing the evidence base on ending violence against women and girls. In 2021, Spotlight Initiative remained committed to accelerating efforts to support evidence-based programming on ending violence against women and girls that lead to catalytic and sustainable impact.

Strengthening knowledge exchange and uptake

The Secretariat has expanded its knowledge management efforts, strengthening exchange across Spotlight Initiative stakeholders. The Secretariat regularly shared the latest resources to inform evidence-based programme implementation and supported continuous adaptation to the COVID-19 context. Through the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI) as well as its monthly newsletters, the Secretariat offered a one-stop shop, sharing up-to-date information on all Spotlight Initiative platforms, resources and tools.

The Knowledge Management Focal Points Network, with over 50 members, was also strengthened by meeting regularly and by hosting an orientation for focal points of new programmes. Furthermore, in



Maine Mura: Girls with Dignity, closing the period poverty gap in the Cook Islands. ©Te Ipukarea Society/Pacific Regional Programme

2021, the Secretariat engaged with relevant focal points of the Joint Programmes on Child Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation and set up a coordination mechanism of knowledge management focal points at the headquarters level.

This coordination mechanism has strengthened synergies in knowledge management among different funds and initiatives, such as the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) and the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. As a result, the mechanism has allowed improved peer exchange and collaboration. Efforts are underway to make this a system-wide working group on knowledge management to strengthen evidence-based programming and implementation on ending violence against women and girls.

Convening stakeholders: Dynamic spaces to foster dialogue to end violence against women and girls

The Secretariat played a convening role to foster cross-regional and intra-regional knowledge exchanges. In 2021, in collaboration with regional and country programmes – and based on a comprehensive needs assessment – a series of

global, cross-regional and regional webinars on relevant topics on ending violence against women and girls were held, including on:

- Embracing healthy masculinities and innovative coordination for **Latin America** and **Caribbean**
- Addressing harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights through effective stakeholder engagement for **Asia and Africa**
- Innovative adaptations through COVID-19 and other emergency contexts for the **Pacific**
- Fostering civil society engagement through participatory monitoring and evaluation for **all regions**
- Innovative coordination in the spirit of UN Reform **across all regions** in order to: support programmes in identifying good practices and solid mitigating measures in response to the challenge of transitioning to a new way of working; highlight creative solutions to harmonize processes and workplans across agencies; quickly and efficiently share information across United Nations agencies and disseminate information cohesively to programme partners; and leverage collective expertise to mitigate challenges.

In addition to the above, the Secretariat also held a global knowledge exchange in collaboration with the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund's Global Learning Hub and the Community of Practice for civil society on coalition and movement-building for advocacy to end violence against women and girls and advance women's rights, including in conflict and crisis-affected environments. Spotlight Initiative and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund co-developed a **brief** summarizing good practices on coalition and movement-building based on the contributions of the civil society partners participating in the event. This session drew **over 220 participants online, from over 120 civil society organizations in over 33 countries**.

Finally, on the side-lines of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2021, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and the Secretariat organized a donor advocacy event to raise awareness on the importance of institutional funding for local women's organizations in fragile and conflict-affected areas. Aimed at mobilizing support for flexible and feminist funding, the event was co-moderated by the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID) and featured speakers and over 150 participants from civil society, women's funds, the United Nations, the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Government of Canada, donors and intergovernmental institutions. A **Policy Brief** with key recommendations was developed together with the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund to continue advocating and mobilizing support for a feminist and decolonial funding ecosystem.

In total, the convenings described above drew **over 900 participants** from the United Nations, government, civil society, non-traditional partners, the European Union, and other Spotlight Initiative stakeholders, and were followed by the development of knowledge products that captured key lessons and promising practices that emerged during the sessions. These exchanges are producing results: feedback surveys have shown that these learning sprints have resulted in enhanced knowledge on the relevant topics, helped to further ensure quality and evidence-based programme implementation, and deepened connections in the Spotlight Initiative global community in 2021.

Organizing knowledge for efficient and targeted use – accelerating results

In 2021, a comprehensive inventory and tagging system of good practices and lessons learned across all programmes was developed. The inventory is searchable and documents good practices and lessons learned across all Spotlight Initiative programmes in one place, supporting the production of a compendium of good practices and lessons, as well as a technical package on comprehensive programming to end violence against women and girls. Developing a comprehensive inventory and tagging system has also facilitated the development of additional knowledge products including **International Day of the Girl Child, the Adaptability of the Spotlight Initiative and its advancement of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, Engaging with Men and Boys and Engaging Religious and Faith-Based Leaders**. Based on a rigorous desk review of over 100 tagged reports – ranging across annual reports and knowledge products from the country, regional and global levels – these knowledge products have been used to further promote Spotlight Initiative's results, promising practices and lessons, and to support various campaigns including during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and International Day of the Girl Child.

A “how-to” technical package of lessons and promising practices from Spotlight Initiative's experience implementing a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls will support self-starter countries as well as provide technical support and resources for Member States following on the Secretary-General's call in **Our Common Agenda** to develop emergency response plans to eradicate violence against women and girls. Through Spotlight Initiative's global hub – described further below – additional linkages will be made with relevant initiatives on ending violence against women and girls in order to strengthen the global evidence-base.

Amplifying and disseminating lessons and best practices: The Global Platform

Critically, to amplify lessons and good practices (including the ones detailed in this chapter) beyond Spotlight Initiative stakeholders, and to model a comprehensive programming approach for ending violence against women and girls, the Secretariat is rolling out **the Global Platform – Spotlight Initiative’s global hub for knowledge, engagement and impact to end violence against women and girls**. This aims to offer the combined power of a knowledge hub, a community of practice and an advocacy platform, founded in the practical experience of the Spotlight Initiative’s programmes.

Throughout the reporting period, various consultations were held across the United Nations, the European Union and civil society to inform the design of the Global Platform. A mapping of relevant existing platforms for ending violence against women and girls was conducted to ensure synergy and strengthen sustainability from the onset. Furthermore, a technical action plan has been in development and will be finalized in early 2022. Critically, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat formed and fostered a partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women for the online hub of the Global Platform, **SHINE**. *SHINE* is currently being tested with stakeholders and will be rolled out in early 2022.

Within the context of Spotlight Initiative’s Global Platform, the Secretariat produced and disseminated a series of knowledge products on various areas such as on **Embracing Healthy Masculinities in Latin America and the Caribbean, Addressing Harmful Practices and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa and Asia, Innovative Adaptations: Spotlight Initiative Programming in COVID-19 and other emergency contexts in the Pacific, Coalition-Building: Advocating for Women’s Rights, Advancing Peace and EVAWG** and **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**. The Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation knowledge product is described later in this chapter.

In 2022, with the launch of the Global Platform, a key priority will be expanding engagement and rolling out *SHINE*. This will include a global event introducing

the online hub and multi-stakeholder engagement on the platform. Various knowledge exchanges and other learning initiatives will also be undertaken. The Knowledge Management Focal Points Network will continue to be strengthened and particular support will be provided to regional programmes to strengthen knowledge management efforts within and across regions. Knowledge production under the framework of the Global Platform will also be critical to amplify the lessons, promising practices and results from across Spotlight Initiative programmes, and programmes will also be supported with regional- and national-level knowledge production.

8.1.2 Lessons Learned from 2021 Programme Implementation

Over the course of implementation, Spotlight Initiative teams have monitored and adjusted programming based on lessons learned, and the Secretariat has aimed to support them in these efforts through assessments for learning. Acting on lessons learned completes the learning cycle and is critical to improving existing programmes and informing future programmes.

The following sub-section presents a selected overview of overarching and Pillar-specific lessons learned in 2022. Programmes have identified a much wider range of lessons learned within their particular contexts, which are documented in their annual reports. This section is designed to be used as documentation and a resource on important lessons learned that could be integrated into programmes aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

Overall Lessons Learned

The overarching lessons presented here consolidate cross-cutting learning generated across Spotlight Initiative programmes. Many of these lessons point to established good practices and are common knowledge to organizations, activists and movements fighting to end violence against women and girls. However, we highlight them here to re-emphasize their importance and centrality to ensuring rights-based, non-colonialist, participatory programming to ending violence against women and girls.



©Spotlight Initiative Mali

- Facilitating a whole-of-society approach by bringing together national and regional stakeholders is critical to building consensus, securing ownership and spurring collective action around efforts to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.
- Expanding local capacity, including through both thematic trainings and the provision of flexible and core funding, equips programmes and implementing partners with the skills necessary for sustainable success even after the Spotlight Initiative closes.
- Agile programming, as evidenced by Spotlight Initiative's adaptation to COVID-19, is essential to maintaining ongoing implementation, fostering innovation and strengthening the resilience and sustainability of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.
- Mid-term assessments (MTAs) provide a valuable opportunity to strengthen interventions and strategies, hone in on a way forward for programmes and foster stronger collaboration and commitment to collective action across stakeholders.
- Community-centred approaches are a building block to sustainability, as community leaders provide invaluable technical insight to the realities on the ground and can often identify the most effective solutions to challenges.
- Strengthening existing community networks and structures before focusing on their expansion results in more sustained actions in exchanging knowledge and galvanizing support around achieving specific objectives for ending violence against women and girls.
- Participatory monitoring ensures a needs-driven approach that adapts as new needs arise, enabling programmes to help identify appropriate interventions to meet the specific needs of survivors and civil society organizations.

Pillar-Specific Lessons Learned



Pillar 1 – Policies and legislation

- The engagement of strategic stakeholders, primarily cultural, community and religious leaders, the government, civil society and interest groups, should be meaningfully engaged from the start of the policy design and lobbying process to ensure policies are needs-driven and concretely benefit those being served. This is useful to increase buy-in for the passage and implementation of related laws and policies.
- Developing policies and legislation for ending violence against women and girls can be supported by evidence-based advocacy that amplifies promising and good practices from Spotlight Initiative. Prioritizing this approach can help teams develop concrete roadmaps to increase uptake of what has been learned, strengthening the sustainability of policy models for ending violence against women and girls, as they are based on the latest evidence. Evidence-based advocacy is especially strategic in lobbying for budgetary and resource mobilization for programming to end violence against women and girls at the government-level.

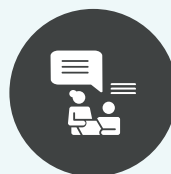


Pillar 2 – Institutions

- Raising awareness of policies and legislations that are rights-based and address violence against women and girls can rally advocacy

around ensuring specific measures outlined are institutionalized and implemented.

- Ensuring national partners are engaged in continuous dialogue with government ministries supports an inclusive and participatory approach and, critically, builds collective ownership to address violence against women and girls. This also allows for synergies to be drawn across initiatives to address violence against women and girls comprehensively.
- Having high-level national ownership of efforts to end violence against women and girls is critical for sustainability as this motivates government actors to make long-term commitments. In connection with Pillar 4, this can support long-term continuity of services by creating a sustainable model that ensures that services do not end once a project ends. A thorough hand-over is helpful to ensure a smooth transition.



Pillar 3 – Prevention

- Providing young people with platforms to collectively develop solutions generates innovative and localized approaches that are better tailored to each issue and draw on lived experiences. Forums, networks and youth-led organizations are some of the leading and most useful convening spaces to engage young people committed to making a change in their communities in order to further efforts to end violence against women and girls and achieve gender equality.
- Religious and traditional leaders continue to be change-makers and affect widespread impact on social norms and policy change in their communities and across networks. Connecting with Pillar 4, the support of traditional leaders and faith-based organizations can improve referral pathways for survivors, providing greater access to essential services, including for sexual and reproductive health and rights in some



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contexts. Tailored, contextual and comprehensive approaches to women's economic rights can be one factor that supports the long-term recovery and economic autonomy of survivors of violence. More research on the intersections of addressing violence against women and girls through women's economic rights initiatives is critical to build the evidence-base and centre the principle of do no harm.

- Engaging in participatory dialogue and systematic community mobilization prior to the implementation of programmes can be useful for garnering community-level support and addressing misconceptions or doubts about efforts to end violence against women and girls.
- It is critical to ensure that those leading community dialogues on ending violence against women and girls understand the evidence-based drivers of such violence (as even self-defined gender advocates can possess unconscious or conscious biases that may come through in their trainings). Training for potential trainers or community and peer leaders leading these dialogues can help ensure that engagement with communities reflects the complexity and depth of addressing unequal gender norms and violence against women and girls.



Pillar 4 – Services

- Building on existing services enables a more integrated, comprehensive approach to addressing survivors' most urgent needs. Services like one-stop centres, integrated health centres, women and girls spaces and mobile women centres are all conducive to providing quality essential services efficiently.
- As initiatives were adapted through COVID-19 and much of programming was shifted online, this exposed the gender digital divide and exacerbated inequalities particularly for women and girls from marginalized communities, underserved socioeconomic backgrounds and in remote areas. Increased attention to efforts that reach women and girls without access to digital platforms or the internet, such as conducting socially distanced in-person activities while following strict safety measures, can support efforts to leave no one behind.

- Developing creative solutions in collaboration with multiple levels of the justice system (such as various departments and government ministries) can support increased access to justice. This could take the form, for example, of securing pro-bono initiatives for survivors and using mobile services to broaden access to legal assistance.
- An emphasis on providing mental health and psychosocial support for survivors of violence exhibiting emotional distress and needing emotional support is critical. This support can be provided by building the capacity of individuals who can moderate different sensitive discussions.



Pillar 5 – Data

- Big data can be leveraged to support evidence-based interventions to end violence against women and girls. For example, the use of artificial intelligence in data systems can support gender-sensitive analyses of femicide. This can also be used to better analyse and understand levels of violence within and across contexts before and during the pandemic. However, continued efforts need to be made to enhance robust data on ending violence against women and girls.
- Collaboration across the justice sector can be strengthened to develop harmonized security data collection systems that increase the quality of disaggregated data on violence against women and girls. It is essential that key principles of information management on violence against women and girls are followed to ensure ethical data collection and to ensure that the trust of survivors is respected.



Pillar 6 – Women's movements

- Targeted capacity development, with an emphasis on circular knowledge exchanges and elevating practice-based knowledge, can equip grassroots organizations with the tools and know-how to affect change at legislative levels. This can enable local civil society organizations and networks to advance the agenda for ending violence against women and girls and foster enabling environments.
- The strength of intentional network-building, across groups and at multiple levels, continues to be an unparalleled strategic approach to elevating the influence of grassroots movements in order to address violence against women and girls. One method includes encouraging consortiums and supporting the process of developing agreements.
- It is crucial to acknowledge that women activists, women's rights organizations and women human rights defenders are at the forefront of responding to complex systemic challenges that expose them to violence and put them at risk. It is thus of paramount importance to make support services accessible for these actors, including strategies for safety and security protocols, as well as emotional support and stress management at the personal level.

Coordination and Management Lessons Learned

Implementing under United Nations Reform

- Once teams have identified how to effectively undertake truly integrated planning and partnership-building, programmes are better placed to meaningfully deliver and achieve more

comprehensive results while reducing duplication of time and resources in engaging government and civil society partners.

- The UN Resident Coordinator has an important leadership role to exercise in order to streamline decision-making and problem-solving and establish a broader culture of coordination and interacting as one UN team at all levels. Where needed, UN Resident Coordinators can successfully establish formal mechanisms dedicated to ensuring and advancing inter-agency collaboration, dismantling siloed programming, and planning joint activities, strategies, visibility and programme management. The support of Resident Representatives of the United Nations agencies can further strengthen these coordination efforts.
- Adopting UN Reform inter-agency tools, such as the United Nations-wide Business Operations Strategy framework or the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning the Provision and Use of Common Services, helps equip teams to achieve more responsive, integrated implementation.
- Implementing a Pillar-lead system – whereby one or two agencies lead on a particular Pillar but all agencies come together to ensure technical coherence and coordination across Pillars – enables smoother programme implementation and provides a platform to identify synergies across agency interventions.
- Ensuring there are clearly defined roles and responsibilities for members of the Spotlight Initiative programme teams, particularly across the Spotlight Initiative coordinator, technical coherence lead, and United Nations agency staff, and that those roles and responsibilities are well communicated, enables smooth and coordinated programming without duplication of work or gaps in capacity. At the global level, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has provided guidance on the division of roles, including in the Operations Manual Compendium, and at the programme level, developing inter-agency standard operating procedures have been found to be a helpful tool to facilitate common understanding and expectations.
- Identifying opportunities to coordinate across agencies on programme activities and on processes, templates and platforms is important for programmes to effectively coordinate and lead the way in transitioning to the new way of working,

especially in the absence of a comprehensive set of harmonized procedures.

- Ensuring programmes have dedicated full-time finance, administrative and operations support staff and capacities within the coordination unit has proven to enable more effective and efficient programme and budget management, including better monitoring and anticipation of budget needs, higher quality Phase II proposal development and timely and better inter-agency coordination on key operational processes.

Partnering with National Governments

- High-level political commitment by government to the elimination of violence against women and girls significantly increases the impact and sustainability of Spotlight Initiative's interventions.
- Approaching government partnerships through a one UN interface – whereby the UN Resident Coordinator leads the United Nations Country Team in coordinating with key partners – enables programmes to streamline communication and make more effective use of their collective time and resources. As a result, programmes are able to build stronger partnerships that drive national ownership at the highest level.
- The political support of the EU is critical to build stronger partnership and ensure high-level political commitment, as well.
- Strategically communicating and advocating the added value of Spotlight Initiative can convince governments to further engage with and take leadership over the programme's efforts, a critical step in ensuring the long-term continuity of the Initiative.
- Identifying focal points or “champions” within government entities who are committed to advancing collaboration with Spotlight Initiative is critical to maintaining regular engagement as well as to securing the necessary buy-in for national ownership over the elimination of violence against women and girls.
- Spotlight Initiative can play a critical role in bringing government and civil society together, particularly in terms of lobbying for civil society representation and leadership in national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Advancing the UN–EU Partnership

- The partnership between UN Country Teams and EU Delegations through the Spotlight Initiative enables programmes to benefit from the combined lessons learned and good practices of the two multilateral organizations in order to more effectively advocate for the elimination of violence against women and girls and mobilize efforts to this end.
- Maintaining open communication between UN Country Teams and EU Delegations, including in terms of programme strategies, guidance, procedures and key messages, builds a sense of mutual trust and facilitates coordination.
- Undertaking joint monitoring missions between UN Country Teams and EU Delegations is an effective way to strengthen programme interventions and identify gaps and challenges in programming while bolstering the UN–EU partnership and elevating the joint visibility of the Initiative among local communities.

Engaging civil society

- Programme teams adapted civil society partnership processes to enhance access to small, grassroots women’s and youth organizations that

- are otherwise excluded from quality funding, as further detailed in the box [below](#). Spotlight Initiative continues to work towards a civil society organization partner engagement process that is increasingly agile, flexible and responsive to civil society’s needs under all spheres of its work.
- Dedicated capacity is needed for Spotlight Initiative programmes to deliver in a meaningful and timely way against the ambitious target of implementing 30–50 per cent of programme funds via civil society. Resourcing a civil society engagement function (such as a “CSO engagement officer”) can help ensure adequate management of civil society engagement within Pillar 6, across Pillars, and in terms of the Civil Society National or Regional Reference Groups.
- Through the development of costed work plans, Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups have formalized their engagement in programmes, from representation in decision-making bodies to independent monitoring and advocacy that drives policy change. The Civil Society Reference Groups’ compensation policy has also been a step forward, recognizing the leadership and expertise of civil society as a key and equal partner. [Chapter 5](#) has more details on this.



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Drawing lessons from programme contexts – Adapting UN systems and processes to improve access to funding

The recently completed meta-review of Spotlight Initiative mid-term assessments in Latin America and Africa identified that the most significant obstacles to civil society participation were related to structural and administrative barriers that exist within the United Nations – financial rules and procedures that have been approved and mandated by agencies' respective Boards. This suggests a level of risk aversion by United Nations programme teams to trusting major interventions to national or grassroots civil society organizations, even when these organizations meet the United Nations' accountability requirements and demonstrate the expertise and experience required.

Aligned with Spotlight Initiative's commitment to a feminist funding approach, the Initiative is working towards promoting civil society organization partner engagement processes that are more agile, flexible and responsive to civil society's needs. In **Malawi**, the team contextualized the global Grassroots Action Plan to address local challenges and pivot towards greater emphasis on grassroots capacity building. An important measure under the Malawi Grassroots Action Plan was to encourage consortiums, which allowed the programme to engage several grassroots organizations and build capacity through the creation of partnerships with more established organizations. As a result of this capacity building, two of the grassroots organizations have since branched out of their consortium to receive direct funding. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, a programmatic revision was necessary to expand the pool of applicants for an activity related to the design and implementation of social accountability tools for the women's movement. Despite extensive efforts to reach civil society organizations, no proposals were received. To address this, the activity was redesigned from an implementing partner modality to a small grants modality, as the small grants modality involves a simplified application process and selection criteria, allowing for a more inclusive partner selection process that better supports institutional strengthening and capacity building. It is anticipated that by strengthening these civil society organizations, they will be better able to use existing or develop new social accountability mechanisms to bolster their advocacy on prevention and response efforts on violence against women and girls.

8.2 Monitoring and Evaluation: Supporting Strategic Analysis and Sharing of Lessons Learned

In 2021, the Secretariat continued to monitor the progress of the Fund, assess and evaluate its impacts on the ground and collect evidence in a more coherent and participatory manner in order to implement lessons learned and thereby strengthen its programming. The Secretariat further expanded

its Spotlight Initiative monitoring and reporting online tool (SMART platform), which allows all programme teams to report qualitative and quantitative data on indicators and sub-indicators. This online platform contributes to a more integrated way of reporting by United Nations agencies, strengthens quality assurance and facilitates the consolidation, aggregation and visualization of results (data reported and corresponding infographics in this global annual report are produced directly using Spotlight Initiative's SMART platform).

8.2.1 Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

With the aim of decolonizing knowledge (and querying whose knowledge is valued), increasing accountability toward right-holders and civil society organisations, and ensuring alignment with the core principle of leaving no one behind, Spotlight Initiative began an unprecedented effort within the United Nations system to transform monitoring and evaluation into a truly participatory process. In line with recommendations from the mid-term assessments, Spotlight Initiative has laid the foundation for a multi-stakeholder learning process aimed at streamlining participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) in all core aspects of the Spotlight Initiative.

During the reporting period, the Secretariat developed a **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy**, aimed at making the monitoring and evaluation tools and framework as inclusive and participatory as possible. The strategy adopts a feminist, human rights-based and grassroots approach to monitoring and evaluation, ensuring that

local stakeholders, including feminist and women's rights activists and organizations, are meaningfully engaged and have decision-making power from the design of the programme to the implementation of corrective actions.

To foster cross-regional dialogue, the Secretariat, in collaboration with regional and country programmes, hosted two global exchanges on fostering civil society engagement through participatory monitoring and evaluation. These dialogues contributed to an enhanced multi-stakeholder exchange on tools, methodologies, lessons learned and promising practices that emerged during the implementation of participatory monitoring and evaluation at country and regional levels. The outcomes of the first multi-stakeholder Global Learning Sprint are summarised in a learning product **Fostering Civil Society Engagement through Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**, as noted above. In addition, significant lessons learned emerged on implementing participatory monitoring and evaluation, which have fed into Phase II development processes. These include for example: the identification of community gatekeepers who can facilitate a participatory approach; using joint



Urban refugees in Kampala supported by Bondeka, a local NGO with funds from the Spotlight Initiative participate in a monitoring visit where they shared inputs into Phase II of the programme. ©Davinah Nabirye/ Office of the UN Resident Coordinator

monitoring visits as concrete entry-points to ensure enhanced multi-stakeholders' engagement; and using shadow reporting as a useful tool to track progress and ensure accountability.

Taken together, the global-level work on participatory monitoring and evaluation supported programmes' critical leadership in advancing participatory monitoring and evaluation throughout 2021. For example, during the reporting period, 15 countries, under the leadership of their Civil Society National Reference Groups, engaged in monitoring activities adopting a multi-stakeholder and participatory approach. In **Niger**, for example, implementing their participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy, the Civil Society National Reference Group, using the "most significant change" technique, collected stories of change and testimonies from women and girls directly impacted by the Spotlight Initiative. Their critical perspective will help shape and adapt programming. Similarly, in **Honduras**, joint evaluation exchanges were held with over 15 civil society partners to collect lessons learned and good practices on participatory data collection processes and define a joint roadmap to further integrate participatory monitoring and evaluation in the second phase of the programme.

In **Jamaica**, a joint participatory monitoring and evaluation toolkit was developed and provided an opportunity to institutionalize the tools and processes on how to conduct participatory monitoring and evaluation while adapting to the challenges that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Joint monitoring processes bolstered active engagement, ownership and the sense of empowerment of civil society, allowed for more inclusive programmes and fostered co-ownership. In **Liberia**, the programme team organized a multi-stakeholder retreat between the programme coordination technical and operational team, and their Civil Society National Reference Group to jointly define a common blueprint to implement participatory monitoring and evaluation in the second phase of the programme. In **Belize**, Spotlight Initiative, capitalizing on the United Nations information guidance note, developed a Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit. This system allows the Recipient UN Organizations and civil society organizations to improve their monitoring and evaluation plan and allows the teams to work collaboratively updating data on the same portal.

8.2.2 Conducting Assessments and Evaluations to Bring About Learning for Greater Impact

Mid-term assessments

Representing a critical aspect of its monitoring and evaluation function, the Spotlight Secretariat launched an independent mid-term assessment of Spotlight Initiative programmes in 2020. The mid-term assessments for the Africa and Latin America country programmes were completed and presented to the Operational Steering Committee in April 2021. In the last quarter of 2021, the mid-term assessments were launched for the remaining programmes in the Caribbean, Pacific and Asia.

Conducted by Hera, an evaluation and research company based in Brussels, the mid-term assessments offer an opportunity to assess the performance of each programme, improve programme management by informing stakeholders about the performance of the interventions and identify lessons learned to test Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change. Finally, the assessments provide critical information to guide the Operational Steering Committee's decisions on additional budget allocations for Phase II.

The mid-term assessments from Africa and Latin America programmes showed compelling results across the six Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative. Early findings from the mid-term assessments from the Pacific, Caribbean, and Asia programmes, which are still ongoing in early 2022, also reveal similar trends and findings, as detailed below:

- Overall, the mid-term assessments validate the assumptions and key principles of Spotlight Initiative: the comprehensive Theory of Change, the participatory and multi-stakeholder methodology as well as the central role given to civil society in the governance, design and implementation of the Spotlight Initiative.
- Programme stakeholders (government, civil society, the European Union and United Nations teams) overwhelmingly confirmed the gender-transformative, survivor-centred and human-rights-based approach of Spotlight Initiative. Through a survey of stakeholders, around 90 per cent of respondents (700 respondents)

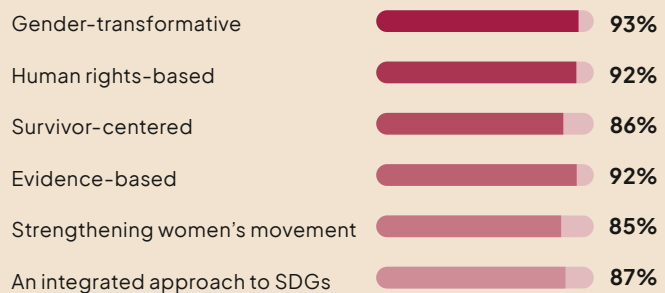
Spotlight Initiative Mid-term Assessments

The Spotlight Initiative conducted mid-term assessments for all country programmes in Latin America and Africa (except for Ecuador, which began later) over a five month period from November 2020 to April 2021. The mid-term assessments for programmes in the Caribbean, Pacific and Asia were conducted over a six month period between October 2021 and April 2022.⁸⁴ These assessments follow a results-oriented monitoring methodology and provide an analysis of programmes' relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. Recommendations for Phase II are also detailed.

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



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



also expressed the view that they considered Spotlight Initiative to be in line with the UN Reform's principles and to contribute to more efficient and better coordinated action on ending violence against women and girls (see visual above).

- Reports also highlight the efficient and nimble adaptation of programmes to issues surrounding COVID-19 restrictions, including ensuring that services for survivors of violence are seen as essential and seeking new ways to reach communities during COVID-19 restrictions.

Meta-review of the mid-term assessment in Africa and Latin America

Following the completion of the mid-term assessments in Africa and Latin America, a **meta-review** of the findings from these assessments was conducted, which generated important lessons about the key features of success of the Spotlight Initiative programmes in different contexts. The aim of the meta-review was to summarize learning and results from Phase I, to analyse building blocks and driving forces of successful programmes for ending violence against women and girls and to provide recommendations for the implementation of the next phase of the Spotlight Initiative. More specifically, the meta-review focused on four overarching evaluation questions:

⁸⁴ The table captures the aggregated results of all mid-term assessments, except for Haiti, Ecuador, Tajikistan, Guyana, the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, the Africa Regional Programme, and the Caribbean Regional Programme.

1. What are the building blocks and driving forces of successful programmes? What are promising practices?
2. What are missed opportunities and what should be avoided? What are the main lessons in relation to restraining forces that can be drawn from the Spotlight Initiative that may have generic application?
3. Which external systemic factors⁸⁵ constrain or enable the Spotlight Initiative?
4. How have global-level stakeholders (European Union headquarters, Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, the Global Civil Society Reference Group and Recipient UN Organizations focal points) influenced the effective delivery of the programme?

The meta-review generated numerous valuable findings and lessons learned for the Spotlight Initiative and its partners. A critical lesson, reflected above, is that **implementing a multi-stakeholder, multi-dimensional, gender-transformative programme that includes meaningful involvement of civil society, combined with the operationalization of the UNDS reform, requires time and incentives** for all partners to take ownership. The success of Spotlight Initiative ultimately rests on the dedication and determination of countless individuals. A few of the key findings of the meta-review, which will inform programming, are:

- The meta-review reconfirms the proof of concept of the Spotlight Initiative model in its comprehensive and global approach. The report finds that this represents **a competitive advantage compared to other joint programmes**.
- Spotlight Initiative is predicated on the commitment and ownership of its stakeholders. Central to this is the **conducive partnership between the United Nations and the European Union**. Further, Spotlight Initiative principles of inclusivity and national ownership that promoted **extensive, participatory stakeholder engagement** proved to be essential as a driving force for success.

- The analysis of the impact of the global stakeholders showed that the Spotlight Initiative was the result of a concerted effort of all actors. Overall, the meta-review shows positive elements in the role of global stakeholders. **The Civil Society Reference Group, United Nations agency headquarters, the Secretariat and the European Union are all recognized for their critical contributions and commitment to the programme.**

The graphic **below** highlights the driving forces and building blocks for rights-based, effective programming based on the findings of the meta-review.

Thematic evaluation: Assessing Spotlight initiative's transformative Theory of Change

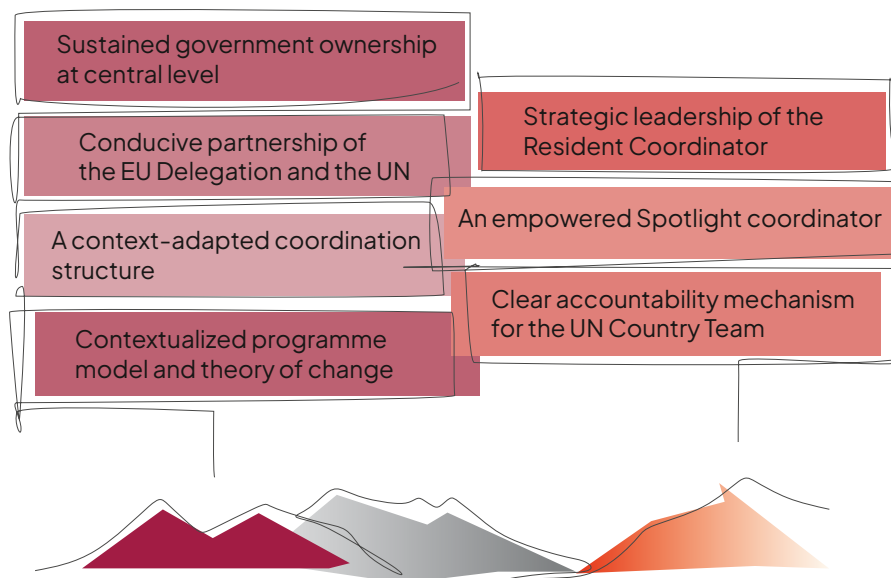
In late 2021, the Initiative commissioned a thematic evaluation, covering three interconnected dimensions: the meaningful engagement of civil society organizations, particularly local and grassroots groups; the implementation of the principle of leaving no one behind; and support to feminist and women's rights movements. The thematic evaluation offers the opportunity to identify and implement critical learning on the extent to which the Initiative has adhered to and advanced its central transformative principles. Preliminary results are expected in the third quarter of 2022, with conclusions and recommendations emerging toward the end of 2022.

Dalberg study: Making the case for the imperative to invest

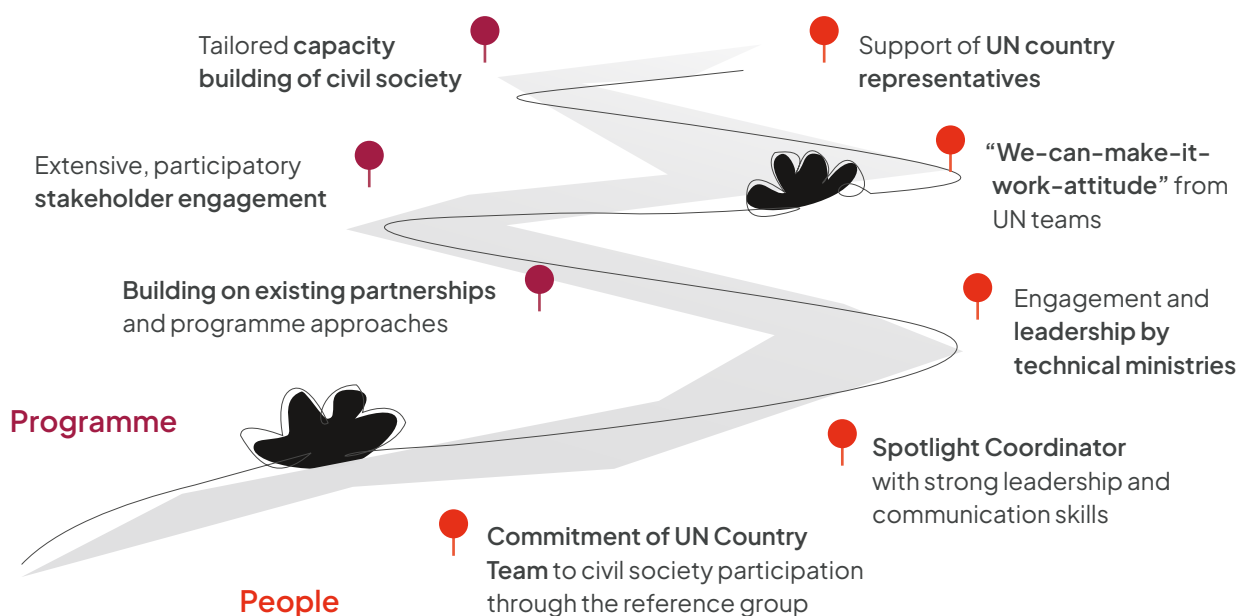
In addition to the mid-term assessments, the meta-review and the upcoming thematic evaluation, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, in partnership with Dalberg, a global development consulting firm, launched a study that models the potential long-term impact of implementing a comprehensive model to end violence against women and girls (as the Spotlight Initiative has).

⁸⁵ These include organizational, structural or governance related factors internal to the UN system, as well as the external context including global economic, institutional and political factors.

Building blocks



Driving forces



Drawing on a range of data to develop the predictive model,⁸⁶ the study’s early findings clearly suggest that investing in this approach significantly reduces levels of violence against women and girls and supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, more broadly. Final findings are expected in the second quarter of 2022. More information on this study, including its top-level indicative findings, can be found in [Chapter 10](#).

The Spotlight Initiative has prioritized deep focus knowledge management and learning efforts in order to lift and document this historic and global programme to end violence against women and girls. As part of this process, the Initiative also documents good practices across programmes to support knowledge exchange and scale-up, which are shared in [Chapter 9](#).

⁸⁶ This includes the Initiative’s own monitoring and reporting data, expert interviews and more than 100 meta-experimental and quasi-experimental studies of interventions that the Initiative emulates.

Innovative, Promising, and Good Practices

This chapter describes Spotlight Initiative's work to design and implement innovative, promising and good practices. The examples presented in this chapter highlight how Spotlight Initiative regional and country programmes have ensured effective implementation of survivor-centred policies, improved access to justice through integrated service provision, elevated the advocacy power of young people to address violence against women and girls and strengthened community-led engagement for sustainable change. Other promising and good practices – including those related to engaging civil society and feminist organizations and movements in the Initiative's governance structure and through dedicated funding mechanisms – have been detailed in [Chapter 3](#), [Chapter 5](#) and [Chapter 6](#). The range of innovative, promising and good practices that emerged from across the Spotlight Initiative builds the evidence-base on effective programme management and on what works to end violence against women and girls. The hope is that inspiration may be drawn from these practices to be adapted, strengthened and scaled up for widespread impact and systemic change.

9.1 Country and Regional Innovative, Promising, and Good Practices: Technical

Three years into implementation, Spotlight Initiative continues to implement a range of innovative, promising and good practices aimed at the elimination of violence against women and girls. Spotlight Initiative regional and country programmes across Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific and Asia – including Central Asia, Afghanistan and the Safe and Fair programme in ASEAN countries – are models of how comprehensive investments to end violence against women and girls can advance sustainable, systemic change in alignment with the principles of leaving no one behind and doing no harm.

The following practices are described in more detail in the subsections below:

- Advocating for the translation of policy into implementation in ways that directly serve the needs of women and girls
- Providing integrated services that increase access to justice using multisectoral, adaptive and digital approaches
- Engaging youth as change agents and providing them with platforms to generate innovative solutions to ending violence against women and girls
- Harnessing the power of community-led change by supporting the agency of local actors, tapping into the change at scale that traditional leaders can bring and strengthening comprehensive approaches to prevention.



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9.1.1 Promising Practices for Translating Policy into Practice

In efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative engages in promising practices to develop policy frameworks, plans and laws that reflect a survivor-centred approach. Advocating for the development and implementation of policies that reflect the needs of survivors and women and girls at risk of violence requires that their voices be integrated throughout the process from design to implementation.

The health sector is one of the first points of entry for survivors of violence to receive care. How survivors experience care at this critical moment can determine whether they continue to seek help, and underscores the importance of employing a survivor-centred approach in policy and national healthcare systems. In a **promising practice**, Spotlight Initiative in **Trinidad and Tobago** addressed this by making linkages between the new domestic violence legislation and healthcare services. The programme produced the **National Clinical and Policy Guidelines on Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence**, endorsed by the National Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health Committee.

With the Ministry of Health, work is ongoing with regional health authorities to adopt the guidelines. The development of these guidelines is profound as they provide a template through which significant improvements will be made in care and support to survivors through the healthcare system and referral pathways, such as to social services, housing and access to justice.

Grounded in survivor-centred approaches, Spotlight Initiative goes a step further to support the translation of legislation into effective implementation, that is, to turn policies into practice. Working with educational institutions can be a critical conduit for this. In **Malawi**, the Model Gender and Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy for Higher Learning Institutions is a **promising practice** developed as a guide to support educational institutions in developing their anti-sexual harassment policies. This policy is a commitment to making human and financial capacity and resources available to support the achievement of gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls, particularly sexual harassment across higher-learning campuses in Malawi. Through a **promising practice** within the **Africa Regional Programme**, a partnership between the African Union and Equality Now culminated in developing the Regional Action

Plan for Africa, a significant milestone. The plan was formulated to include a monitoring and evaluation framework for ending violence against women and girls, which will be critical for ensuring the plan is put into practice. This concerted effort provides a continental-wide framework to collectively implement evidence-based interventions to address violence against women and girls.

Without ensuring effective implementation, the ability of laws and policies to create real changes in the lives of women and girls is limited. For this reason, the Initiative in **Nigeria** facilitated sessions to exchange lessons learned on effective implementation of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act. The focus was on awareness creation and advocacy for adoption across 36 states of the Nigerian federation. Currently, about 30 states – including all states in which Spotlight Initiative works in Nigeria – have signed and adopted the law. The Initiative **developed costed monitoring and implementation plans** for Spotlight Initiative states that have passed the Violence Against Persons Act. As a **promising practice**, this can be adapted and replicated to support implementation of other legislation on ending violence against women and girls.

9.1.2 Innovative, Promising and Good Practices to Increase Access to Justice through Integrated Service Provision

Across programmes, Spotlight Initiative demonstrated the importance of ensuring access to justice for all women and girls as an essential component of integrated service provision. The Initiative embraced the principle of leaving no one behind by reaching women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. For instance, mobile brigades are a **good practice** in **Mozambique** that provide essential justice, social and health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, closer to women and girl survivors of violence in hard-to-reach areas. Spotlight Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** launched the Bus of Solidarity, a mobile group of lawyers, notary officers, social workers and other specialists from the Ministry of Justice, the Social Fund, State Registration Service, and Ministry of Labour, Social Security and Migration. **Building on the good practice** of mobile one-stop centres, the Bus of Solidarity travels to hard-to-reach areas

using a special vehicle to provide free legal support to women and girls. The Bus of Solidarity increases access to legal aid services for women and girls, including those who live along national borders and women and girls living with disabilities. Information on women and girls' rights as outlined in legislation and free legal assistance are provided, increasing gender-equitable access to justice at the community level. In **Belize**, mobile women centres have “the children's space” designed to provide a safe and interactive space for children while women access a range of essential services. This makes quality essential services more accessible for mothers and women with caretaking duties, and, at the same time the “children's spaces” offer a stimulating environment for children to interact based on the UNICEF Return to Happiness Programme using props and other activities.

Providing multisectoral services is key to mobilizing a whole-of-society and comprehensive approach to essential service provision for survivors and women and girls at risk of violence. **Promising and good practices** emerged across **Jamaica, Uganda** and **Trinidad and Tobago** that enhanced access to justice for survivors, bringing together actors from across the justice system including police officers, prosecutors and judicial officers. This includes the domestic violence intervention centres (DVICs) that promote gender-responsive policing in **Jamaica**, for example. The centres provide an accessible point of entry for women to access justice, health and security services. Police stations are also often a first line of contact for survivors – thus there is a real need to ensure that survivors can access quality essential services at these locations. The establishment of domestic violence intervention centres at police stations in Jamaica is a **promising practice** with the potential of becoming a good practice in the future, as coordinated service provision at domestic violence intervention centres aligns with the service provision in the essential services package. Domestic violence intervention centres provide gender-responsive policing and help to integrate the issue of violence against women and girls as a compulsory component of citizen safety and security interventions. Finally, a coordinated response of justice, health and security sectors is needed to effectively eliminate violence against women and girls, and the domestic violence intervention centres connect all three through its referral design system.



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Digital information and reporting platforms on gender-based violence are widely used across Spotlight Initiative programmes and provide timely access to justice services. Innovative practices include: InfoViolência and Project Kambas; the Integrated Information Reconciliation Database System in **Mozambique**; the Integrated System of Cases of Gender-Based Violence in **Argentina**; and artificial intelligence (AI) tools used in the **Latin America Regional Programme**. Integrated systems like these help to better manage the criminal investigation and prosecution data of cases of violence against women and girls. Mobile applications such as the iMatter.gy on Gender-Based Violence in **Guyana**, those for police and gendarmerie brigades in **Niger** and the app Helping Our People Emerge (HOPE) in **Jamaica** all offer information on essential services, laws and policies. Additionally, the **Safe and Fair** programme in **Cambodia** developed the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) platform that provides information on safe migration, available services for violence against women and girls, trafficking risks, migrant workers' rights, sexual and reproductive health and COVID-19 prevention. The IVR platform goes a step further by providing an

option to speak to a counsellor or go through the automated information system. Using smartphones, Spotlight Initiative in **Niger** helped strengthen the responsiveness of justice-related services (like those provided by the police) by enabling smaller communities to collect important gender-based violence-related data promptly. Holistically, innovative digital interventions across Spotlight Initiative programmes collate data on cases of violence against women and girls and create more efficient reporting systems to advance efforts to end violence against women and girls.

Spotlight Initiative programmes also mobilized to meet rising needs for access to justice following the spike in violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, the Initiative in **Zimbabwe** launched virtual victim-friendly courts that enabled survivors of violence and abuse to give testimonies wherever they were, overcoming restrictions in movement in order to provide justice services. This practice is innovative because it increases the level of flexibility in the justice system and demonstrates how, with concerted effort, justice can be accessible.

How a Prosecution Hub restored justice to girl survivors of sexual violence: An innovative practice from Nigeria

The Spotlight Initiative in **Nigeria** demonstrates how convening justice actors with a common goal of changing the status quo for girl survivors of sexual and gender-based violence can make a difference. For the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence in 2021, the Federal Ministry of Justice in collaboration with Spotlight Initiative launched a Prosecution Hub (also known as a “Solution Room”). The Prosecution Hub brought together legal aid providers to provide integrated legal aid on a pro-bono basis for girl survivors of sexual violence, seeking to break through barriers that constrain access to justice for girl survivors.

Spotlight Initiative promoted a collaborative approach and held cross-sectoral information exchanges, successfully convening 70 legal aid providers (43 women and 27 men) from the police, the Ministry of Justice, the judiciary, the Legal Aid Council, the Social Welfare Department, the Nigerian Bar Association, Nigerian University Legal Aid Institute and the Child Protection Network. Mobilizing key actors from across the justice sector has built momentum around swiftly addressing cases of violence and provided an opportunity to overcome the systemic barriers that survivors face.

Impressive results have been achieved in a short period of time. For example, 98 cases were prosecuted within only three days, whereas previously just a few cases would be prosecuted over several months. This approach increased the number of convictions for perpetrators of sexual violence in Nigeria and, ultimately, restored hope and confidence in the system to hold perpetrators accountable and to bring justice to survivors. The Prosecution Hub represents a new opportunity for survivors of sexual violence and their families to develop trust in the justice system and break the culture of silence and impunity.⁸⁷

9.1.3 Innovative and Promising Practices for Young People – the Change Agents: Providing Platforms to Combat Violence against Women and Girls

Spotlight Initiative continuously seeks to create and tap into spaces that engage young people who are at the forefront of advocating for sustainable change. Youth are active agents of change in shifting the attitudes, behaviours and norms that enable violence against women and girls. Through various mentoring programmes, Spotlight Initiative provides centres for fostering knowledge on ending violence against women and girls and shifting social norms. Mentorship programmes provide a foundation for protecting women’s rights for young women and

girls and transforming behaviours and attitudes early on, such as in **Mozambique**. In **Nigeria** the Initiative facilitates peer-education programmes, while in **Zimbabwe** it has mobilized the peace hut model for encouraging families to end violence that can lead to violence against women and girls through dialogue. A **promising model** from Malawi is the Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence Programme (GESD) and the Boy’s Transformation Curriculum. The Girls Empowerment and Self-Defence Programme supports girls to protect themselves and shift power from potential abusers, and the boy’s programme supports norm change to challenge gender stereotypes and norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls. In **Belize**, Spotlight Initiative engages in a promising practice of helping adolescents in formal and informal unions

⁸⁷ Definition of ‘guardian ad litem’ [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime & UNICEF \(2009\), Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime: Model Law and Related Commentary \(p. 5\).](#)

transform the imbalance of power and build healthy relationships, manage conflicts and understand family violence.

Efforts can also be geared towards supporting young women and girls with developing essential life skills, which can deeply benefit survivors as well as women and girls at risk of experiencing violence. In **Nigeria**, Spotlight Initiative implements the STEAM⁸⁸ Flagship for Women and Girls, an integrated approach and **good practice** for developing life skills through “21st century entrepreneurship training” for women and girl survivors of violence, including harmful practices. Women and girls in the programme received training as peer educators on sexual and reproductive health and rights, ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices, as well as accounting and business management. Another programme that is working to equip women and girls with tangible life skills is in Haiti, where the educational model

Girl’s Space aims to help adolescent girls and young women to build resiliency and life skills to help prevent domestic violence. This is a collaborative local initiative in the Northeast of the country with the organization *Asosyasyon Fanm Solèy Dayiti* (AFASDA) that has been implemented across six municipalities.

Furthermore, Spotlight Initiative elevates the role of youth in curating solutions to end violence against women and girls. Besides creating spaces for mentorship and life-skills training, Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as the **Africa Regional Programme, the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** and **Tajikistan** provide platforms for youth to lead efforts to end violence against women and girls. Through a three-day youth engagement forum, the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme and a youth-led organization, IDEA Central Asia, improved knowledge of youth organizations on the response and prevention



Futsal tournament final game: EU Ambassador, UN Resident Coordinator, Deputy Chair of CoWFA with the winners of the national futsal tournament among girls. ©Spotlight Initiative Tajikistan

88 STEAM stands for: **S**RHR information; **T**echnology skills for sales and marketing; **E**nding VAWG and harmful practices information; **A**ccounting and business management skills; **M**anufacturing and start-up support.

measures to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices in Central Asia. An additional **innovative practice** that engaged youth in the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** was the Spotlight Digital Challenge, educating youth on how technology may help reveal, prevent and respond to violence against women and girls while simultaneously raising awareness of new types of violence against women and girls, such as online violence. Similarly, the **Safe and Fair** programme facilitated a Youth Perspective: Cross Border Forum in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The forum was a **promising practice** and a two-month-long initiative that brought together **56 youth leaders to exchange knowledge and experiences** towards solving problems relating to the public attitudes towards women migrant workers in their countries. Speakers from youth-led organizations unpacked their experiences of being in youth-led advocacy groups and gave participants insights on being change-makers. The forum resulted in the launch of two campaigns: one that addressed hate speech and negative narratives on migrant workers in mainstream media and the other that highlighted the mental and physical stress endured by domestic workers during the pandemic. Spotlight Initiative's work with Project Liber8 leverages the momentum of youth movements to raise the collective public consciousness on the issue of women's labour migration, violence against women migrant workers and public attitudes towards women migrant workers.

Additionally, the **Africa Regional Programme**, in partnership with the East and the Southern Africa Regional Offices, UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation and UNFPA Innovation – Headquarters, launched the Female Genital Mutilation Innovation HackLab Project. This project aimed to stimulate the innovation market by including young people in creating innovative, community-centred solutions to address female genital mutilation. Creating spaces specifically for youth as change-makers, particularly in digital spaces, addresses the generational gap often present in efforts to end violence against women and girls and ensures that the Spotlight Initiative is supporting young women and girls in designing their own futures free of violence.

9.1.4 Harnessing the Power of Community: Innovative, Promising and Good Practices that Advance Sustainable Change

Efforts to end violence against women and girls must be driven by and for communities and local actors in order to be sustainable. This is critical for lasting impact. This disrupts patterns of traditional development assistance and transforms power dynamics by centring communities and situating duty bearers as those who directly serve women and girl survivors of violence.

Spotlight Initiative programmes harnessed the power of community and civil society networks through elevating local expertise and reaching those who need it most. For example, the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** implemented a **promising practice: “Producing knowledge by NGOs for NGOs”**. The Initiative recognizes that grassroots organizations working directly with survivors of violence possess unique knowledge and diverse experiences that international organizations do not have access to. Thus, the Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme organized peer-to-peer circular knowledge exchanges. This enabled widespread learning on good practices and new approaches to effectively deliver essential services for survivors, which was a crucial need through the COVID-19 pandemic. Grassroots organizations were also able to exchange critical knowledge on how to engage with institutional structures to protect the rights and interests of survivors of violence, often information that is not easily accessible to local actors. Bridging these connections to enhance knowledge sharing across local organizations and throughout the region signals to other actors that practice-based knowledge is of value and should be elevated. Importantly, this contributes to the sustainability of efforts to end violence against women and girls for local networks to carry forward beyond Spotlight Initiative programming.

Adapting design-thinking for a survivor-centred approach: An innovative practice

In **Kyrgyzstan**, Spotlight Initiative piloted an **innovative practice** by adapting design-thinking and the “user journey” from business models to create a survivor-centred approach to programming and foster multi-stakeholder dialogue. This was developed with the end goal of generating **local solutions** to ending violence against women and girls. The objective of the practice is to bring the lived realities of survivors to light while mapping the “journey” of survivors, identifying key needs and bottlenecks, and creating prototypes of solutions developed with a participatory approach – all with the voluntary involvement of survivors. Spotlight Initiative collaborated with local partners **promoting science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects and social entrepreneurship to co-create design thinking and user journey tools.**

The process is anchored in examining the profiles of women survivors of violence, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Visualizing the journey of survivors helped local actors identify systemic gaps in services and critical attitudes, beliefs and practices present in communities that reinforce violence against women and girls. Survivors were supported to break the silence around these lived realities and share personal stories. More than 300 stakeholders representing different sectors – from those in public service to the private sector and across policy makers, key line ministries, non-government organizations, gender experts, crisis centres, women’s movements and others – joined together and used the insights from women and girl survivors of violence and sexual violence to generate solutions to systemic barriers. By working closely with survivors, the design-thinking process allowed local actors to move beyond assumptions about violence and instead generate high-impact solutions from the ground up. As a result of these participatory workshops, 18 telegram groups were created to sustain networks across stakeholders to carry solutions forward through expanded cooperation. Joint projects were implemented by stakeholders, including during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, while some began using an empathy tool, called New Rhythm. Following the workshop, **a design-thinking toolkit and guidance** was developed, adapting business-oriented strategies towards addressing sexual violence and violence against women and girls. This includes the insights, knowledge and experiences of participants to continue creating innovative solutions through participatory and survivor-centred approaches to address violence against women and girls.

As custodians and gatekeepers of faith-based communities and cultures, engaging religious and traditional leaders in efforts to end violence against women and girls has proven to be a good practice: it has the power to influence entire communities and networks to stand in solidarity with women and girls’ rights to live with integrity, freedom and safety. The long-standing presence and service of traditional leaders and faith-based organizations has come to command the trust and respect of local communities and actors. In **Niger** for example, traditional leaders are considered auxiliaries of the central administration and as such, represent the state in their villages. The advisors of traditional leaders are the first point of contact for survivors to

file a complaint of violence even if there are police or judicial services in the locality. Yet, advisors often dissuade survivors from reporting and because the advisors are men, survivors do not feel comfortable sharing case details. As a **promising practice**, Spotlight Initiative supported the Sultan of Tibiri to reform the court and appoint two women to be advisors – one in charge of addressing cases of violence against women and girls more broadly, and the other focused on ending child marriage and supporting girls’ education. This is a first in the history of traditional chieftaincy in Niger, and it is anticipated that it will make survivors more at ease with confiding in advisors and reporting cases of violence.



©Spotlight Initiative Samoa

Through activities that increase income and access to, and control over, resources, women have gained greater security and protection from violence. For example, **the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund and Spotlight Initiative grantees in Uganda, Liberia and Nigeria** have established Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLAs) in communities to strengthen the economic resilience and independence of survivors of violence. Initial results in Uganda demonstrate a clear linkage between increased income and increased confidence of group members, including in their ability to engage in efforts to end violence against women and girls. In Liberia, as a result of 12 established Village Savings and Lending Associations, 300 women have accessed loans and have developed commitments and buy-in in their communities on addressing critical issues affecting women and girls, such as sexual and gender-based violence and denial of land rights. This in turn has allowed women, including those from vulnerable groups, to advance efforts to access land and other rights. Similarly, the **UN Trust Fund and Spotlight Initiative grantee, Scripture Union West Africa, in Nigeria** focuses on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls through support groups and Village Savings and Lending Associations. Through these efforts, 75 women received relevant training and many of them

have been able to start their own businesses with 90 per cent able to access loans. To sustain these gains, the grantee set up community-based committees to help build synergies with stakeholders, including religious and traditional institutions. Changes in men’s perspectives on women and women’s rights were reported and 89 per cent of men who participated in the community dialogue sessions expressed high levels of support for equitable norms and promoting this in their communities.

Furthermore, Spotlight Initiative’s emphasis on a comprehensive approach to prevention has only been possible through the work of community volunteers and activists who are determined to carry the fight forward to end violence against women and girls. In **Zimbabwe**, one of the most innovative models created by the Innovators against Gender-Based Violence is the ‘Peace Hut Model’, a community-based approach to solving family conflicts that can lead to violence against women and girls. Drawing on the cultural significance of a ‘hut’ as a home in the Shona and Ndaou cultures, the Peace Hut Model seeks to inspire communities to address violence against women and girls together as one family. The Village Head convenes meetings attended by other traditional leaders, members of village development committees, faith-based organizations

and community-based groups. Gender Champions in the community, who have been trained on issues surrounding violence against women and girls and referral pathways through Spotlight Initiative, work closely with the Village Head to engage communities in actively addressing harmful practices, supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights, and transforming gender stereotypes and norms that contribute to violence against women and girls.

Community groups lead change across networks and increase the buy-in of men and boys to shift social, cultural and gender norms that perpetuate gender inequalities and underpin violence against women and girls, such as through the #PeaceBeginsatHome and #HeForShe campaigns. Village family safety committees (VFSC) were piloted in **Samoa**. The village family safety committees included change actors such as Chiefs and other village decision-makers, illustrating the strategic role played by change-makers in endorsing policies to end violence against women and girls. The village family safety committees modelled on the significance of the “*faasamoa*”, which uses a culturally-responsive approach to empower village leaders and members to proactively be the vanguards of change for the prevention of domestic violence in their villages. From an analysis conducted on the initiative, violence was decreased or eliminated in these villages.

Another example of a promising practice is the “Gate Keepers Clubs” driven by Spotlight Initiative in **Guyana**, which provides a structure for local actors to implement prevention initiatives and referral services. The clubs have become a powerful mechanism and safe spaces as community members are now aware of their responsibilities and rights and are more empowered to speak out against violence against women and girls and report cases of violence. Community gatekeepers spearhead and lead prevention strategies, allowing them to be sustained long-term. Furthermore, Spotlight Initiative in **Honduras** reaches those furthest left behind in areas that have gangs and drug trafficking networks where very few organizations manage to enter. Traditional methodologies for reducing homicides and youth violence through the Cure Violence model were adapted to specifically prevent femicide and other forms of violence against women and girls, an **innovative practice**. Working with community leaders

has extended the reach of the Spotlight Initiative to women and girls in underserved areas and LGBTQI+ populations and has strengthened community action to sustain continued action. This initiative is evolving into a **promising practice** as it has been brought to scale for implementation in Mexico and Colombia.

9.2 Country and Regional Innovative, Promising, and Good Practices: Implementation, Coordination and Partnership-Building

Given Spotlight Initiative’s role as a flagship programme for UN Reform, Spotlight Initiative has consistently promoted and cultivated innovations related to programme management, operations and implementation, monitoring creative ideas as they developed into promising and good practices that can influence future programming and efforts even beyond Spotlight Initiative. To this end, the Initiative maintains regular dialogue with the **United Nations Development Cooperation Office** (DCO) that supports UN Resident Coordinators in overseeing activities across UN Country Teams and ensures the implementation of all standard operating procedures of the UN Sustainable Development Group, including the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, Business Operations Strategies and pooled funding mechanisms. In 2021, Spotlight Initiative teams, led by UN Resident Coordinators, adopted innovative, promising and good practices that further integrated inter-agency coordination into programming, made joint operations more efficient and effective and solidified the impacts of key partnerships.

The following innovative, promising and good practices are highlighted in the sub-sections below:

- Leveraging the role of the UN Resident Coordinator and the advantages of inter-agency coordination to advance stronger partnerships and programmes
- Utilizing joint operational tools and processes to share costs, facilitate coordination across agencies and achieve greater efficiency
- Building communities of practice and fostering innovative exchanges to disseminate knowledge for better informed and more effective programming
- Embracing the UN-EU partnership to maintain high-quality programming and advocacy and make progress in securing sustainability and funding for efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls

9.2.1 Innovative and Promising Practices for Transitioning to Inter-Agency, Multi-Stakeholder Delivery

An empowered and impartial UN Resident Coordinator system is the backbone of delivering under the UN Reform in order to usher in a new generation of more coherent and effective UN Country Teams. Across the Spotlight Initiative, UN Resident Coordinators exercise critical leadership and accountability for the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and in guiding teams towards a better joined-up way of working. Three years into programme implementation, it is clear that the extent to which UN Resident Coordinators leverage their role is essential to the Spotlight Initiative's success in delivering as a truly

integrated programme, beyond traditional joint programming, and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Leveraging the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator for broader partnerships

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes continued to pursue and build innovative partnerships through a “one UN interface” led by UN Resident Coordinators on behalf of all agencies within UN Country Teams. In **Jamaica**, the Resident Coordinator's engagement was essential in bringing actors together to launch a gender-based violence partnership forum, which aimed to identify partnership possibilities to support the Government's response efforts to end violence against women and girls as well as explore innovative solutions to eliminate this violence. United Nations agencies, the EU Delegation, International Development Bank of Jamaica, the Government of Canada, and USAID all came together in this forum, which was an important step forward in fostering new and stronger partnerships in service of more comprehensive programming and national response efforts.

Moreover, even programmes that are not led by Resident Coordinators because of their particular programmatic structure⁸⁹ have benefitted from the Resident Coordinator system. For example, the **Safe and Fair** programme has engaged Resident Coordinators in several programme countries to utilize their advice, leadership and political advocacy as well as to ensure coherence with country-level UN Sustainable Development Partnership Framework priority areas, in order to advance more cohesive and transformative results. In this way, the Resident Coordinators have come together in partnership to both contribute to the ambitious goals of the Safe and Fair programme and advance the UN Reform even beyond the Spotlight Initiative.

⁸⁹ Because of the specific nature of Spotlight Initiative regional programmes, each team proposed the most appropriate and effective set-up during the design phase. While the Caribbean, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and Pacific regional programmes are led by Resident Coordinators, the Africa Regional Programme is led by the UN Regional Director of the Regional Office for Africa under the UN Development Cooperation Office (DCO), and the Latin America Regional Programme is led by the UN Women Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean. The Safe and Fair programme is implemented by ILO and UN Women in collaboration with UNODC under the leadership of the ILO Regional Office.

Strengthening programming through inter-agency coordination practices

In 2021, Spotlight Initiative teams worked to equip their programmes with the necessary tools and information to develop innovative practices regarding joint operations, coordinated implementation and inter-agency collaboration. Many teams identified opportunities to leverage pre-existing United Nations coordination structures to advance cooperation both within Spotlight Initiative programmes and with national or regional stakeholders, while others created new mechanisms specific to the vision of Spotlight Initiative. These practices have enabled programmes to make the best use of all agencies' resources and expertise in order to strengthen national capacities and foster coordination among local and national actors, contributing to local ownership and sustainability of efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls.

In **Timor-Leste**, for instance, the programme engaged with existing United Nations-non-governmental organization coordination mechanisms, in order to better engage civil society, foster multi-stakeholder coordination and advance the principle of leaving no one behind by identifying the priority needs of marginalized groups. By providing technical and advisory support to the gender and protection coordination mechanism, the agencies of Spotlight Initiative worked together as one programme to support local civil society organizations in shaping and strengthening national prevention and response efforts, including in the aftermath of COVID-19 and climate disasters. In **Kyrgyzstan**, recognizing a need to better support implementing partners in managing simultaneous activities, the programme harmonized on- and off-line operational modalities and organized coordination platforms across agencies. As a result, the team was better placed to coordinate field activities and integrate results-based monitoring comprehensively across programming. Moreover, the

Creating innovative tools to facilitate integrated implementation: An innovative practice

In **Honduras**, Spotlight Initiative developed an inter-agency “toolbox” of joint documents, resources and planning instruments for common use across agencies. The objective of this toolbox is to systematize inter-agency coordination by streamlining knowledge-sharing and better connecting efforts across agencies and activities. So far, the toolbox includes:

- A matrix to monitor activities and partnerships at the municipality-level within the common results framework
- A joint spreadsheet to keep track of municipal partners (including civil society organizations, government actors and academia) in order to share information across agencies on the existing partner landscape
- A planning matrix to map knowledge products, communications products, reports, performance indicators and other key documents, all of which are saved in a common repository

These tools are a break from previous practice in programme communication and knowledge management. They have the potential to amplify the programme's efforts for greater impact by reducing duplication of work, enabling agencies to leverage each other's experience and expertise and streamlining the flow of information between agencies. As such, this toolbox is an illustrative example of how coordination practices can foster the kind of truly integrated implementation by United Nations agencies that results in more transformational impact.

programme’s coordination techniques enabled the team to more efficiently and collaboratively provide technical support to government partners and foster synergies with other existing programmes across United Nations agencies and beyond. Similarly, in **Trinidad and Tobago**, the programme worked collaboratively to convene implementing partners to regularly discuss ongoing projects, assess project status and collectively problem-solve any challenges and identify opportunities for interconnections between partners. By supporting this systematic exchange across implementing partners, Spotlight Initiative is working towards a more cohesive and coordinated programme.

Advancing integrated implementation: the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as a key United Nations system convener

In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat continued to convene inter-agency meetings at the headquarters level to exchange information about fund developments and programme status, agree on collective mitigating measures in response to

challenges and on next steps in response to emerging needs and align on key guidance to share with programme teams. In August, the Deputy Secretary-General met with UN Heads of Agencies to jointly take stock of Spotlight Initiative’s progress and brainstorm on the future of the Initiative. The participants agreed on the need to continue to accelerate implementation and the importance of agencies working together in a less fragmented way as well as leveraging a closer relationship with the Development Cooperation Office. The Heads of Agencies also unanimously agreed on the importance of continuing the Spotlight Initiative as a comprehensive approach to ending violence against women and girls. Looking ahead, the participants agreed to leverage synergies with the Generation Equality Forum and focus on how the United Nations and the European Union can work together and increase flexibility to ensure smooth implementation. This high-level engagement of United Nations principals is evidence of the cross-cutting commitment to Spotlight Initiative as well as the benefits of centring inter-agency dialogue in development efforts.



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In addition, the Secretariat fosters inter-agency decision-making and consensus-building at the level of Directors of United Nations agencies. In March 2021, the Directors agreed to pursue joint work with the Secretariat to analyse bottlenecks, good practices and acceleration measures at programme-level to help equip teams to advance implementation and reach programme targets. Following this meeting, the Secretariat convened a taskforce with the core United Nations agencies of Spotlight Initiative to share lessons learned from producing acceleration plans and identify common themes and solutions. Later in the year, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General met with United Nations core agency Directors in preparation for upcoming governing body meetings, in order to build a cohesive and comprehensive United Nations position on decision points.

On a monthly basis, the Secretariat also engages with United Nations agency focal points to exchange information on programme-level challenges and successes and to streamline support to programme teams. These monthly meetings have provided a reliable pathway for inclusive joint engagement on day-to-day matters, which has been critical for building coherence, trust and a common vision for Spotlight Initiative at all levels of the United Nations. The Secretariat has also collaborated with the Development Coordination Office (DCO) to advance the UN Reform and feed into existing and future resources on integrated programming with lessons learned from the Spotlight Initiative. The Development Coordination Office has been a particularly vital partner in engaging the Regional Directors of Spotlight Initiative regions, who have an important role to play in both supporting inter-agency coordination within individual programmes and contributing to broader coordination across United Nations agencies at the regional level. In November 2021, the Secretariat and the Development Coordination Office convened the Regional Directors to discuss implementation acceleration and results of Spotlight Initiative programmes, exchange information on the successes and challenges experienced in each region and identify good practices and next steps for implementing UN Reform. This kind of high-level, inter-agency, cross-

regional exchange has been found to be critical to mobilizing Spotlight Initiative programmes and agencies to further commit to delivery in the spirit of UN Reform.

9.2.2 Streamlining Delivery: Innovative and Promising Practices for Joint Operations and More Effective Programming

In the spirit of UN Reform, Spotlight Initiative teams make programmatic decisions and assign roles and responsibilities following a “function over agency” principle. As such, all agencies pool their resources and expertise in order to contribute to stronger internal capacity for the programme as a whole. Moreover, as a pooled fund, the Initiative is committed to identifying methods of increasing efficiency and decreasing transaction costs in order to maximize the impact of the European Union’s investment. In 2021, Spotlight Initiative programmes adopted innovative and promising operational practices that ultimately enabled teams to benefit from economies of scale and share administrative costs. For example, in **Nigeria**, Spotlight Initiative contributes to the UN Common Premises, which allows the agencies to benefit from not only a shared location but also ICT cost-recovery payments, logistical support and conference facilities. Other programmes, such as **Guyana** and **Uganda**, have similarly chosen to co-locate teams within a common office space, which has proven to foster improved cohesion and coherence across agencies as well as to streamline work planning and day-to-day communication for more effective programming.

In addition, UN Resident Coordinators have provided valuable insights and inputs to help guide Spotlight Initiative programmes towards effective joint operations to better facilitate transformative results in line with the Initiative’s ambitious goals. For the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, the UN Resident Coordinator⁹⁰ has helped ensure that all agencies involved in the programme can access the UN Common Premises in one of the major cities, which offers several essential common services including security and safety, IT support, recruitment

⁹⁰ The Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programmes is overseen by the UN Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan.

and diplomatic mail services to the capital. The use of these Common Premises not only enables streamlined team management and shared costs, but also illustrates the collective benefits of leveraging the United Nations system across agencies to implement programmes in a more integrated way.

Moreover, many programmes have sought to harmonize processes such as recruitment and procurement across agencies in order to reduce duplicating efforts and to leverage each agency's partnership base. In **Liberia**, the agencies agreed to joint procurement processes and developed generic Terms of Reference for common use. In 2021, UN Women effectively procured visibility materials for all agencies while conducting its own procurement, saving significant time and human resources while equipping the entire programme to advance critical communications and visibility efforts. Similarly, the agencies of the **Africa Regional Programme** developed a joint call for an Expression of Interest to identify civil society organizations and research institutes for particular activities. The agencies agreed that this approach would leverage the common bargaining power of the United Nations and allow the programme to more comprehensively engage with partners. These kinds of joint practices illustrate how Spotlight Initiative is moving away from the traditional model of working within agency silos and instead encourages sister agencies to work together to rationalize programme operations and management to collectively dedicate more time to achieving results.

Additionally, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat encouraged and guided programmes to use existing UN Reform tools to enable inter-agency coordination, including the Business Operations Strategy (BOS). In **Ecuador**, Spotlight Initiative reported greater efficiency in its operations following use of the Business Operations Strategy, which translated into greater capacity to coordinate across agencies and achieve high-level complementarity across programming. Within this framework, the agencies systematically coordinate project activities and share administrative and technical capacity in order to identify ways to simplify processes and reduce transactional costs. For example, in 2021, the programme used cross-agency procurement mechanisms to leverage existing long-term agreements and establish relationships with key

partners already working with other agencies. As a result, the programme efficiently contracted a marketing agency with previous knowledge of the United Nations system for their prevention campaign **#EseTipoNo**. This reduced the time needed for administrative processes and ensured the campaign benefitted from the necessary technical expertise, strengthening its impact. In **Niger**, in line with the Business Operations Strategy, the programme merged two similar activities, initially planned for implementation by two agencies, which allowed the team to reduce the number of consultants to be hired and facilitated the eventual recruitment process, saving both time and funds. Additionally, two agencies coordinated on the process of procuring necessary equipment and materials to upgrade a national obstetric fistula referral centre by utilizing one agency's long-term agreement through its central purchasing office. In addition to sharing costs and strengthening collaboration between the agencies, this practice provided an opportunity for the agencies to engage with the partner on behalf of the programme instead of as individual entities.

9.2.3 Fostering Dialogue: **Innovative and Promising Practices that Enable More Comprehensive Programming**

Since the inception of Spotlight Initiative, its programmes have contributed to a new model of knowledge exchange and built innovative communities of practice in order to share the necessary information and lessons learned to guide effective and impactful programming. Many programmes have taken the lead and created regional forums for coordination and exchange.

In June 2021, the **Africa Regional Programme** launched a continental learning platform to coordinate across country-level Spotlight Initiative programmes in Africa. The platform aims to share innovative, promising or good practices for informed implementation among the programme teams and to support partnership-building across the continent. During the first meeting of programmes, the teams discussed how to ensure coherence and comparability in data collection, analysis and dissemination while taking into account contextual differences, as well as how to foster a stronger sense of shared contribution to the elimination of



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violence against women and girls among Spotlight Initiative programmes. Participants worked together to identify common and emerging trends, brainstorm on mitigating measures for operational challenges and assess how to inform more effective future programming. Following the success of the first platform meeting, the Africa Regional Programme will hold a second annual convention in 2022.

In addition, Spotlight Initiative programmes share knowledge and collectively problem-solve on an ad hoc basis. For example, after the **Kyrgyzstan** team expressed a need for more guidance on meaningfully engaging the Civil Society National Reference Group, the Spotlight Coordinator reached out to the **Zimbabwe** team, given the programme's impressive achievements in building a solid relationship with their Reference Group. After sharing lessons learned and innovative practices, the Spotlight Coordinator in Zimbabwe was invited to speak during a meeting with

the technical working group and Civil Society National Reference Group in Kyrgyzstan, who reported that Zimbabwe's experience-sharing was extremely useful in helping the participants to collectively identify practices to implement.

Additionally, in 2021, the **Latin America Regional Programme** disseminated information on an innovative inter-agency practice that is now being replicated by Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean. The agencies of the Latin America Regional Programme have coordinated with UNICEF to generate evidence on the intersections between violence against women and violence against children (including particularly girls) in order to inform public policy recommendations and a pilot care service for child and girl survivors of violence. On a broader scale, this kind of cross-regional cooperation represents a valuable model for effective information-sharing and stronger programming.

9.2.4 Mobilizing Multilateralism: Innovative, Promising and Good Practices that Leverage Joint UN-EU Engagement

As described in [Chapter 4](#), the UN-EU partnership at the heart of Spotlight Initiative represents a new way of working in multilateral cooperation that serves as a critical model for innovative and integrated coordination. The Initiative has presented a unique opportunity for the two organizations to achieve more effective programming and advocacy by working together on day-to-day programmatic issues as well as on higher-level political objectives. At the global level, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships have maintained close communication on programme guidance and direction, communications and visibility and the future of the Spotlight Initiative. In parallel, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General has engaged with the European Union Directors, Director-Generals and Commissioner to identify and solidify common objectives, setting the tone for thoroughly integrated practices of partnership at the programme level.

In 2021, UN Country Teams and EU Delegations identified innovative methods to collectively strengthen the quality of programming and leverage governance mechanisms to further hone the strategic vision and objectives of programmes. In **Nigeria**, for instance, the EU Delegation used its role on the National Steering Committee to help shape the programme's Phase II by tabling detailed recommendations. These recommendations included how to increase complementarity with existing initiatives in the country, strengthen inter-agency coherence and further engage government at all levels to advance the elimination of violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative team took deliberate steps to consider and respond to the

recommendations, which it presented at the following National Steering Committee meeting, where the Head of the EU Delegation pronounced its support of the programme's direction and the Government's ongoing engagement. This experience illustrates how the multi-stakeholder nature of Spotlight Initiative, with close and frequent exchanges between the United Nations and the European Union, enables free-flowing communication and strategic advice that ultimately leads to more effective and comprehensive programmes.

Moreover, during the reporting period, United Nations and European Union teams strengthened joint advocacy efforts to more effectively elevate the issue of violence against women and girls to the top of political agenda. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative has focused on advocacy at the policy level, collectively raising awareness of violence against women and girls at community, district and national levels while disseminating good practices and lessons learned to inform policy action. In particular, the United Nations and the European Union have leveraged their participation in high-level events with government partners to secure significant media coverage for Spotlight Initiative and widely communicate key messages around violence against women and girls across the country in order to influence policy change together. In **Uganda**, the EU Ambassador, UN Resident Coordinator, and Heads of UN Agencies have worked together to advocate for the future of Spotlight Initiative and for greater national commitment to ending violence against women and girls. During high-level meetings with government partners, the United Nations and European Union representatives presented a collective strategic vision for the programme, which convinced the Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to confirm her support for extending Spotlight Initiative efforts past 2022. More information on this UN-EU partnership can be found in [Chapter 10](#).

Way Forward

Throughout 2021, Spotlight Initiative continued to demonstrate the effectiveness of its unique model to eliminate violence against women and girls. The Initiative has broken many barriers in the way the United Nations traditionally operates and works with civil society organizations and United Nations agencies, as well as governments, media, universities, the private sector and others to more effectively advance women's rights and end violence against women and girls. The mid-term assessments of the programmes confirm this, and annual reports from the past three years of implementation, along with the results from the Dalberg study detailing the potential exponential results of this model over time, underscore the Spotlight Initiative's contributions and successes and the importance of its comprehensive approach.

This chapter opens with reflections on ensuring the sustainability of Spotlight Initiative's results and investments, and then moves on to providing an overview of Spotlight Initiative 2.0 and efforts to maintain and scale up progress made so far. The chapter concludes with a call to action on the need to increase investment in comprehensive approaches that centre feminist and women's rights groups dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. Spotlight Initiative will build on its achievements in adapting to the pandemic, fostering transformative change, seeking out new partners for sustainable results, and advancing implementation in line with UN Reform and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10.1 Consolidating the Sustainability of Spotlight Initiative's Results and Investment

In 2022, Spotlight Initiative will enter the final two years of programme implementation on the initial seed funding from the European Union. The findings of the mid-term assessments and the meta-review, as well as lessons learned from the last three years of implementation, will guide the Initiative as it looks to the next stages. Given this, the priority areas for the current European Union funding window of the Spotlight Initiative are detailed below.

Supporting programmes in the transition to Phase II

In 2022, programmes in **Asia, Caribbean and Pacific** will submit proposals for Phase II of programming. Phase II will entail additional funding to consolidate progress made during Phase I and strengthen the strategic focus on national ownership and long-term sustainability. The Operational Steering Committee will make decisions on Phase II programme continuation based on the findings of the respective programme's mid-term assessment. Lessons learned from the **Africa** and **Latin America** programmes that moved to Phase II in 2021 will guide next year's process to ensure a smooth and efficient transition.

Ensuring sustainability and closing of Phase I

In early 2022, the Operational Steering Committee decided to extend the maximum implementation timeframe – along with the funding window – for Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Asia, Caribbean and Pacific** by one year, from 31 December 2022 to 31 December 2023. The Operational Steering

Committee also agreed that the extension of programmes in **Latin America** and **Africa** (to a maximum date of 31 December 2023) would be decided based on a request by the UN Resident Coordinator.

To ensure an effective closure of Spotlight Initiative's EUR 500 million investment from the European Union, the Secretariat will lead in supporting teams to ensure programmes can consolidate results and amplify impact with adequate sustainability plans – a priority as programmes wind down – and comply with operational and financial closure processes, particularly given the multi-agency nature of Spotlight Initiative programmes. For this, the Secretariat will work closely with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office and United Nations agency focal points as it coordinates and monitors the process.

Importantly, as programmes approach the end of the implementation period for this first phase of Spotlight Initiative work, they will increasingly focus on outlining an exit strategy and sustainability plan in order to ensure the long-term impact of progress made in eliminating violence against women and girls. The



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Secretariat will prioritize support for these efforts, with written guidance and knowledge products on sustainability, as well as cross-regional dialogues among Spotlight Initiative teams to reflect on and strategize for long-term sustainability. Linked to this, the Secretariat will also provide close support to teams in their efforts to mobilize resources more systematically and secure local and national contributions for programming to end violence against women and girls. Over the past two years, in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic's particular effects on violence against women and girls, the Secretariat has been able to build closer partnerships with government and civil society through national, multi-stakeholder response and prevention efforts, which the Spotlight Initiative will seek to further strengthen as programmes strive for sustainability and sustained investment. For more on the next phase of the Spotlight Initiative, or "Spotlight 2.0", see Section 10.2 below.

Updating Spotlight Initiative's Terms of Reference and Operations Manual Compendium and Preparing for a Performance Review

In 2022, the Secretariat will take stock of the Fund's overall management, roll-out and implementation. The Spotlight Initiative's founding Terms of Reference (contractually referred to as Description of the Action with the European Union) will be reviewed to ensure that the document adequately reflects the Fund's extension and incorporates any Operational Steering Committee decisions since the launch of Spotlight Initiative that may need to be included. This will be critical to ensuring that the contractual framework of the Spotlight Initiative is effectively up to date. This exercise will be carried out in close coordination with the European Union and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

In parallel, the Secretariat will produce and issue the next iteration of the Operations Manual Compendium in order to offer programme teams and Fund stakeholders a single source reference manual that incorporates the latest programme implementation guidance. Updates will focus on Phase I to Phase II transition arrangement, Phase II design and roll-out, closure guidance, any Operational Steering Committee decisions and general revisions to improve the manual's clarity and usefulness for

programme teams. This extensive work will engage the whole Secretariat in coordination with United Nations agency focal points and Spotlight initiative programme teams for consultations and feedback, as well as the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office and the European Union.

Finally, in 2022, the European Court of Auditors (ECA) will initiate a performance review of Spotlight Initiative. More specifically, this review will consider the European Commission's engagement with Spotlight Initiative and the Commission's choice of partnering with the United Nations. This is a critically important review for the United Nations, particularly given the historically unprecedented investment in the issue of ending violence against women and girls. The results of the review will be published and discussed by the European Parliament and made available to all donors and the general public. As such, the Secretariat will closely support the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office and the United Nations Office in Brussels in engaging with the European Court of Auditors throughout the review, as well as coordinating with programme teams and Fund stakeholders as needed to collect and disseminate information, facilitate interviews and exchanges and ensure effective common messaging.

Strengthening knowledge management and rolling out the Global Platform

In order to strengthen evidence-based programming and policy on ending violence against women and girls, in 2022, Spotlight Initiative will amplify its wealth of knowledge, lessons learned and promising practices through the Global Platform. This will include a planned launch with the European Union and roll-out of the online hub, SHINE. To strengthen knowledge management efforts on ending violence against women and girls at regional and headquarters levels, inputs will be drawn from the Management Focal Points Networks and the Knowledge Management Headquarters Group on Ending Violence against Women and Girls. Specifically, a coordination or communication mechanism for Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups will be created on SHINE, and the Secretariat will explore the possibility of convening civil society and duty bearers through the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls to support civil society advocacy

and engagement. Furthermore, linkages will be made with the Generation Equality Gender-Based Violence Action Coalition – of which the European Union is a co-chair – to leverage the reach of the United Nations system and broader ecosystem in service of ending violence against women and girls.

Continuing the support to the advancement of the UN Reform

In light of the Spotlight Initiative's unparalleled level of experience with implementing jointly in line with UN Reform principles, the Secretariat will continue to collect lessons learned and innovative practices related to this new way of working in order to help guide future funds and Sustainable Development Goal programmes towards greater coordination and more transformative impact. In particular, the Secretariat will look at the use of the Business Operations Strategy and other UN Reform tools by programmes to make an informed contribution to the United Nations' business operations and efficiency agenda. Moreover, by working closely with the United Nations Development Coordination Office, the Secretariat will feed this knowledge as lessons learned in support of the development of new tools, policies and procedures that facilitate a joined-up approach, including through inputs to the updated joint programming guidance the United Nations system is currently developing. In this way, Spotlight Initiative will take leadership in setting up the future of United Nations joint programming to

effectively drive the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Engaging civil society – deepening meaningful partnerships

Engagement with civil society will continue to deepen at both the strategic and implementation levels. In particular, the Secretariat is fully committed to finding innovative ways to increase core and flexible funding to grassroots civil society organizations. Through the expansion of the WithHer Fund, the Initiative and UN Foundation are seeking ways to reach organizations traditionally excluded from funding. The Secretariat in collaboration with the Global Civil Society Reference Group will revise and simplify the civil society monitoring toolkit to strengthen accountability to rights-holders and communities and to foster civil society-led independent shadow reports. As the Initiative strives to protect women's human rights defenders, the Secretariat will continue to support country and regional programmes and Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups in contextualizing and implementing the Spotlight Initiative-specific integrated protection approach. Further, to encourage robust participation from Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups, the Secretariat will closely monitor the roll-out of the compensation guidance note and help ensure that civil society partners are meaningfully consulted in designing the compensation modalities.

“Machinga is a district with high cases of SGBV [sexual and gender-based violence]. The coming of the SI [Spotlight Initiative] has changed the status quo, we are doing better, and we can see change”

– Aisha Adams, Second Deputy Speaker of Parliament.



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©Spotlight Initiative Mali

Expanding public engagement

Spotlight Initiative will continue to expand its digital presence with the intention of reaching new audiences both within and beyond the United Nations system. As mentioned in [Chapter 7, The Culture Change Commitment](#) and the Initiative's partnership with the [Social Good Club's](#) network of social media influencers will enter its next phase with the development of a fellowship programme. This will support and fund influencers to create content on ending violence against women and girls, allowing the Initiative to reach new audiences in a way that resonates. Spotlight Initiative will also expand its own social media content to include new, more accessible formats, including short expert talks, more video content and thematic content in partnership with other organizations working towards the Sustainable Development Goals, similar to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Spotlight Initiative collaboration in March 2022, "[The impact of climate change on violence against women and girls](#)", which included a webinar, experts talks, activists' testimonies and educational content on social media. Spotlight Initiative will also partner

with global public relations firm Edelman in 2022 to ensure that key moments, results and products reach the public more broadly. This will allow the Initiative to expand its brand awareness and visibility efforts in the European donor market and secure media opportunities and events to better promote Spotlight Initiative's programme results and impact within the European Union.

10.2 Spotlight Initiative 2.0: Next Generation Investment to End Violence against Women and Girls

In 2021, the Secretariat laid the groundwork for "Spotlight Initiative 2.0," and looking ahead, the Secretariat will work with UN Country Teams, the European Union and other stakeholders to firm up the vision for the next iteration of the Spotlight Initiative. The current vision for the future of Spotlight Initiative is for a renewed USD 500 million-1 billion multi-donor fund positioned as the global reference on ending violence against women and girls, leveraging

the whole of the United Nations system towards an integrated, comprehensive and scaled-up effort. Mostly, the next stage of the Initiative will focus on expanding the country outreach in all regions, adding regions to the programme portfolio, and consolidating the Initiative's global footprint through the Global Platform and global advocacy.

In the shorter-term, the Secretariat will pursue three to four larger donors that have a higher likelihood of providing funding in 2022 or 2023. In 2023–2025, Spotlight Initiative will seek to build new relationships with donors and consider possibilities with philanthropies.

As noted above, in 2022, Spotlight Initiative will prioritize building on and expanding the European Union's initial investment, in order to expand this proven model to additional countries and potentially new regions. The Secretariat will focus on developing and rolling out a resource mobilization strategy and outreach plan, which will include deepening its resource mobilization expertise and capacities. The Secretariat will pursue the possibility of convening a replenishment conference, in order to bring together

high-level stakeholders, mobilize broad support for the elimination of violence against women and girls and secure the necessary resources to sustain the progress made by the Initiative. Additionally, the Secretariat will explore avenues for the continuous capitalization of Spotlight Initiative and innovative financing.

As the future of European Union funding lies at the country level, in line with the 2021–2027 Multiannual Financing Framework, the Secretariat will support and guide programmes as they pursue opportunities for expanded investment with their EU Delegations. To ensure diversified partnerships and national ownership, Spotlight Initiative will also seek out opportunities to mobilize resources locally, from both bilateral donors and domestic resources. The Secretariat will dedicate time and resources to identifying innovative ways to combine domestic contributions with donor funds to increase opportunities for further investments.

Leveraging national contributions for greater impact

During 2021, several Spotlight Initiative programmes proactively advocated for national contributions to fund future efforts that would build on the Initiative's progress in eliminating violence against women and girls. These are a testament to the transformative results and fundamental to sustainability of the Spotlight Initiative.

In **Uganda**, for example, the team leveraged its strong relationship with the EU Delegation to present a proposal to fund a successor programme to the Spotlight Initiative. The team strongly advocated for the continuation of the critical interventions and campaigns already being carried out and for the opportunity to further hone the programme's strategic focus. In parallel, the Resident Coordinator, Heads of Agencies and European Union Ambassador convened a high-level meeting with the new Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development to communicate the unique added value of the Spotlight Initiative model. The Minister was convinced and agreed in principle that the Spotlight Initiative should continue past 2022, which provided critical backing to the team's request for funding. The EU Delegation has now committed EUR 20 million for the Spotlight Initiative successor to implement from 2023–2025.

The **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** team held consultations to identify opportunities to mobilize regional efforts to fund the elimination of violence against women and girls, in preparation for the Generation Equality Forum and in order to scale up regional cooperation and partnership on ending sexual violence and violence against women and girls in Central Asia. Following these consultations, the team invigorated its efforts to engage national governments at the highest level. At the Generation Equality Forum, the President of Kazakhstan announced his country's readiness to make financial contributions to the Spotlight Initiative programme. The Government of Kazakhstan's contributions have now funded efforts to build the capacity of regional civil society organizations to effectively address sexual violence and violence against women and girls, enabled a shelter in Almaty to improve its services for survivors of violence and supported further engagement with civil society organizations under Pillar 6, with a special focus on responding to sexual violence and violence against women and girls, including in the context of COVID-19. This contribution is particularly notable given the critical importance of government support for civil society leadership in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

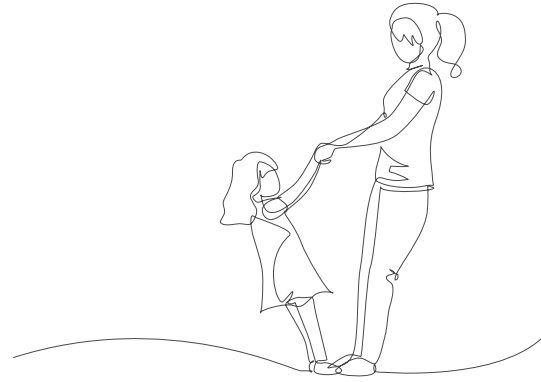
Programme teams also worked to mobilize national resources to end violence against women and girls. In **Ecuador**, the team advocated with the new Government to position the issue of violence against women and girls high on the national political agenda. A visit by the Deputy Executive Director of UN Women to the country was critical in increasing the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative and influencing the President-elect to prioritize national funding for the elimination of violence against women and girls. At the end of 2021, the Government of Ecuador announced an allocation of USD 24 million to the Human Rights Secretariat to be invested in policies and projects related to ending violence against women and girls for the following fiscal year.

In **Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative worked closely with the Department for Community Development and Religion to request national funding for the implementation of the National Gender-Based Violence Strategy. Over the course of several months, Spotlight Initiative supported the Department with developing a detailed budget proposal, organized briefings with the Chair of the Gender-Based Violence Parliamentary Committee and the Co-Chairs of Coalition of Parliamentarians to End Gender-Based Violence to ensure coordination and collective advocacy and helped lobby the Treasurer to secure his support for the funding request. In November 2021, the Parliament ultimately approved approximately USD 1.4 million for the National Gender-Based Violence Secretariat within the national budget. This commitment represents the largest sum of funding ever committed in the national budget by the Government from its own resources on violence against women and girls.

Chapter 6 includes an additional example of a Spotlight Initiative programme – **Timor-Leste** – supporting advocacy efforts for increased national contributions to protecting women's rights and ending violence against women and girls. These locally generated contributions are a testament to the transformative results that Spotlight Initiative programmes have already achieved and to the promise of the Spotlight Initiative model to make even greater progress in eliminating violence against women and girls in the future. In 2022 and beyond, it is expected that this proactive approach will drive similar contributions at the national level in other countries in order to build on the significant results of the past years and continue to comprehensively address violence against women and girls.

10.3 Spotlight Initiative 2.0: A Call to Action to Invest

As mentioned in [Chapter 8](#), the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat commissioned Dalberg in 2021 to project the potential long-term impact of investing in a fund like Spotlight Initiative. As noted, the study found that investing in a holistic, rights-based approach – one that works across multiple, mutually reinforcing pillars, and deeply engages grassroots and local actors and feminist movements – has the potential to reduce violence 70–90 per cent more effectively than single-pillar or siloed approaches, and concurrently, accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals more broadly (as depicted in the visual below).



Support people to realize their full potential

Keep 19 million more girls in school by 2050



Imperative to invest

Reduce violence and foster peace and stability

Prevent 21 million women and girls from facing violence by 2025



Reduce violence 70%–90% more effectively than single-pillar or siloed interventions



Reduce escalations of conflict and foster national/global peace and stability



Improve perpetrator accountability and survivors' access to quality support



Save at least 5 women's and girls' lives every day



Save the lives of 330,000 children



Preempt critical physical injuries for 2,500 women and girls and the onset of serious psychological distress for 1,000 women and girls every day



Enable role modelling of gender-equal values and relationships for 70 million children



Safeguard survivors from losing 30% of their annual earning potential



Add back 39 million productive days a year



In 2022, the Initiative will widely share the results of the Dalberg study and continue to advocate for investments in proven models like Spotlight Initiative. Toward that end, Spotlight Initiative calls on donors to robustly resource comprehensive, rights-based programming to end violence against women and girls. With roughly USD 317 million more, for example, the Dalberg study predicts that Spotlight Initiative's work could further reduce the prevalence of violence in target communities from 1 in 3 to 1 in 5 women and girls within a decade.

As backlash to progress in women's human rights is felt globally, and violence against women and girls continues to be a pervasive and egregious human rights violation, with levels rising, the importance of funding this model cannot be overstated. We know it works!

CHAPTER 11

UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Consolidated Annual Financial Report

CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT of the Administrative Agent

Spotlight Initiative Fund
for the period 1 January to 31 December 2021

UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
United Nations Development Programme
PARTNERS GATEWAY: <https://mptf.undp.org>

23 May 2022



23 May 2022

RECIPIENT UN ORGANIZATIONS

 <p>International Labour Organization</p>	<p>The International Labor Organization (ILO)</p>	 <p>The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)</p>
 <p>IOM UN MIGRATION</p>	<p>International Organization for Migration (IOM)</p>	 <p>The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)</p>
 <p>UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER</p>	<p>The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)</p>	 <p>The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)</p>
 <p>Pan American Health Organization Regional Office of the World Health Organization</p>	<p>Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)</p>	 <p>The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)</p>
	<p>The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)</p>	 <p>The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)</p>
 <p>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</p>	<p>The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)</p>	

CONTRIBUTORS

	<p>ALBANIA</p>	 <p>EUROPEAN UNION</p>
	<p>PORTUGAL</p>	

Definitions

Allocation

Amount approved by the Operational Steering Committee for a project/programme.

Approved Project/Programme

A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Operational Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Contributor Commitment

Amount(s) committed by a contributor to a Fund in a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.

Contributor Deposit

Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement.

Delivery Rate

The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Recipient Organization against the 'net funded amount'. This does not include expense commitments by Recipient Organisations.

Indirect Support Costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Recipient Organizations. UNSDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs for inter-agency pass-through MPTFs.

Net Funded Amount

Amount transferred to a Recipient Organization less any refunds transferred back to the MPTF Office by a Recipient Organization.

Recipient Organization

A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is a partner in a Fund, as represented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular Fund.

Project Expenditure

The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all Recipient Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Recipient Organization follows for donor reporting.

Project Financial Closure

A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project Operational Closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which Recipient Organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project Start Date

Project/ Joint programme start date as per the programmatic document.

Total Approved Budget

This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Operational Steering Committee.

US Dollar Amount

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars

Introduction

This Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund** is prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in fulfillment of its obligations as Administrative Agent, as per the terms of Reference (TOR), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the UNDP MPTF Office and the Recipient Organizations, and the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) signed with contributors.

The MPTF Office, as Administrative Agent, is responsible for concluding an MOU with Recipient Organizations and SAAs with contributors. It receives, administers and manages contributions, and disburses these funds to the Recipient Organizations. The Administrative Agent prepares and submits annual consolidated financial reports, as well as regular financial statements, for transmission to stakeholders.

This consolidated financial report covers the period 1 January to 31 December 2021 and provides financial data on progress made in the implementation of projects of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund**. It is posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY (<https://beta.mptf.undp.org/fund/sif00>).

2021 Financial Performance

This chapter presents financial data and analysis of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund** using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December **2021**. Financial information for this Fund is also available on the MPTF Office GATEWAY, at the following address: <https://beta.mptf.undp.org/fund/sif00>.

1. Sources and Uses of Funds

As of 31 December **2021**, **3** contributors deposited US\$ **483,607,346** and US\$ **1,964,560** was earned in interest.

The cumulative source of funds was US\$ **485,571,906**.

Of this amount, US\$ **402,725,254** has been net funded to **11** Recipient Organizations, of which US\$ 269,395,490 has been reported as expenditure. Table 1 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses, and balance of the **Spotlight Initiative Fund** as of 31 December 2021.

Table 1. Financial Overview, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

	Annual 2020	Annual 2021	Cumulative
Sources of Funds			
Contributions from donors	148,798,779	127,746,919	483,607,346
Sub-total Contributions	148,798,779	127,746,919	483,607,346
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	410,506	145,295	1,964,560
Total: Sources of Funds	149,209,285	127,892,214	485,571,906
Use of Funds			
Transfers to Participating Organizations	168,665,649	93,952,038	389,014,575
Refunds received from Participating Organizations	0	-2,477,109	-2,477,109
Net Funded Amount	168,665,649	91,474,929	386,537,466
Administrative Agent Fees	280	405	735
Direct Costs	427,913	5,647,668	16,187,787
Bank Charges	878	1,340	3,747
Other Expenditures	0	1,887,729	5,186,067
Total: Uses of Funds	169,094,719	99,012,071	407,915,802
Change in Fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	-19,885,434	28,880,144	77,656,103
Opening Fund balance (1 January)	68,661,393	48,775,960	
Closing Fund balance (31 December)	48,775,960	77,656,103	77,656,103
Net Funded Amount (Includes Direct Cost)	169,093,562	97,122,597	402,725,254
Participating Organizations Expenditure (Includes Direct Cost)	83,423,237	148,784,069	269,395,490
Balance of Funds with Participating Organizations	85,670,324	-51,661,472	133,329,763

2. Partner Contributions

Table 2 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this fund as of 31 December 2021.

The **Spotlight Initiative Fund** is currently being financed by **3** contributors, as listed in the table below

The table includes financial commitments made by the contributors through signed Standard Administrative Agreements with an anticipated deposit date as per the schedule of payments by 31 December 2021 and deposits received by the same date. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond 2021.

Table 2. Contributions, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Contributors	Total Commitments	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020 Deposits	Current Year Jan-Dec-2021 Deposits	Total Deposits
Government of Albania	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
European Union	534,104,381	355,827,454	127,706,417	483,533,872
Government of Portugal	68,474	27,972	40,502	68,474
Grand Total	534,177,855	355,860,426	127,746,919	483,607,346

3. Interest Earned

Interest income is earned in two ways: 1) on the balance of funds held by the Administrative Agent (Fund earned interest), and 2) on the balance of funds held by the Recipient Organizations (Agency earned interest) where their Financial Regulations and Rules allow return of interest to the AA.

As of 31 December 2021, Fund earned interest amounts to US\$ **1,964,560**.

Details are provided in the table below.

Table 3. Sources of Interest and Investment Income, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Interest Earned	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020	Current Year Jan-Dec-2021	Total
Administrative Agent			
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	1,819,265	145,295	1,964,560
Total: Fund Earned Interest	1,819,265	145,295	1,964,560
Recipient Organization			
Total: Agency earned interest			
Grand Total	1,819,265	145,295	1,964,560

4. Transfer of Funds

Allocations to Recipient Organizations are approved by the Operational Steering Committee and disbursed by the Administrative Agent. As of 31 December 2021, the AA has transferred US\$ **389,014,575** to **11** Recipient Organizations (see list below) for the programme implementation in countries selected by the Operational Steering Committee: 8 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Africa, 6 countries Programme and 1 Regional Programme in Latin America, 3 countries and 2 Regional Programmes in Asia, 6 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Caribbean, 4 countries and 1 Regional Programme in Pacific, 3 UNWomen CSOs Regional and 3 CSO Country Programmes. Table 4 provides additional information on the refunds received by the MPTF Office, and the net funded amount for each of the Recipient Organizations.

Transfer by Region/Countries

Table 4.1 provides additional information on the approved and net funded amounts per Region/Country.

Table 4 Transfer, Refund, and Net Funded Amount by Recipient Organization (in US Dollars)

Recipient Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020			Current Year Jan-Dec-2021			Total		
	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded
ILO	10,617,597	0	10,617,597	4,357,156	0	4,357,156	14,974,753	0	14,974,753
IOM	191,626	0	191,626	287,436	0	287,436	479,062	0	479,062
OHCHR	1,407,205	0	1,407,205	291,164	0	291,164	1,698,369	0	1,698,369
PAHO/WHO	300,015	0	300,015	450,023	0	450,023	750,038	0	750,038
UNWOMEN	112,665,396	0	112,665,396	31,931,878	-910,137	31,021,741	144,597,274	-910,137	143,687,137
UNDP	51,850,787	0	51,850,787	19,787,201	-785,772	19,001,430	71,637,988	-785,772	70,852,216
UNESCO	3,360,462	0	3,360,462	286,742	-153,666	133,076	3,647,204	-153,666	3,493,538
UNFPA	64,563,457	0	64,563,457	20,211,693	-465,363	19,746,330	84,775,150	-465,363	84,309,787
UNHCR	2,771,846	0	2,771,846	484,848	0	484,848	3,256,694	0	3,256,694
UNICEF	46,103,857	0	46,103,857	15,799,697	-162,171	15,637,526	61,903,554	-162,171	61,741,383
UNODC	1,230,289	0	1,230,289	64,200	0	64,200	1,294,489	0	1,294,489
Grand Total	295,062,537	0	295,062,537	93,952,038	-2,477,109	91,474,930	389,014,575	-2,477,109	386,537,466

Table 4.1 Approved and Net Funded Amount by Regions/Countries, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Net Funded	Year Jan-Dec 2021 Net Funded	Total Net Funded
Africa					
119124	Africa Regional Programme	25,620,000	6,000,000	4,248,000	10,248,000
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	22,634,286	9,226,829	5,000,000	20,844,000
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	28,571,429	11,628,425	5,000,000	25,000,000
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	25,714,287	10,442,487	0	18,000,000
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	28,571,429	11,619,872	5,000,000	25,000,000
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	24,285,715	9,855,943	0	17,000,000
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	35,714,286	14,570,067	0	25,000,000
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – AF	20,636,792	0	0	20,636,792
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	7,075,472	0	0	7,075,472
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	31,428,571	12,801,128	5,000,000	26,999,999
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	30,000,000	12,309,536	5,000,000	26,000,000
Africa: Total		280,252,267	98,454,287	29,248,000	221,804,263
Asia					

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Net Funded	Year Jan-Dec 2021 Net Funded	Total Net Funded
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	16,500,000	4,950,000	0	4,950,000
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	4,248,584	1,499,604	2,748,980	4,248,584
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	4,700,000	4,700,000	0	4,700,000
108309	Safe and Fair	29,370,587	6,462,673	6,212,514	22,988,180
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	2,000,000	700,000	800,000	1,500,000
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	4,900,000	1,960,000	2,940,000	4,900,000
Asia: Total		61,719,171	20,272,277	12,701,494	43,286,764
Caribbean					
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	990,000	1,435,500	2,425,500
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional Programme	9,552,830	3,821,132	0	3,821,132
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	1,650,000	660,000	990,000	1,650,000
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	3,700,000	1,480,000	2,220,000	3,700,000
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	3,959,999	5,940,001	9,900,000
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	6,600,000	2,640,000	3,960,000	6,600,000
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	2,000,000	700,000	800,000	1,500,000
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight	3,700,000	1,479,999	2,220,001	3,700,000
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	15,731,130	17,565,502	33,296,632

Region / Project No	Project Title	Total Approved	Year Jan-Dec 2020 Net Funded	Year Jan-Dec 2021 Net Funded	Total Net Funded
Latin America					
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	7,714,286	2,856,623	2,314,286	7,714,286
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	1,160,001	1,739,999	2,900,000
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	10,285,713	3,831,349	3,085,713	10,285,713
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme	5,400,000	0	-2,477,109	20,387
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	10,285,714	3,890,945	3,085,714	10,285,714
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	5,000,000	1,925,000	1,500,000	5,000,000
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	8,999,999	3,272,037	0	6,300,000
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – LA	5,660,378	0	0	5,660,378
Latin America: Total		56,246,090	16,935,955	9,248,603	48,166,478
Pacific					
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	7,077,830	1,650,000	5,427,830	7,077,830
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	15,680,000	6,272,000	9,408,000	15,680,000
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	2,900,000	0	2,900,000
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	2,000,000	1,500,000	500,000	2,000,000
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	3,960,000	5,940,000	9,900,000
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	990,000	1,435,500	2,425,500
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	17,272,000	22,711,330	39,983,330
Grand Total		477,828,188	168,665,649	91,474,929	386,537,466

5. Expenditure and Financial Delivery Rates

All final expenditures reported are submitted as certified financial information by the Headquarters of the Recipient Organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Joint programme/ Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Recipient Organization, and are reported to the Administrative Agent as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The expenditures are reported via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The **2021** expenditure data has been posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY at <https://beta.mptf.undp.org/fund/sif00>.

5.1 Expenditure Reported by Recipient Organization, Region / Countries

As shown in table below, the cumulative net funded amount is US\$ **386,537,466** and cumulative expenditures reported by the Recipient Organizations amount to US\$ **256,928,849**. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of **66.47** percent.

Tables 5.1, 5.1a and 5.2 provide additional information on the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Region and RUNO.

Direct cost transferred amounts and expenditures reported (Secretariat and AA) are reflected in the Section 8. Direct Costs

Table 5.1 Net Funded Amount and Reported Expenditures by Recipient Organization, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Recipient Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure			Delivery Rate %
			Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020	Current Year Jan-Dec-2021	Cumulative	
ILO	18,913,231	14,974,753	5,557,779	3,261,410	8,819,188	58.89
IOM	479,063	479,062	28,627	320,866	349,492	72.95
OHCHR	2,006,853	1,698,369	491,148	872,734	1,363,882	80.31
PAHO/WHO	750,038	750,038	146,001	284,720	430,721	57.43
UNDP	85,854,833	70,852,216	21,074,583	25,508,772	46,583,355	65.75
UNESCO	4,846,841	3,493,538	1,396,975	1,370,512	2,767,487	79.22
UNFPA	108,376,966	84,309,787	28,286,298	33,614,092	61,900,390	73.42
UNHCR	3,686,132	3,256,694	2,120,233	883,984	3,004,217	92.25
UNICEF	80,161,229	61,741,383	18,592,217	25,550,682	44,142,898	71.50
UNODC	1,696,713	1,294,489	418,829	693,778	1,112,606	85.95
UNWOMEN	171,056,289	143,687,137	33,706,616	52,747,997	86,454,613	60.17
Grand Total	477,828,188	386,537,466	111,819,304	145,109,545	256,928,849	66.47

Table 5.1a Net Funded Amount, Reported Expenditure, and Financial Delivery by Region and Recipient Organization, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Region	Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Africa					
	ILO	1,177,208	935,055	645,560	69.04
	OHCHR	1,421,804	1,317,551	1,019,290	77.36
	UNDP	49,353,500	38,804,831	28,953,229	74.61
	UNESCO	3,755,362	2,743,539	2,286,734	83.35
	UNFPA	72,607,073	54,546,446	45,101,847	82.69
	UNHCR	3,686,132	3,256,694	3,004,217	92.25
	UNICEF	55,984,283	40,955,325	31,777,855	77.59
	UNWOMEN	92,266,906	79,244,822	53,248,109	67.19
Africa: Total		280,252,268	221,804,263	166,036,841	74.86
Asia					
	ILO	16,334,125	12,637,802	7,410,045	58.63
	UNDP	4,969,079	3,923,985	1,866,436	47.56
	UNFPA	7,608,633	4,245,156	1,654,619	38.98
	UNICEF	5,242,009	3,083,181	1,768,199	57.35
	UNODC	276,451	276,451	254,969	92.23
	UNWOMEN	27,288,874	19,120,188	10,297,733	53.86
Asia: Total		61,719,171	43,286,763	23,252,001	53.72
Caribbean					
	PAHO/WHO	750,038	750,038	430,721	57.43
	UNDP	9,417,460	8,231,883	4,095,382	49.75
	UNFPA	7,887,159	6,992,724	3,554,713	50.83
	UNICEF	7,465,277	6,593,598	3,686,897	55.92
	UNWOMEN	14,057,896	10,728,389	4,091,834	38.14
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	33,296,632	15,859,547	47.63

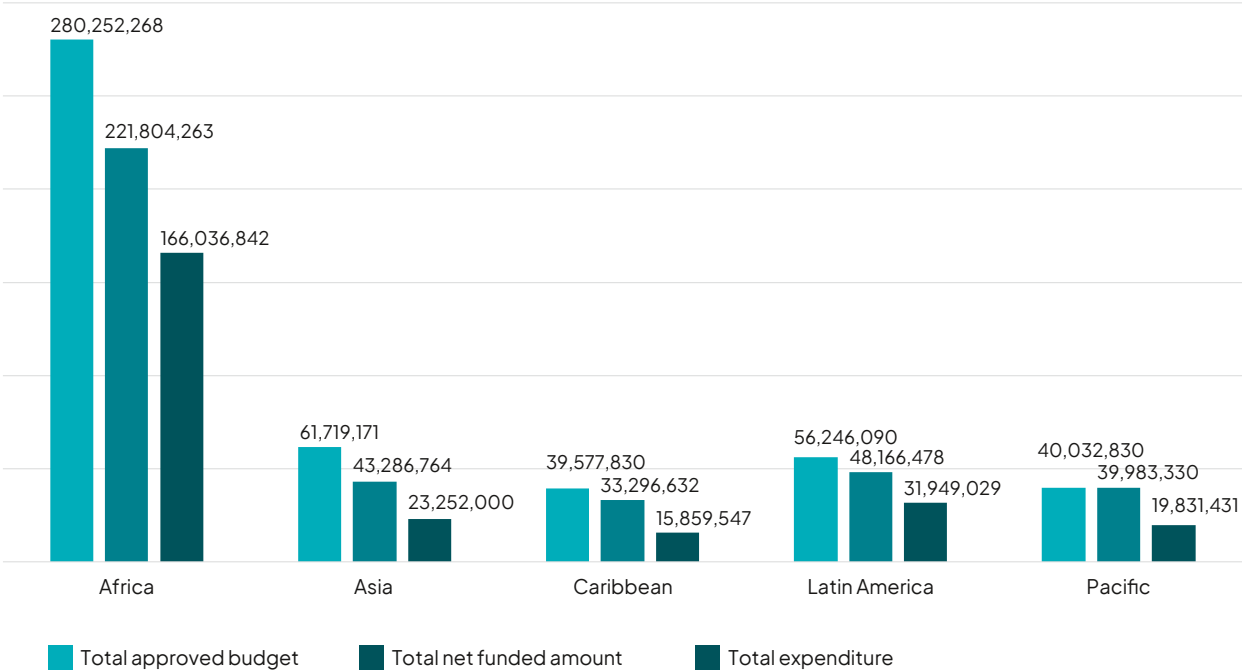
Region	Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Latin America					
	ILO	744,821	744,820	523,553	70.29
	OHCHR	585,049	380,818	344,591	90.49
	UNDP	13,599,504	11,376,223	7,229,288	63.55
	UNESCO	341,480	-	-	N/A
	UNFPA	11,866,954	10,157,114	7,327,069	72.14
	UNICEF	5,191,078	4,830,697	3,482,361	72.09
	UNODC	1,420,262	1,018,038	857,637	84.24
	UNWOMEN	22,496,942	19,658,768	12,184,529	61.98
Latin America: Total		56,246,090	35,664,617	23,851,596	66.33
Pacific					
	ILO	657,076	657,076	240,030	36.53
	IOM	479,062	479,062	349,492	72.95
	UNDP	8,515,294	8,515,294	4,439,020	52.13
	UNESCO	749,999	749,999	480,753	64.10
	UNFPA	8,417,847	8,368,347	4,262,142	50.93
	UNICEF	6,278,582	6,278,582	3,427,587	54.59
	UNWOMEN	14,934,970	14,934,970	6,632,407	44.41
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	39,983,330	19,831,431	49.60
Grand Total		477,828,188	386,537,466	256,928,849	66.47

Table 5.2 Expenditure by Region/Project, as of 31 December 2021
(in US Dollars)

Region / Project No. and Project Title		Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Africa					
119124	Africa Regional Programme	25,620,001	10,248,000	4,205,816	41.04
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	22,634,286	20,844,000	14,092,753	67.61
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	28,571,429	25,000,000	19,237,240	76.95
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	25,714,287	18,000,000	17,225,815	95.70
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	28,571,429	25,000,000	18,841,157	75.36
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	24,285,715	17,000,000	15,492,264	91.13
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	35,714,286	25,000,000	21,424,776	85.70
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW - AF	20,636,792	20,636,792	10,690,872	51.80
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	7,075,472	7,075,472	3,556,558	50.27
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	31,428,571	26,999,999	20,493,549	75.90
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	30,000,000	26,000,000	20,776,041	79.91
Africa: Total		280,252,268	221,804,263	166,036,841	74.86
Asia					
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	16,500,000	4,950,000	1,361,576	27.51
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	4,248,584	4,248,584	1,247,790	29.37
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	4,700,000	4,700,000	3,382,903	71.98
108309	Safe and Fair	29,370,587	22,988,180	15,477,671	67.33
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	2,000,000	1,500,000	0	0.00
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	4,900,000	4,900,000	1,782,061	36.37
Asia: Total		61,719,171	43,286,764	23,252,001	53.72

Region / Project No. and Project Title		Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Caribbean					
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	2,425,500	1,856,939	76.56
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional Programme	9,552,830	3,821,132	1,329,833	34.80
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	1,650,000	1,650,000	723,318	43.84
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	3,700,000	3,700,000	1,013,993	27.41
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	9,900,000	4,989,296	50.40
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	6,600,000	6,600,000	3,322,613	50.34
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	2,000,000	1,500,000	913,909	60.93
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight	3,700,000	3,700,000	1,709,646	46.21
Caribbean: Total		39,577,830	33,296,632	15,859,547	47.63
Latin America					
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	7,714,286	7,714,286	5,230,484	67.80
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	2,900,000	873,090	30.11
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	10,285,714	10,285,713	7,163,190	69.64
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme	5,400,000	20,387	20,390	100.02
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	10,285,714	10,285,714	6,753,815	65.66
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	5,000,000	5,000,000	3,432,704	68.65
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	8,999,999	6,300,000	5,999,154	95.22
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW - LA	5,660,378	5,660,378	2,476,201	43.75
Latin America: Total		56,246,091	48,166,478	31,949,028	66.33
Pacific					
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	7,077,830	7,077,830	2,973,706	42.01
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	15,680,000	15,680,000	8,301,429	52.94
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	2,900,000	2,900,000	1,847,410	63.70
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	2,000,000	2,000,000	158,197	7.91
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	9,900,000	9,900,000	5,024,886	50.76
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	2,475,000	2,425,500	1,525,803	62.91
Pacific: Total		40,032,830	39,983,330	19,831,431	49.60
Grand Total		477,828,188	386,537,466	256,928,849	66.47

Figure 1: Net Funded Amount and Reported Expenditure by Region (as of 31 December 2021)



5.3 Expenditures Reported by Category

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Recipient Organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. All expenditure incurred are reported in the eight categories. See tables below (5.3a; 5.3b; 5.3c; 5.3d and 5.3e) for the reported expenditure by Region.

Table 5.3 All Regions' Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)."

Category	Expenditures			Percentage of Total
	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020	Current Year Jan-Dec-2021	Total	Programme Cost
Staff & Personnel Cost	15,628,282	13,215,163	28,843,445	12.01
Supplies, commodities and materials	3,647,974	4,056,628	7,704,602	3.21
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	3,543,883	3,276,616	6,820,499	2.84
Contractual Services Expenses	23,273,806	31,064,135	54,337,942	22.63
Travel	3,715,560	3,096,880	6,812,440	2.84
Transfers and Grants	41,190,937	69,418,345	110,609,281	46.07
General Operating	13,464,567	11,497,387	24,961,954	10.40
Programme Costs Total	104,465,010	135,625,153	240,090,163	100.00
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	7,354,294	9,484,392	16,838,686	7.01
Grand Total	111,819,304	145,109,545	256,928,849	

Table 5.3a Africa Region Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	30,709,983	15,605,829	10.06
Supplies, commodities and materials	8,650,020	6,050,464	3.90
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	5,624,310	5,136,829	3.31
Contractual Services	40,937,823	22,477,508	14.49
Travel	13,299,357	5,310,214	3.42
Transfers and Grants	148,398,234	83,119,950	53.57
General Operating	14,298,280	17,449,431	11.25
Programme Costs Total	261,918,008	155,150,225	100.00
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	18,334,261	10,886,617	7.02
Total	280,252,268	166,036,842	

¹ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Recipient Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

Table 5.3b Asia Region Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	13,816,606	7,123,527	32.78
Supplies, commodities and materials	112,623	119,341	0.55
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	381,652	145,011	0.67
Contractual Services	22,078,316	9,044,522	41.62
Travel	2,525,863	457,924	2.11
Transfers and Grants	15,826,063	2,750,278	12.66
General Operating	2,940,345	2,089,164	9.61
Programme Costs Total	57,681,468	21,729,767	100
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	4,037,703	1,522,232	7.01
Total	61,719,171	23,252,000	

Table 5.3c Caribbean Region Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	5,031,089	1,832,962	12.36
Supplies, commodities and materials	829,703	305,528	2.06
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	342,011	391,611	2.64
Contractual Services	8,697,301	4,887,219	32.95
Travel	2,292,849	140,067	0.94
Transfers and Grants	16,517,446	6,478,411	43.67
General Operating	3,278,227	797,569	5.38
Programme Costs Total	36,988,626	14,833,367	100
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	2,589,204	1,026,181	6.92
Total	39,577,830	15,859,547	

¹ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Recipient Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

Table 5.3d Latin America Region Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	2,857,304	1,127,444	3.78
Supplies, commodities and materials	1,408,877	624,641	2.09
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	1,618,330	989,379	3.31
Contractual Services	23,555,728	13,143,114	44.04
Travel	1,139,871	267,369	0.90
Transfers and Grants	18,914,449	11,059,454	37.06
General Operating	3,071,879	2,634,422	8.83
Programme Costs Total	52,566,439	29,845,823	100
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	3,679,651	2,103,206	7.05
Total	56,246,090	31,949,029	

Table 5.3e Pacific Region Expenditure Reported by Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Category	Approved Amount	Total Expenditure reported	Percentage of Total Programme Cost
Staff and personnel costs	5,710,561	3,153,683	17.15
Supplies, commodities and materials	1,067,227	603,775	3.28
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	85,450	157,670	0.86
Contractual Services	7,459,368	4,767,937	25.93
Travel	2,103,437	615,130	3.35
Transfers and Grants	19,275,804	7,100,475	38.62
General Operating	1,712,012	1,988,587	10.82
Programme Costs Total	37,413,859	18,387,256	100
Indirect Support Costs Total ¹	2,618,970	1,300,450	7.07
Total	40,032,829	19,687,707	

¹ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Recipient Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

6. Cost Recovery

Cost recovery policies for the Fund are guided by the applicable provisions of the Terms of Reference, the MOU concluded between the Administrative Agent and Recipient Organizations, and the SAAs concluded between the Administrative Agent and Contributors, based on rates approved by UNDG.

The policies in place, as of 31 December 2021, were as follows:

- **The Administrative Agent (AA) fee:** 1% is charged at the time of contributor deposit and covers services provided on that contribution for the entire duration of the Fund. In the reporting period US\$ **405** was deducted in AA-fees. Cumulatively, as of 31 December **2021**, US\$ **735** has been charged in AA-fees.
- **Indirect Costs of Recipient Organizations:** Recipient Organizations may charge 7% indirect costs. In the current reporting period US\$ **9,484,392** was deducted in indirect costs by Recipient Organizations. Cumulatively, indirect costs amount to US\$ **16,838,686** as of 31 December **2021**.

7. Accountability and Transparency

In order to effectively provide fund administration services and facilitate monitoring and reporting to the UN system and its partners, the MPTF Office has developed a public website, the MPTF Office Gateway (<https://mptf.undp.org>). Refreshed in real time every two hours from an internal enterprise resource planning system, the MPTF Office Gateway has become a standard setter for providing transparent and accountable trust fund administration services.

The Gateway provides financial information including: contributor commitments and deposits, approved programme budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by Recipient Organizations, interest income and other expenses. In addition, the Gateway provides an overview of the MPTF Office portfolio and extensive information on individual Funds, including their purpose, governance structure and key documents. By providing easy access to the growing number of narrative and financial reports, as well as related project documents, the Gateway collects and preserves important institutional knowledge and facilitates knowledge sharing and management among UN Organizations and their development partners, thereby contributing to UN coherence and development effectiveness.

8. Direct Costs

In the reporting period, direct costs transfers amounted to US\$ **5,187,017**. Cumulatively, as of 31 December 2021, the total of US\$ **21,373,855** has been transferred as Direct Costs, including US\$ **15,420,451** as Direct Costs for the Secretariat, US\$ **767,337** for the Spotlight Global Platform and US\$ **5,186,067** for the Administrative Agent. Overall, US\$ **15,373,490** was reported in expenditure. This equates to an expenditure delivery rate of **72** percent for the Direct Cost.

Table 8.1 Total Transferred and Expenditure of the Secretariat and Administrative Agent Direct Costs by RUNOs, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

Recipient Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2020		Current Year Jan-Dec-2021		Total		Delivery Rate, %
	Transfers	Expenditure	Transfers	Expenditure	Transfers	Expenditure	
UNDP	4,483,931	3,185,958	2,348,380	1,251,788	6,832,311	4,437,746	64.95
UNFPA	65,190	63,408	0	0	65,190	63,408	97.27
UNWOMEN*	5,990,999	5,542,752	3,299,288	2,422,736	9,290,287	7,965,488	85.74
AA/UNDP	3,298,338	2,267,651	1,887,729	639,197	5,186,067	2,906,848	56.05
Grand Total	13,838,458	11,059,769	7,535,397	4,313,721	21,373,855	15,373,490	71.93

* Includes Spotlight Global Platform

Table 8.2 Total Approved and Expenditure amount of the Secretariat and Administrative Agent by UNDG Budget Category, as of 31 December 2021 (in US Dollars)

CATEGORY	Secretariat Management Unit		Secretariat Technical Unit (incl. UNFPA and Global Platform)		Administrative Agent		TOTAL	
	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported	Amount Approved	Expenditure Reported
Staff and personnel costs	6,203,788	2,761,787	6,988,387	4,915,633	3,835,268	2,367,855	17,027,443	10,045,275
Supplies, commodities and materials	0	0	426,637	24,209	0	0	426,637	24,209
Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation	41,689	17,689	76,000	2,858	0	0	117,689	20,547
Contractual Services	993,440	673,238	1,296,005	1,092,097	210,000	0	2,499,445	1,765,335
Travel	362,576	167,521	599,000	370,265	323,000	62,536	1,284,576	600,322
Transfers and Grants	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
General Operating	1,001,027	527,190	1,312,933	1,098,579	478,524	286,289	2,792,484	1,912,058
Total Direct costs	8,602,520	4,147,425	10,698,962	7,503,641	4,846,792	2,716,681	24,148,274	14,367,746
Indirect Costs Total	602,176	290,321	748,927	525,255	339,275	190,168	1,690,378	1,005,744
Total	9,204,696	4,437,746	11,447,889	8,028,896	5,186,067	2,906,849	25,838,652	15,373,490

Annex 1. Expenditure by Project

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Afghanistan						
119460	Afghanistan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,268,797	380,639	137,524	36.13
		UNFPA	4,804,967	1,441,490	340,172	23.6
		UNICEF	3,084,040	925,212	608,228	65.74
		UNWOMEN	7,342,196	2,202,659	275,651	12.51
Afghanistan: Total			16,500,000	4,950,000	1,361,576	27.51
Argentina						
111637	Argentina Spotlight Programme	ILO	744,820	744,820	523,553	70.29
		UNDP	2,434,295	2,434,295	1,582,939	65.03
		UNFPA	2,103,700	2,103,700	1,533,598	72.9
		UNICEF	202,230	202,230	0	0
		UNODC	64,200	64,200	0	0
		UNWOMEN	2,165,041	2,165,041	1,590,393	73.46
Argentina: Total			7,714,286	7,714,286	5,230,484	67.8
Belize						
119130	Belize Spotlight Programme	UNDP	901,279	851,779	787,563	92.46
		UNFPA	592,602	592,602	386,685	65.25
		UNICEF	981,119	981,119	682,691	69.58
Belize: Total			2,475,000	2,425,500	1,856,939	76.56
Ecuador						
125139	Ecuador Spotlight Programme	UNDP	698,079	698,079	44,521	6.38
		UNFPA	698,079	698,079	340,293	48.75
		UNWOMEN	1,503,842	1,503,842	488,276	32.47
Ecuador: Total			2,900,000	2,900,000	873,090	30.11
El Salvador						
112283	El Salvador Spotlight Programme	UNDP	3,043,965	3,043,965	2,130,165	69.98
		UNFPA	2,315,828	2,315,828	1,568,417	67.73
		UNICEF	2,286,059	2,286,059	1,607,435	70.31
		UNWOMEN	2,639,861	2,639,861	1,857,173	70.35
El Salvador: Total			10,285,713	10,285,713	7,163,190	69.64

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Global and Interregional						
108309	Safe and Fair	ILO	16,334,125	12,637,802	7,410,045	58.63
		UNWOMEN	13,036,461	10,350,377	8,067,625	77.95
116744	Latin America Regional Programme	UNDP	1,501,795	1,501,795	1,057,523	70.42
		UNFPA	1,501,795	1,501,795	1,025,342	68.27
		UNWOMEN	1,996,410	1,996,410	1,349,839	67.61
117245	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – AF	UNWOMEN	20,636,792	20,636,792	10,690,872	51.8
117246	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS UNTFEVAW – LA	UNWOMEN	5,660,378	5,660,378	2,476,201	43.75
117247	SPOTLIGHT GRANTS WPHF	UNWOMEN	7,075,472	7,075,472	3,556,558	50.27
119124	Africa Regional Programme	UNDP	2,134,479	863,914	268,698	31.1
		UNFPA	10,625,993	4,251,874	2,880,424	67.74
		UNICEF	9,404,872	3,749,403	502,293	13.4
		UNWOMEN	3,454,656	1,382,809	554,401	40.09
119129	Pacific Regional Programme	IOM	190,571	190,571	159,891	83.9
		UNDP	791,283	791,283	462,288	58.42
		UNFPA	1,142,597	1,142,597	620,147	54.28
		UNICEF	674,635	674,635	352,301	52.22
		UNWOMEN	4,278,744	4,278,744	1,379,079	32.23
119463	Asia Spotlight Regional Programme	UNDP	1,018,957	1,018,957	269,275	26.43
		UNFPA	688,010	688,010	209,948	30.52
		UNWOMEN	2,541,617	2,541,617	768,566	30.24
119464	Caribbean Spotlight Regional P	UNDP	1,893,461	757,384	318,097	42
		UNFPA	1,490,725	596,290	356,044	59.71
		UNICEF	1,452,799	581,120	153,451	26.41
		UNWOMEN	4,715,845	1,886,338	502,241	26.63
123503	SPOTLIGHT WPHF AFGHANISTAN	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	1,500,000	0	0
123504	SPOTLIGHT WPHF HAITI	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	1,500,000	913,909	60.93
123505	SPOTLIGHT WPHF PNG	UNWOMEN	2,000,000	2,000,000	158,197	7.91
Global and Interregional: Total			120,242,473	91,756,368	46,463,257	50.64

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Grenada						
119131	Grenada Spotlight Programme	PAHO/WHO	372,210	372,210	215,758	57.97
		UNDP	363,523	363,523	149,367	41.09
		UNICEF	206,479	206,479	120,626	58.42
		UNWOMEN	707,788	707,788	237,568	33.56
Grenada: Total			1,650,000	1,650,000	723,318	43.84
Guatemala						
111638	Guatemala Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,641,475	20,387	20,390	100.02
		UNESCO	341,480	0	0	
		UNFPA	1,034,140	0	0	
		UNICEF	360,380	0	0	
		UNWOMEN	2,022,526	0	0	
Guatemala: Total			5,400,001	20,387	20,390	100.02
Guyana						
119132	Guyana Spotlight Programme	UNDP	787,875	787,875	106,770	13.55
		UNFPA	1,223,524	1,223,524	426,058	34.82
		UNICEF	793,243	793,243	329,333	41.52
		UNWOMEN	895,358	895,358	151,831	16.96
Guyana: Total			3,700,000	3,700,000	1,013,993	27.41
Haiti						
119133	Haiti Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,777,156	2,777,156	1,090,816	39.28
		UNFPA	2,115,931	2,115,931	1,118,626	52.87
		UNICEF	1,934,775	1,934,775	958,625	49.55
		UNWOMEN	3,072,138	3,072,138	1,821,229	59.28
Haiti: Total			9,900,000	9,900,000	4,989,296	50.4
Honduras						
112284	Honduras Spotlight Programme	UNDP	2,936,255	2,936,255	1,675,900	57.08
		UNFPA	2,062,007	2,062,007	1,401,777	67.98
		UNICEF	1,625,381	1,625,381	1,159,214	71.32
		UNWOMEN	3,662,071	3,662,071	2,516,923	68.73
Honduras: Total			10,285,714	10,285,714	6,753,815	65.66

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Jamaica						
119134	Jamaica Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,585,915	1,585,915	1,122,928	70.81
		UNFPA	1,565,796	1,565,796	737,038	47.07
		UNICEF	1,644,055	1,644,055	1,195,793	72.73
		UNWOMEN	1,804,234	1,804,234	266,855	14.79
Jamaica: Total			6,600,000	6,600,000	3,322,613	50.34
Kyrgyzstan						
119461	Kyrgyzstan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,181,114	1,181,114	792,435	67.09
		UNFPA	901,529	901,529	681,280	75.57
		UNICEF	1,078,910	1,078,910	824,541	76.42
		UNODC	276,451	276,451	254,969	92.23
		UNWOMEN	1,261,996	1,261,996	829,679	65.74
Kyrgyzstan: Total			4,700,000	4,700,000	3,382,903	71.98
Liberia						
112285	Liberia Spotlight Programme	OHCHR	1,421,804	1,317,551	1,019,290	77.36
		UNDP	4,615,415	4,215,173	2,740,652	65.02
		UNFPA	6,208,800	5,722,285	3,638,232	63.58
		UNICEF	2,470,807	2,279,676	1,661,522	72.88
		UNWOMEN	7,917,460	7,309,315	5,033,056	68.86
Liberia: Total			22,634,286	20,844,000	14,092,753	67.61
Malawi						
111640	Malawi Spotlight Programme	UNDP	7,163,251	6,056,436	4,731,761	78.13
		UNFPA	7,409,246	6,640,940	5,209,323	78.44
		UNICEF	5,941,806	5,165,012	3,981,515	77.09
		UNWOMEN	8,057,127	7,137,612	5,314,641	74.46
Malawi: Total			28,571,430	25,000,000	19,237,240	76.95

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Mali						
111641	Mali Spotlight Programme	UNDP	3,071,802	2,302,646	2,208,587	95.92
		UNFPA	9,419,594	6,800,496	6,310,144	92.79
		UNHCR	910,987	910,987	910,987	100
		UNICEF	6,549,740	4,172,489	4,172,245	99.99
		UNWOMEN	5,762,163	3,813,382	3,623,853	95.03
Mali: Total			25,714,286	18,000,000	17,225,815	95.7
Mexico						
111639	Mexico Spotlight Programme	OHCHR	585,049	380,818	344,591	90.49
		UNDP	1,343,644	741,447	717,849	96.82
		UNFPA	2,151,406	1,475,705	1,457,641	98.78
		UNICEF	717,027	717,027	715,711	99.82
		UNODC	1,356,063	953,838	857,637	89.91
		UNWOMEN	2,846,811	2,031,165	1,905,724	93.82
Mexico: Total			9,000,000	6,300,000	5,999,154	95.22
Mozambique						
111642	Mozambique Spotlight Programme	UNDP	5,732,960	4,976,234	4,019,503	80.77
		UNFPA	8,925,741	7,803,412	5,877,064	75.31
		UNICEF	5,472,843	4,780,959	3,269,035	68.38
		UNWOMEN	8,439,885	7,439,395	5,675,555	76.29
Mozambique: Total			28,571,429	25,000,000	18,841,157	75.36
Niger						
111643	Niger Spotlight Programme	UNDP	5,887,686	4,048,345	3,526,835	87.12
		UNFPA	7,956,988	5,651,624	5,627,917	99.58
		UNICEF	6,273,991	4,410,485	4,178,313	94.74
		UNWOMEN	4,167,050	2,889,546	2,159,199	74.72
Niger: Total			24,285,715	17,000,000	15,492,264	91.13

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Nigeria						
112286	Nigeria Spotlight Programme	UNDP	8,862,687	6,159,157	3,789,443	61.53
		UNESCO	2,608,098	1,825,668	1,600,140	87.65
		UNFPA	9,020,459	6,314,321	6,327,130	100.2
		UNICEF	4,998,326	3,498,828	3,414,421	97.59
		UNWOMEN	10,224,716	7,202,026	6,293,641	87.39
Nigeria: Total			35,714,286	25,000,000	21,424,776	85.7
Papua New Guinea						
119125	Papua New Guinea Spotlight Programme	UNDP	3,757,450	3,757,450	1,782,615	47.44
		UNFPA	3,982,112	3,982,112	2,186,860	54.92
		UNICEF	3,218,408	3,218,408	1,642,863	51.05
		UNWOMEN	4,722,030	4,722,030	2,689,090	56.95
Papua New Guinea: Total			15,680,000	15,680,000	8,301,429	52.94
Samoa						
119126	Samoa Spotlight Programme	UNDP	893,130	893,130	689,220	77.17
		UNESCO	749,999	749,999	480,753	64.1
		UNFPA	547,992	547,992	198,172	36.16
		UNICEF	186,180	186,180	97,078	52.14
		UNWOMEN	522,699	522,699	382,186	73.12
Samoa: Total			2,900,000	2,900,000	1,847,410	63.7
Tajikistan						
119462	Tajikistan Spotlight Programme	UNDP	1,343,275	1,343,275	667,202	49.67
		UNFPA	1,214,127	1,214,127	423,219	34.86
		UNICEF	1,079,059	1,079,059	335,429	31.09
		UNWOMEN	1,263,539	1,263,539	356,211	28.19
Tajikistan: Total			4,900,000	4,900,000	1,782,061	36.37

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Timor-Leste						
119127	Timor-Leste Spotlight Programme	ILO	657,076	657,076	240,030	36.53
		UNDP	2,448,706	2,448,706	1,072,482	43.8
		UNFPA	1,624,202	1,624,202	699,231	43.05
		UNICEF	1,758,519	1,758,519	989,289	56.26
		UNWOMEN	3,411,497	3,411,497	2,023,854	59.32
Timor-Leste: Total			9,900,000	9,900,000	5,024,886	50.76
Trinidad and Tobago						
119135	Trinidad and Tobago Spotlight	PAHO/WHO	377,828	377,828	214,963	56.89
		UNDP	1,108,251	1,108,251	519,842	46.91
		UNFPA	898,581	898,581	530,262	59.01
		UNICEF	452,807	452,807	246,378	54.41
		UNWOMEN	862,533	862,533	198,201	22.98
Trinidad and Tobago: Total			3,700,000	3,700,000	1,709,646	46.21
Uganda						
111644	Uganda Spotlight Programme	UNDP	7,423,367	6,407,367	4,748,604	74.11
		UNFPA	6,985,342	6,047,183	4,733,372	78.27
		UNHCR	2,775,145	2,345,707	2,093,230	89.24
		UNICEF	5,182,545	4,423,716	3,523,285	79.65
		UNWOMEN	9,062,172	7,776,027	5,395,058	69.38
Uganda: Total			31,428,571	26,999,999	20,493,549	75.9
Vanuatu						
119128	Vanuatu Spotlight Programme	IOM	288,491	288,491	189,602	65.72
		UNDP	624,725	624,725	432,415	69.22
		UNFPA	1,120,944	1,071,444	557,731	52.05
		UNICEF	440,840	440,840	346,055	78.5
Vanuatu: Total			2,475,000	2,425,500	1,525,803	62.91

Country / Project No. and Project Title		Recipient Organization	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure	Delivery Rate %
Zimbabwe						
111645	Zimbabwe Spotlight Programme	ILO	1,177,208	935,055	645,560	69.04
		UNDP	4,461,851	3,775,560	2,919,146	77.32
		UNESCO	1,147,264	917,871	686,594	74.8
		UNFPA	6,054,909	5,314,311	4,498,241	84.64
		UNICEF	9,689,353	8,474,757	7,075,226	83.49
		UNWOMEN	7,469,414	6,582,446	4,951,276	75.22
Zimbabwe: Total			29,999,999	26,000,000	20,776,041	79.91
Grand Total			477,828,189	386,537,467	256,928,848	66.47

Annexes

Annex A: Global Results Framework 2021

Annex B: Summaries of 2021 Programme Annual Reports

Africa

1. Liberia Country Programme
2. Malawi Country Programme
3. Mali Country Programme
4. Mozambique Country Programme
5. Niger Country Programme
6. Nigeria Country Programme
7. Uganda Country Programme
8. Zimbabwe Country Programme
9. Africa Regional Programme

Latin America

10. Argentina Country Programme
11. Ecuador Country Programme
12. El Salvador Country Programme
13. Honduras Country Programme
14. Mexico Country Programme
15. Latin America Regional Programme

Asia

16. Afghanistan Country Programme
17. Kyrgyzstan Country Programme
18. Tajikistan Country Programme
19. Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme
20. Safe and Fair Programme

Caribbean

21. Belize Country Programme
22. Grenada Country Programme
23. Guyana Country Programme
24. Haiti Country Programme
25. Jamaica Country Programme
26. Trinidad & Tobago Country Programme
27. Caribbean Regional Programme

Pacific

28. Papua New Guinea Country Programme
29. Samoa Country Programme
30. Timor-Leste Country Programme
31. Vanuatu Country Programme
32. Pacific Regional Programme

Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

33. United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) – Grant-giving to Civil Society Organizations in Africa and Latin America
34. Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) – Grant-giving to Civil Society Organizations in Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea

Annex C: Methodology of Civil Society Funding Analysis



Spotlight Initiative

