



Spotlight Initiative
To eliminate violence against women and girls



The Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu:

Opportunities to strengthen ending violence against women and children efforts through integrated programming December 2023



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Executive summary

Purpose and methodology

This study aims to shine light on the progress towards ending violence against women and children (EVAWC) in Vanuatu so far, learnings from the experience, and opportunities for the UN's Spotlight Initiative to deepen its work with the government and CSO ecosystem, through an integrated programming approach.

The study is based on consultations and workshops with government representatives, CSOs and on-ground UN stakeholders in Vanuatu, along with a rapid review of UN progress reports and government policy documents and guidelines.

The Spotlight Impact | Efforts to sustainably eradicate VAWG in Vanuatu

The Spotlight Initiative commenced in Vanuatu in 2020, adopting a new 'whole-of-society' and 'whole-of-UN' approach to sustainably end violence against women and girls, closely aligning its efforts with existing priorities.

There was a compelling case for the Spotlight Initiative to bring efforts to strengthen the existing response to VAWG in Vanuatu, including (i) a recent acceleration of EVAWC efforts by the government against high prevalence (ii) need for additional financial and non-financial resources to tackle the problem, (iii) fragmentation of some ecosystem actors' efforts at a national and local level, and (iv) an added burden of disaster response.

In just 3 years, joint efforts between the Spotlight Initiative, the government, and grassroots players have built greater awareness of VAWG and a stronger policy environment through:

- Strengthening of key policies alongside the government that form the backbone of EVAWC response in the country. For instance, it supported implementation of the National Gender Equality Policy 2020 – 2030.
- Partnerships on prevention programming touching individuals, families, communities, and national systems. For instance, it built tailored Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) curriculum, engaged in family and community level workshops, and worked with the government on building common SOPs for clinical care for GBV survivors.
- Direct funding of CSOs who have been able to generate critical outputs for the ecosystem. For instance, it supported the creation of the “Stanapstrong,” website that stores resources to bolster the collective effort against various forms of gender-based violence.

The experience has surfaced key learnings on areas that need more support and opportunities to deepen efforts.

- Need for integrating activities across different levels of the ecosystem – from individual to national systems, within the same communities so that changing behaviours at each level can reinforce each other.
- Opportunity to increase focus on less-represented dimensions, especially around integration of VAC efforts, male engagement and investing in mental health to build holistic response **to violence**.
- Scope to deepen efforts at a province level and on ground partnership with grassroots players, to reach survivors in remote areas.
- Opportunity to build adaptable solutions that cater to both, disaster and non-disaster periods, to ensure a consistent response to VAWG that account for different circumstances.

The Spotlight Initiative 1.0 is not a finished product in Vanuatu but has laid the groundwork for the UN to enable deeper coordinated efforts in the future, through a strengthened Spotlight Initiative 2.0.

Looking Ahead | Ambitions to integrate efforts to collectively end VAWG

The future integrated model would reflect a 'Unified UN for a unified ecosystem' approach – where all UN agencies show up together to enable coordination across design, delivery, and evaluation of initiatives in the ecosystem.

- Coordinating, planning and deploying efforts in partnership with government and CSOs to enhance impact and reduce the burden of engaging across multiple UN systems.
- Building linkages in prevention programming on VAWG with VAC, to leverage common resources and messaging.
- Aligning mechanisms to continue GBV work during 'disaster' and 'non-disaster' times to ensure consistency of efforts and streamlined use of resources.

The UN would enable deeper efforts at the provincial level and invest in areas currently receiving less attention.

- Shift activity to provinces, by strengthening province level coordination systems, investing in community-level prevention, and supporting the cascade of national policy work to the provinces.
- Broaden prevention strategies to include male engagement and mental health.
- Boost investments in the digital ecosystem, by supporting integration of data management systems, and leveraging technology to deliver services at scale.
- Develop or strengthen mechanisms to channel greater funding to grassroots organizations, potentially through broader regional/global efforts by the UN.



How can you engage | Opportunities to meaningfully contribute and collaborate

As an ally towards ending VAWC in Vanuatu, the Initiative is seeking support to deepen efforts.

- Financial support can support in piloting efforts to learn how best to integrate efforts across different actors and levels of the ecosystem, and build on-ground capabilities for under-represented themes.
- Technical support can help deepen work directly in the provinces, and knowledge exchange on complementary themes can strengthen the overall programming.

The Spotlight Initiative looks forward to partnering to harness the power of collectivization and sustainably end all forms of violence against women and children in Vanuatu.

A. THE SPOTLIGHT IMPACT EFFORTS

to sustainably eradicate VAWG in Vanuatu

The Spotlight Initiative (SI), a flagship collaboration between the United Nations and the European Union, is the world's most extensive endeavour to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG). Launched with a seed funding commitment of €500 million from the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative represents an unprecedented global effort to invest in gender equality as a driver for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Initiative emphasizes a systematic and holistic approach to tackle interlinked causes of violence against women and girls. Unlike individual efforts in the past, the Initiative adopts a unified “whole of society” and “whole of UN” approach – a multi-agency model in support of the government, civil society, communities, donors, and experts to collectively end violence against women and girls (EVAWG). The interventions focus on six mutually reinforcing programming pillars: Law and Policies, Institutions, Prevention, Services, Data, and Civil Society/Women's Organizations.

Figure 1 : 6 Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative



The Spotlight Initiative commenced in Vanuatu in 2020, bringing a ‘whole-of-society’ and ‘whole-of-UN’ approach to support ecosystem efforts in eliminating violence against women and girls.

While the Spotlight Initiative was launched globally in 2017, it commenced in Vanuatu in 2020. The country made a particularly relevant case for the Initiative given 1) high prevalence of VAW and VAC in the country, 2) significant effort required vs. the relatively limited resources and 3) added burden that disaster response puts on the ecosystem.

Vanuatu poses the highest prevalence rates of violence against women and girls (VAWG) globally. With 60% of ni-Vanuatu women aged 15–49 years having experienced physical and/or sexual violence; of those who have experienced violence, 42% have also been raped.¹ Corporal punishment against children is widespread with almost 51 percent of caregivers viewing physical violence as necessary to raising children.² Moreover, the prevalence of sexual abuse against girls under the age of 15 years (almost 30%) is also one of the highest in the world.³ Given the extent of the problem, the resources and effort required to tackle it are huge but remain constrained given the size of the country and hence competing priorities. Further, these issues are exacerbated during emergencies. As one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, Vanuatu sees significant levels of disaster linked violence, adding further complexities. For instance, after the two cyclones in 2011, the Tanna Women’s Counselling Centre saw a 300% spike in new domestic violence cases, highlighting the link between disasters and increased violence.⁴ Periods of disaster also put added burden on the government, civil society, and development partners’ activities, who may then need to re-prioritize resources to achieve their long-term goals.

The Spotlight Initiative’s focus in Vanuatu is on tackling Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence (DV/IPV), including men’s physical and sexual violence against women, psychological violence, emotional and economic abuse, controlling behaviours and as well as control over access to finance.

Embodying the “whole of UN” approach in Vanuatu, the Initiative brought together four UN agencies – UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, and IOM – each with distinct and complementary mandates, along with UN Women, that acts as a strategic partner.

- UNDP focuses on strengthening justice and legal systems, partnering with the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, and the Public Prosecutor’s office. It also engages Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), especially on prevention and response to domestic and intimate-partner violence.
- UNICEF supports multiple efforts to prevent and respond to VAC in Vanuatu and the Pacific, even prior to SI. For instance, It worked closely with the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports on community-level child protection programs, especially involving adolescents, as well as with the Ministry of Justice and Community Services to strengthen their Child Desk responsible for the national child protection work in Vanuatu. It also engages CSOs on online child protection and on youth empowerment to address violence.

¹ Spotlight Initiative, Vanuatu: Annual Narrative Programme Report, 2021

² UNICEF, Situation Analysis of Children in Vanuatu, 2017

³ Spotlight Initiative, Vanuatu: Annual Narrative Programme Report, 2021

⁴ UN Women, gender equality, climate change and disaster risk reduction, 2016

- IOM partnered with the Internal Affairs Ministry to address labour-mobility-based GBV and with the National Disaster Management Office to strengthen response to GBV during disasters.
- UNFPA worked with the Ministry of Health to boost clinical response to violence and with the Ministry of Education and Training to increase access and uptake of sexual and reproductive health information and services.
- Finally, UN Women engages in Vanuatu through the EU-funded Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Girls and Women Programme. The Pacific Partnership programme is led by the Pacific Community (SPC), UN Women and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. UNW functions as a facilitator between the Pacific Partnership and the Spotlight Initiative, ensuring their activities complement each other effectively. Through this, UNW aims to optimize resources, thus alleviating the burden on the government and CSOs who are concurrently engaged in both these initiatives. The effort to draw linkages in the ecosystem further highlights the broader value that the UN can bring to the table, especially on the ability to integrate currently siloed activities, such as the work on VAC and VAW, that could benefit from common approaches.

Working alongside the government, CSOs and broader ecosystem is central to the Spotlight Initiative. It aims to integrate into existing priorities and offer its expertise and support to strengthen existing efforts rather than engage through parallel systems. Ecosystem players have welcomed the Initiative in Vanuatu, both at the highest levels of government and the grassroots CSOs, and have appreciated the intention behind trying to tackle one of the biggest humanitarian challenges through close partnership, increased coordination, resourcing and awareness.

Despite Covid-19-related disruptions and several natural disasters, the Spotlight Initiative hit the ground running in 2021, with the first phase of the Initiative running from 2021–22, and the second phase from 2022–23. In this short span of 3 years, the Spotlight Initiative has managed to make significant strides towards EVAWC in the country, while adapting to Vanuatu’s unique context of being one of the most at-risk countries in the world in relation to natural disasters.

Given the shorter timeframe for the Spotlight Vanuatu programme, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and ten violent cyclones over the course of 4 years, progress on enabling coordination in the ecosystem has been slower than expected, but the Spotlight Initiative’s regular steering committee meetings and CSO consultations in the second half of the programme have demonstrated the value of information sharing, collaboration, relationship strengthening, community building, etc.

Beyond the overarching effort to drive coordination in the ecosystem, the Spotlight Initiative came to be known for several key contributions, including:

Providing technical assistance to the government, on developing key policies and guidelines and strengthening capacities to develop interventions: The Initiative partnered with the government to provide crucial support on refining key policies and guidelines pivotal to the country's response to VAWC, that will form the cornerstone of the EVAWC prevention and response framework in the country for the years to come. For instance, it aligned and supported implementation of the National Gender Equality Policy 2020 – 2030. Further, it supported the drafting of Survivors' Victims Charter, Clinical Guidelines to Respond to SGBV, and the GBV SOP in Evacuation Centres. Moreover, with the Initiative's support the government has prioritized strengthening the capacities of its entities to design and implement interventions effectively. For instance, through the KnowVAWdata Initiative, it conducted capacity-building workshops for the government, to enhance data-related capabilities to measure VAWG through prevalence studies.

Directly funding a range of local and grassroots CSOs: The Initiative has also provided direct funding to a range of CSOs engaged in EVAWC efforts. Support spanned several themes, including awareness, advocacy, capacity-building, economic empowerment, and service delivery, with interventions in many hard-to-reach regions of Vanuatu. This support led to the development of significant outputs that have greatly contributed to the ecosystem. For example, it supported the creation of the "Stanapstrong," website to store resources to bolster the collective effort against various forms of gender-based violence, male advocacy campaigns, and a film capturing survivor's journey through justice system. The support has also helped fuel the feminist movement, led by organizations such as ActionAid, who have played an instrumental role in giving women the voice and confidence to break out of violence. Through ActionAid's efforts, ~9000 women across Vanuatu have been mobilized to acknowledge their experiences, normalize dialogue around violence, and advocate for their rights.

Strengthening prevention programming: Acknowledging that EVAWC requires efforts at all levels in the ecosystem, the Initiative supported a portfolio of prevention programming that cut across the socio-ecological model, i.e., reaching individuals, families, communities, and national systems, with cross-cutting media efforts to amplify messaging. For instance, it has built tailored Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) curriculum, engaged in family and community level workshops, while working in tandem with the government on building common SOPs for clinical care, support for GBV survivors, etc.

Figure 2: The Spotlight Initiative's interventions across different levels of the socio-ecological model



Over this period, Vanuatu has made some important progress towards EVAWC with greater awareness and a strengthened policy environment. However, it also shed light on a broader learning that while it is valuable to engage with the ecosystem at each of these levels, there are opportunities to deepen impact by engaging across all these levels in a particular community or province, to benefit from the power of integration and mutually reinforcing programming. Going forward, it is this form of integration that needs to be targeted relative to the past 3 years, to accelerate progress towards the goals set out under SDG 5 by 2030.

The first phase of the Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu highlighted key learnings on opportunities to support comprehensive prevention and response efforts, deepen partnerships with national and provincial governments, identify areas facing underinvestment, and work as a more integrated UN.

Successes in the last three years were a result of deep collaboration among the UN, government, and civil society in their ongoing journey towards sustainably ending VAWC. The work has surfaced several learnings on two fronts – 1) areas of work that demand greater focus for a comprehensive response and 2) how the broader ecosystem can be supported in Vanuatu.

Learnings around the areas of focus

Efforts to boost prevention of VAWC have succeeded in raising general consciousness about the issue, but going forward, there is a need to translate this into actual behaviour change. Social behaviour change theories such as the Information-Motivation-Behavioural skills (IMB) model by Fisher and Fisher stress the importance of providing accurate behaviour-specific information, boosting motivation, and cultivating essential behavioural skills to drive sustainable behavioural change.⁵ Ground experiences shared by CSOs and others working directly in communities underscore a significant gap between this higher-level awareness and the tangible shift in beliefs and practices. This highlights the risk of prematurely assuming that completion of awareness efforts are sufficient, when the critical task of transforming behaviours remains unfinished.

Sustaining progress towards EVAWC demands behaviour change across multiple stakeholders within the system at the same time. Currently, there are multiple initiatives at national level that run parallel to each other. Work remains sparse at the provincial level, with different interventions offered in different locations, rather than as a comprehensive package. As efforts shift to the provinces, the disconnect between initiatives may carry over to the local levels. **This highlights the need to for integrating interventions across the socio-ecological model**, i.e., individual, family, community, and national level initiatives within the same communities so that changing behaviours at each level can reinforce each other. For instance, having the same touchpoints for a community, including 1-1 counselling, family dialogue and community level discussions can help drive a specific message more strongly. Here, building in human-centered design principles, with the community taking ownership of understanding the challenges and co-designing solutions as equal partners will help ensure that the models are rooted in ground realities.

⁵ Fisher and Fisher, The Information-Motivation-Behavioural Skills Model, 1992

Further, efforts need to comprehensively target different dimensions of the problem, that otherwise see lesser representation. This needs a multi-pronged approach that includes:

- (i) **Optimizing training and establishing necessary supporting systems** for effective implementation. For example, for a health worker, going beyond just their training material, designing systems that can help them effectively implement their training (such as supporting infrastructure, digital tools as required, support staff) can help elevate the impact.
- (ii) **Investing more in mental health and psychosocial services** and understanding their potential in preventing VAWC. Here, it is critical to recognize how mental health plays a role in understanding, preventing, and managing situations of VAWC, and investing in building this can strengthen the overall response. While formal mental health support such as therapy and medication may be restricted due to resource constraints, psychosocial support in the form of attentiveness to individual context during medical response, creating safe spaces to share a personal experience even in broader community settings can go a long way.
- (iii) **Focusing on the role of male engagement** in preventing VAWC, not just as champions, but specific interventions offering information, counselling, and support to avert any instances of VAW and VAC. These efforts would also include strengthening the engagement of boys in particular, as a way to shape their attitudes and reinforce positive norms in their formative years. However, in the context of scarce resources for EVAWC work in Vanuatu altogether, it's important to think about what targeted investments in male engagement are necessary to reinforce other work without significantly diverting resources from survivors.
- (iv) **Increasing EVAC efforts, and building an integrated approach to VAWC across children, adolescent girls, and women.** Despite the prevalence of VAC being equally if not more concerning than that of VAW, VAC often remains a relatively under-represented and under-resourced area, deprioritized by most, barring government agencies explicitly responsible for addressing it. For instance, levels of child sexual abuse in Vanuatu (of girls aged below 15) are amongst the highest of the PICTs, at 30 per cent.⁶ While attention towards the issue is increasing, the opportunity to integrate efforts across women, adolescent girls and children is being missed, and legislation and mechanisms are built in parallel or in siloes. While approaches cannot be fully integrated given nuances in the two groups, there are opportunities to leverage resources (people, capital, infrastructure) more efficiently and seamlessly across these causes. For instance, primary prevention interventions can be integrated at a community level (through common channels of dialogue), messaging and advocacy efforts (both at a local and national level) can be integrated in service of the same common goal, and services such as survivor support can also be delivered in an integrated manner.

⁶ UNFPA and UNICEF, Harmful Connections: Examining the relationship between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific, 2015

Learnings on how the broader ecosystem can be supported in Vanuatu

Beyond the specific areas of focus, there are also learnings on how the broader ecosystem and the UN can organize their work to yield greater results.

In order reach survivors across the country, and especially in remote areas, it is crucial to translate policies from the national to provincial levels. In particular, it is important to consider how national legislation and guidelines translate at a provincial and area council level. While Vanuatu's Gender Equality Policy affirms a commitment to eliminate VAWG, considerable support and strengthening of provincial actors' capacity is needed for implementation. Similarly, guidelines such as the Standard Operations Procedures (SOPs) for clinical care and referral mechanisms (delivered by health-workers) and Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (GBVIE) SOPs for evacuation centres are effective when local implementors are motivated and well supported to implement. With limited resources at provincial levels, the Spotlight Initiative 2.0 must proactively anticipate and reflect on these implications to shape future policy support agendas.

As most prone to climate crisis in the world, it's crucial for Vanuatu programming to build resilient systems that cater to both disaster and non-disaster periods. For instance, during crises like natural disasters, instances of VAWC tend to surge due to increased stress and disrupted community support. Additionally, the shift of resources toward disaster response often overlooks the increasing cases of violence against women and children. This necessitates solutions that can adapt to these shifts without disrupting ongoing work. Integrating VAWC support services within disaster response plans ensures immediate help and protection for victims. This ensures a consistent, long-term, and coordinated approach to interventions, irrespective of crises or regular circumstances.

There is a need to go beyond building awareness of the values, norms and practices that underpin communities, to incorporating them while designing solutions. This can be only achieved by actively working with the communities to understand the drivers of VAWC and co-designing interventions. Participatory approaches include ensuring alignment with community arbitration processes and the role of Chiefs, balancing the importance of rights of women and children with respect for the family unit in Ni-Vanuatu culture, among others. While this seems like conventional wisdom, efforts on the ground suggest a risk of creating a parallel system or no system at all where national services do not reach into all communities.

In addition, funding for CSOs remains crunched, particularly for local, grassroots women's rights organisation, who could benefit from integrated mechanisms. While these CSOs are best placed to reach the most remote communities and provide critical life-saving services and awareness, they are constrained in their capacity to meet tedious application requirements for funding and manage grants. While the Spotlight Initiative's funding support created impact and was acknowledged as being one of the only sources of capital for some CSOs, high transaction costs for both CSOs and the UN system highlight the need for alternative approaches. Exploring intermediary actors or mechanisms such as partnering with local microfinance organisations, forming regional funding consortia or local advisory panels could potentially streamline processes and enhance efficiency in funding disbursement.

Approaches need to be rooted in ground realities and linked to national policies, to ensure overall integration of efforts, for holistic and survivor centric prevention and response. This approach may take the form of planning interventions from the bottom-up (that is, adapting plans to local contexts), deeper collaborations with local stakeholders, greater investments in partners/CSOs engaged locally, and so on. This approach is vital for several reasons: Firstly, it helps to align with existing government mechanisms outlined in national policies and legislation. Secondly, such an approach fosters greater transparency and efficiency within the system, amplifying the overall impact on the entire ecosystem. This engagement can come through the Spotlight Initiative or a different joint programme, but is imperative in creating greater transparency, efficiency, and deeper impact for the whole ecosystem.

Lastly, stakeholders, including government actors and civil society organizations in Vanuatu, are advocating for enhanced UN coordination, seeking a unified voice and clearer visibility across initiatives. In Vanuatu, there's a pressing need for a more cohesive approach, a unified entry point, and improved clarity on the spectrum of UN offerings.

Learnings over the last 3 years reinforce the idea that the Spotlight Initiative is not a finished product, but rather has laid the groundwork for holistic and systematic efforts to end violence against women and children. The Spotlight Initiative 2.0 has potential to further synergize with the broader ecosystem and strengthen its comprehensive approach, building on the impacts and momentum gained.

By working across a range of issues in partnership with several on-ground partners and the government, the UN is now at a juncture to unlock the full potential of the Spotlight Initiative. Internally, this means taking the 'Whole-of-UN' approach one step ahead, going from multi-agency efforts towards integrated programming and delivery, to ensure streamlined support that is embedded in government and ecosystem priorities. Externally, it involves building coordination among decision makers at a national level, and building initiatives that can leverage support from one another, and benefit from all the common touch points. The integration can leverage common resources, including:

- Stakeholders: As a small nation, there are common stakeholders (both at a national and province level), who oversee multiple initiatives. A combined approach can build accountability and efficiency for these individuals / institutes.
- Programmes: Given deep interlinkages across outcomes (such as VAG, VAW and VAC), several programmes (especially around prevention, awareness) have common tenets and levers. For instance, common messaging channels can be used to spread information around all forms of violence.
- Processes: Finally, common CSOs and grassroots organizations work on multiple programmes, and can benefit from streamlining of reporting channels, platform for fundraise (or co-fundraise opportunities), to minimize efforts on process, and maximize efforts on actual programme implementation.



B. LOOKING AHEAD

AMBITIONS

to integrate efforts to collectively end VAWC

Integrated programming in the future would reflect a ‘Unified UN for a unified ecosystem’ approach – where all the UN agencies show up together to enable coordination across design, delivery, and evaluation of initiatives in the ecosystem.

The integrated programming approach would collectivize efforts by intentionally linking the design, delivery, and evaluation of EAWC programmes in Vanuatu. Stakeholders would come together to co-create a shared vision (in conjunction with a more in-depth and inclusive external design phase than was possible in 2020), align on common processes and opportunities for resource mobilization, as well as specific provinces or communities for joint programme delivery, while building common and long-term touchpoints across the ecosystem for sustained impact. Importantly, integrated programming could unearth previously missed opportunities – for instance, leveraging local institutions to deliver coordinated awareness programme around VAC and VAW in the same geographies.

The integrated programming approach emphasizes a shift towards holistic planning to create opportunities for mutual reinforcement of interventions. Individual programmes tackling different facets of VAWC may be jointly planned to increase effectiveness while minimizing duplication (for instance, by coordinating efforts in overlapping geographies). One immediate opportunity for integrated planning is between VAC and VAW prevention programmes. There are several intersections in these efforts, including the target group, geographies, and intervention pathways, and therefore, opportunities to pool resources and expertise.

Integrated planning would further translate to integrated delivery of interventions. The implementation of these jointly planned interventions may then leverage a common set of resources and stakeholders, especially at the local levels. For instance, a programme integrating VAC and VAW efforts for in-school interventions would jointly train facilitators, oversee support at the school-level, and monitor implementation. Another mechanism to strengthen the intersection of integrated interventions is to consolidate the messaging on EAWC, that is, consistent messaging may be reinforced across initiatives to be more effective.

The integrated programming model could unlock several opportunities to holistically end VAWC, by:

- Coordinating where to deploy prevention efforts such that impact at the individual, family, community, and national level is reinforced at various touchpoints to create enduring change. For instance, in the past, a youth receiving preventative counselling through a Spotlight-funded CSO may also have been reached through Family Learning Education (FLE) at school, and again through key community members (such as the Chief, who may be trained by another CSO to facilitate prevention of violence). Through an integrated approach, such as coordinating specific geographies for interventions, these efforts would fall under one umbrella, where multiple prongs would target the problem in a coordinated manner.
- Building linkages across efforts on ending violence against children, adolescent girls, and women such that these learn from each other and leverage existing frameworks. The Initiative can look to combine or link existing efforts in these domains, in a way that it can make use of common resources, stakeholders and approaches to minimize duplication. For instance, prevention activities can involve messaging through a common touchpoint (e.g., community workshops). Data collection on prevalence can be streamlined, instead of being carried out separately but among the same groups.
- Supporting alignment of GBV and child protection mechanisms and systems such that these are similar during ‘disaster-time’ and in between disasters. This can help bring continuity in GBV and child protection efforts, but also encourage others in the ecosystem to do so as well in recognition that the distinction between these ‘statuses’ is somewhat arbitrary and fragments efforts across the year.

Building on the existing EAWC efforts in Vanuatu, the Spotlight Initiative 2.0 would invest in key areas of programming particularly at the provincial level, and those currently receiving lesser attention.

The next phase of the Spotlight Initiative would emphasize a shift in EAWC efforts towards the provinces and area councils, to ensure that programming is closer to the women and children that it aims to support, is informed by community members, and builds upwards from there to feed into national policies. Key areas where the UN can support the ecosystem include:

- Assessing and supporting implementation of national policies and guidelines, in particular at the provincial, area council and village levels, and opportunities for capacity building. For instance, reviews at the provincial level could assess how protocols for providing support services to survivors are implemented and can be improved. Assessing capacities for data collection and periodic reporting will also be crucial, to track prevalence as well as outcomes.

- Supporting the government in establishing coordination channels between national and provincial representative, to strengthen the governments decentralization efforts and facilitate greater information sharing in both directions. Importantly, this would also empower local governments to lead EVAWC work, with partnership and support from the national government and the UN.
- Deepening delivery of community-level prevention programming and engagement with community leaders and supporting systems in service of these and other programmes. Here, leveraging the knowledge and inroads of local stakeholders at the province level would be a prerequisite for implementation success.

Broadening the scope of prevention strategies to recognize different pathways to influence EVAWC would also be a key priority for the Spotlight Initiative 2.0.

- Promoting investments in male engagement programming as part of prevention efforts targeting individuals, families, and communities, including awareness programs, counselling, and support services for males to avert short or long-term instances of VAWC, while recognizing that with scarce resources, it will be critical to identify targeted investments that reinforce other work without diverting resources away from survivor support efforts.
- Co-developing targeted mental health interventions with CSOs and government, recognizing their preventive role as well as importance in supporting survivors.

The Spotlight Initiative 2.0 would promote development of the digital ecosystem, including digitization of service delivery, to accelerate efforts for EVAWC and enable greater scale.

- Co-developing, financing and advocating digital solutions for delivery of interventions at scale. This could include online or hybrid channels to share messages or platforms for women and children to report violence or engage in a safe space. Shared technology toolkits that offer solutions across initiatives can optimize resources while unlocking long-term benefits for multiple target-groups. To ensure inclusivity, these solutions would be complemented with efforts to increase digital technology access, boost digital literacy, and address restrictive gender norms that prevent women/girls from accessing digital tools in the first place (such as, preference to spend money on a phone for a boy vs. a girl; monitored internet use by husbands).
- Supporting digitization and integration of data systems and building capacity for data collection. This includes creating common data management systems to streamline resources and reduce the burden on the communities for repeatedly providing similar information. It is important to recognize that some of these tools may require broader support from the UN (outside Vanuatu) but could be thought of as ‘public goods’ that can strengthen interventions across countries.

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative 2.0 would complement these efforts by creating or supporting solutions that can channel more funds to the CSO sector. Identifying the appropriate solution would require a deeper assessment, however potential solutions include:

- Consolidating resource mobilization efforts towards CSOs, to streamline funding sources and channels, in an effort to ease the burden of funding availability and access to CSOs.
- Strengthening strategic plans – such as the UNICEF strategic plan which requires the organization to prioritize the resourcing of in-country and global partnerships with girl-, youth- and women-led organizations and networks, as well as investments in girls’ leadership – to bring periodically reassess and bring attention to areas that need a boost.
- Building capacity of CSOs on financial/donor management, program strengthening, support functions, and other key areas that boost their efficiency, ability to fundraise, and improve impact outcomes.

While creating new funding mechanisms may require efforts from the UN at a regional / global level, the UN would look to build upon and partner with ongoing efforts to scale their impact. For instance, the UNICEF already prioritizes resourcing of in-country and global partnerships with girl-, youth- and women-led organizations and networks, as well as investments in girls’ leadership, and can be further strengthened through multi-agency partnerships and government support.

To enable ecosystem-wide integrated programming, the Spotlight Initiative 2.0 would bring a “One-UN” approach, reflecting a commitment to deeper coordination both within and outside the UN.

The Spotlight Initiative would partner with key actors in the ecosystem – with a focus on government and CSO partners – to encourage and enable coordinated efforts to EVAWC. This support could take the form of organising periodic conventions and workshops to bring the ecosystem together, assigning senior officials as representatives of government, CSOs and the UN to oversee progress and ensure accountability, etc.

To do this, UN agencies would develop internal mechanisms to streamline the UN’s support to the ecosystem of stakeholders. These may include leveraging the agencies’ internal engagement platforms (such as the quarterly inter-agency review meetings already in place) to develop combined pathways for external engagement. Agencies would also invest in combined capacity-building activities to strengthen internal operations and external support. While some of these internal integration efforts may sit at a regional or cross-cutting level (and not just Vanuatu), finding ways to strengthen these in parallel will be crucial to show up as ‘One-UN’ in its full capacity. This programme would be overseen by a full-time coordinator based in Vanuatu to ensure frequent and deep enough engagement with government and CSOs.

These multiple but interrelated prongs would help 1) the community members engage with consistent, reinforcing communication and activities that build off each other, 2) the CSOs or government bodies involved work towards a common goal and finally, 3) the UN to streamline resources and maximize impact by reinforcing their support through complementary channels.

To take the integrated programming approach off the ground, the UN would encourage targeted pilots in select provinces, to tighten the nuts and bolts of the model in a controlled setting and feed the learnings into country-level opportunities for scale.



C. HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE OPPORTUNITIES

to meaningfully contribute and collaborate

The Spotlight Initiative is a one-of-its kind platform that holds the power to sustainably end VAWC in Vanuatu, through a coordinated and holistic response that is greater than the sum of its parts.

The Spotlight Initiative represents a unique, one-of-its-kind approach, bringing the ‘whole-of-UN’ to work through a ‘whole-of-society’ approach. Unlike siloed interventions, it intervenes at the intersection of several, interrelated issues, tackling multiple pieces of the puzzle to ensure a holistic response, that is greater than the sum of its parts. The Initiative brings additionality over existing efforts in several ways.

- Firstly, it engages the national governments to incentivize investment in EAWC, thus strengthening institutional ownership for long-term sustainability. It works on systemic issues, challenging structures that perpetuate violence, stereotypes, biases, and discrimination.
- Secondly, it aims to go deep at a local level, with plans to engage in provinces and area councils in close collaboration with community members, to understand the unique contexts and accordingly elevate learnings to the top, while focusing and tailoring efforts on the ground.
- Finally, it aims to bring together the collective networks, resources, expertise of the entire UN machinery, to tackle the challenge of VAWC from all directions, and at all levels of the ecosystem, to bring sustainable change in an efficient manner.

With a truly holistic, rights-based, grounds up yet systems-change driven model, the Spotlight Initiative stands at the forefront of sustainably ending VAWC in Vanuatu, and more broadly across the world.

As an ally towards ending VAWC in Vanuatu, the Spotlight Initiative is seeking support from partners to deepen efforts, in the form of financial and technical or knowledge based partnerships.

In the true spirit of integrated programming, the Spotlight Initiative is actively seeking partners to deepen and scale efforts in Vanuatu. These partnership opportunities could take various forms:

Financial support can help the Initiative to significantly deepen efforts in Vanuatu through integrated programming. Opportunities include:

- Pilot on-ground efforts to learn how best to integrate efforts across different actors and levels of the ecosystem, and build on-ground capabilities for under-represented themes. For instance, the UN aims to deepen efforts at the province level, and then surface learnings for country-level policy advocacy. Financial support will be critical to design and implement the pilots, and replicate successful models in Vanuatu, and potentially in other Pacific Islands.
- Address the under-represented themes and build on-ground capabilities for such efforts. This includes designing programmes that integrate activities around VAWG and VAC or building funding mechanisms for smaller CSOs.

In parallel, the Spotlight Initiative is also seeking technical support to strengthen programming.

- Facilitate knowledge exchange and strengthen comprehensive prevention and response to violence, while offering an opportunity for collective implementation. For instance, the UN aims to learn from experiences of others in Vanuatu, or best practices that could elevate the work
- Direct support for integrating programming and partners to work with grassroots players for running initiatives at the provincial level
- Thought partner on under-resourced areas such as dedicated male engagement programmes, mental health initiatives, and disaster-mitigation programmes that prioritises EVAWC

The Spotlight Initiative looks forward to partnering to harness the power of collectivization and sustainably end all forms of violence against women and children in Vanuatu.



Annexures

Below is a short summary of the activities under each of the Spotlight Initiative pillars in Vanuatu.

Outcome/ Pillar	Lead Agency	Focus of Activities	Partners	% Budget
1. Laws and Policies	UNDP	The Survivors Victims Charter	Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO)	14%
	UNFPA	Clinical Guidelines to Respond to SGBV	Ministry of Health (MoH)	
	IOM	GBV SOP in Evacuation Centres	National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)	
2. Institutions	UNDP	Renovations of the Victims Support Centre	Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO)	4%
3. Prevention	UNFPA	CSE (FLE) in schools & out of schools	Ministry of Education and Training (MoET)	38%
	UNICEF	Child Online Protection	Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS)	
	UNICEF	Child Protection Community Facilitation Package	Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYSD)	
	IOM	Famili I Redi Labour Mobility Training	Dep Labour	
4. Services	UNDP	Services of the Victim Support Centre	Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO)	20%
	UNFPA	GBV response in Health Centres	Ministry of Health (MoH)	
5. Data	UNFPA	GBV administrative data systems GBV prevalence studies' capacity strengthening	Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO)	12%
6. Women's Movement	UNDP	8 CSO organisations have been awarded a small grant of between USD \$21,000 and \$50,000	Action Aid SISTA Vatu Mauri ACTIV ISRAAID SILAE VANUA The AOG Wan Smol Bag The Spotlight Pacific Regional programme supported: Anglican Church of Melanesia Sunflower Association for Women and Girls with Disabilities Vanuatu Christian Council V-Pride Mixed Youth Challenge Vanuatu	11%

Achievements and impact of the partnership between the Spotlight Initiative and the broader ecosystem in Vanuatu

Below are some short case studies that highlight breadth of interventions across the ecosystem that build upon and support existing work in the country.

On the individual front, the Spotlight Initiative empowered individuals to understand their rights, challenge harmful norms, and promote gender equality and violence-free behaviours. It has done this through behaviour change interventions, awareness campaigns, and educational programmes conducted across schools, workplaces, or through community outreach.

1 | ENGAGING INDIVIDUALS



Objective: Tackle rigid gender roles and promote gender equitable and violence free norms, by building inclusive curriculum and equipping the educators to disseminate it.



Activities: The Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), Family Planning New South Wales (FPNSW), Vanuatu Family Health Association, Vanuatu National Youth Council (VNYC) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) built and rolled out the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)/Family Life Education(FLE) curriculum. It set up a multi-stakeholder CSE/FLE committee to provide programmatic oversight, coordination, and advocacy for in and out of school learners. Objectives include:

1. **Develop in-school curriculum for years 7-12, out-of-school modules and associated teacher guides**
2. **Train master teachers and peer educators to aid in the delivery of the curriculum**



Impact: Over 25 Master Teachers were trained to implement in-school CSE/FLE curricula across six provinces, and 18 trainers from National Youth Council and youth CSOs received training for out-of-school modules. Moreover, the Spotlight Initiative's strong advocacy has led to growing political and technical commitment to CSE/FLE see through the integration of CSE/FLE in the RMNCAH (Reproductive, Maternal, Child, New-born, Child, and Adolescent Health) Policy.

2 | SUPPORTING FAMILIES



Objective: Support current and potential labour migrants families to optimize socio-economic advantages from labor mobility while mitigating risks linked to gender-based violence.



Activities: The Spotlight Initiative, in partnership with the Department of Labour and Employment Services (DoL) developed the Famili-i-Redi programme, a 5-day workshop targeted at future labour mobility participants. The workshop aimed to end GBV associated with labour mobility through lessons on emotional intelligence, non-violent communication, stress and financial management. IOM and World Vision Vanuatu co-designed the curriculum with input from multiple labour mobility stakeholders.



Impact: Through 17 pre-departure workshops in 2 provinces across rural and urban areas, 493 participants including 261 men and 232 women have been trained. Pre and post workshop tests indicate promising results; with participants reporting improvements in their relationships, increased knowledge of violence forms, and application of stress management strategies. For example, there was a 60% improvement in the number of participants who understood different forms of violence.

Individual level activities were complemented by engagements at the family level.

These encompassed interventions with parenting workshops, family counselling, and related support programmes. They aimed to enhance positive parenting practices, communication skills, and conflict resolution within households through initiatives like UNICEF's child protection programme and IOM's Famili-i-Redi workshop, among others.

The community level interventions engaged local leaders, community-based organizations and grassroots players. This involved dialogues, workshops, and community engagement activities to challenge entrenched social practices, address cultural norms perpetuating violence, and foster equitable and respectful relationships within the community. For instance, UNDP with their strong expertise in grant-making lead the Pillar 6 on Civil society engagement by collaborating with civil society partners like the Vanuatu Women's Centre, frontline service providers, and the Vanuatu National Council of Women.

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative also worked at the national level, on broader policy frameworks and institutional initiatives. This included working closely with governmental bodies, policymakers, and national institutions to advocate for, develop, and implement policies that safeguard women's and girls' rights and protection against violence. These initiatives aimed to strengthen the institutional capacity to respond to cases of violence and enforce relevant legislation. For instance, UNDP partnered with the Public Prosecutor's Office to create the Victim's Charter, UNFPA collaborated with the Ministry of Health to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for clinical care and referral processes supporting GBV survivors.

Next steps for the UN to inform activities under the Spotlight Initiative 2.0

Integrated programming will require highly coordinated efforts by UN agencies as well as deep engagement with external stakeholders and can be kick-started through pilots in 1-2 provinces. It can select specific initiatives that can be implemented through the refreshed approach.

As a first step, the Initiative can undertake a province-level study to assess VAWC levels and unique needs, efforts undertaken and progress that may be leveraged for future programming. It can partner with existing efforts (such as provincial mapping by the government), to strengthen the exercise (in terms of metrics to track) or scale the effort (through greater resources for a comprehensive mapping). This exercise is also an opportunity for agencies to test data collection/reporting mechanisms and start creating the necessary tools to strengthen capacity on this front.

The independent studies at the province-level can then inform the planning, processes, resource-mobilization, engagement, messaging, and delivery of programmes for those provinces. This would be an opportunity for UN agencies to organise internal meetings to develop integrated plans, which may be presented to other stakeholders through combined engagement platforms. Findings from these pilots may then be reviewed by all agencies and relayed to external stakeholders for their feedback. Engagement at the local levels will reveal unique challenges, help identify overlaps in initiatives, and opportunities to streamline resources and develop common touchpoints. This iterative process would make room to refine the programmes and build the required internal systems and external supporting environment for the integrated approach.

To hit the ground running, there are some immediate priorities that the UN systems aim to prioritize – 1) dedicate in-person staff, along with clear roles and responsibilities across different agencies 2) review all national frameworks and policies, province level capacities and global best practices, to arrive at priority interventions (broadly, and for specific pilots) and 3) build a formal channel for information sharing and planning across agencies (through common meetings, shared platforms).

