



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

Caribbean Regional Programme

Annual Narrative Programme Report

24 July 2020 – 31 December 2020

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



Programme Title & Programme Number

Programme Title: Strengthening Regional Cooperation to Prevent and Respond to Family Violence in the Caribbean

Priority Regions/Areas/Localities for the Programme

Caribbean: Inclusive of all independent Member States of CARICOM.

MPTF Office Project Reference Number:¹**Recipient Organization(s)**

UN Women
UNDP
UNFPA
UNICEF

Programme Cost (US\$)

Total Phase I approved budget as per the Spotlight CPD/RPD: 11,360,711 USD

Phase I Spotlight funding:² \$9,552,830 USD

Agency Contribution: \$1,807, 881 USD

Spotlight Funding and Agency Contribution by Agency:

Name of RUNO	Spotlight Phase I (USD)	UN Agency Contributions (USD)
UN Women	\$4,715, 845	\$209, 750
UNDP	\$1, 893, 461	\$301, 156
UNFPA	\$1, 490, 725	\$270, 975
UNICEF	\$1, 452, 799	\$1, 026, 000
TOTAL:	\$9,552,830	\$1,807, 881

Key Partners

- UN: ILO, PAHO, ECLAC
- Regional institutions: CARICOM, OECS Commission, CDB, CXC, CDEMA, CAJO, HRD
- Government
- Regional NGOs working on GBV
- Regional trade unions and employers' federations
- Academia working on Gender Studies – (UWI)

Programme Start and End Dates

Start Date: 24 July 2020

End Date: 31 December 2022

Report Submitted By: Name & Title: Didier Trebucq, Resident Coordinator

Email: didier.trebucq@un.org

Physical Address:

UN House, Hastings, Christ Church, Barbados

Telephone: +1 (246) 467-6101

¹ The Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as "Project ID" on the project's factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

² The Spotlight Contribution refers to the amount transferred to the Recipient UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

Table of Contents

<i>Table of Contents</i>	2
<i>Introduction</i>	4
<i>Programme Governance and Coordination</i>	6
<i>Lessons Learned and New Opportunities</i>	7
<i>Communications and Visibility</i>	7
<i>Next Steps</i>	8

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CFPs	Calls for Proposals
CS	Civil Society
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSRRG	Civil Society Regional Reference Group
CONSLE	Council for National Security & Law Enforcement
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EVAWG	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, OECS, CARICOM & CARIFORUM
FV	Family Violence
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HRD	Human Resources Development
HSD	Human and Social Development
IGDS	Institute of Gender and Development Studies
ILO	International Labor Office
IMPACS	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
IPs	Implementing Partners
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
KM	Knowledge Management
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PANCAP	Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RSS	Regional Security System
RUNOs	Recipient UN Organizations
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SI	Spotlight Initiative
ToRs	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNFPA	UN Population Fund
UWI	University of the West Indies
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence against Women and Girls
WRO	Women's Rights Organizations

Introduction

This is the first annual report of the Spotlight Initiative (SI) Regional Programme in the Caribbean and covers the period since the approval of the project document on 24 July 2020 to 31 December 2020. Given that the project is in the initial phase, this report includes information on project initiation, contextual shifts, setting up of the Spotlight Initiative Programme Management team, progress towards establishing programme governance mechanisms, stakeholder engagements, and implementation status.

Project Initiation

The SI Caribbean Regional Programme Design is aligned with United Nations (UN) Reform efforts and is guided by the principle of *leaving no one behind* and the human rights framework. Coordinated by an empowered Resident Coordinator's (RC) Office, the Recipient United Nations Organisations (RUNOs) jointly developed the Regional Programme Document following at least five regional multi-stakeholder consultations with key regional institutions, the European Union (EU) delegation and other UN agencies. The process also included a dedicated consultation with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

With a virtual signing ceremony held on 22 September 2020 (see article <https://bit.ly/2RanmXS>), the SI Regional Programme in the Caribbean commenced later than anticipated, in December 2020. However, all the RUNOs and implementing partners are advancing with critical interventions with some expenditure already incurred by the end of 2020. A plan to accelerate implementation was also discussed and approved during the first steering committee meeting of the Programme on 1 March 2021. RUNOs and partners are implementing the acceleration plan.

Project Initiation

Since women and children perceive more violence when there is tension in the home, it is significant that 29% of women and 31% of adolescents mentioned more loud arguments and shouting in a quick survey, *Youth Speak Up about Violence During COVID-19* conducted by UNICEF in five countries in the Caribbean (<https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/youth-speak-about-violence-during-covid-19>). Anguilla, for example, noted an increase of 88% in domestic violence cases during this period (<https://tinyurl.com/2p4e7jem>). This corroborates the global information that COVID-19 has caused an uptick of Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Family Violence (FV) rates in most countries at different levels, with limited availability of assistance and access to essential services. SI therefore takes on further urgency. For example, in a number of countries in the Caribbean, it became more difficult for women and girls to access police services and report incidents of violence due to lockdown restrictions and limited mobility. Therefore, increasing the institutional capacity of police and justice sectors to respond to VAWG is one of the priority areas under Pillar 2 of the Spotlight Regional Programme.

A key development in the Region, like the rest of the world, was the limiting of travel and gatherings. Further, schools across the region were closed from March to December 2020, which led to e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely on digital platforms. As a result, education delivery including Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has changed dramatically. This new reality comes with both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, digital spaces offer an emerging

platform where some elements of CSE can be made more accessible, engaging, and interactive for young people. Remote learning also offers a potential avenue to complement traditional CSE.

However, moving to digital platforms has impacted interventions in the SI Regional Programme that relate to the education sector. Quality assurance has become a challenge, and, in exploring digital spaces to seek information, young people come across a range of content, some of which may be incomplete, poorly informed, or harmful. In order to address this challenge, a contextual shift was required by SI Regional Programme partners in re-conceptualizing the activities that are being rolled out in the delivery of CSE activities considering the new reality of remote, virtual and distance learning.

Besides some significant political shifts in the Caribbean, in countries like Guyana following its disputed March 2020 elections or Haiti regarding its current President's term, and other developments in the region, COVID-19 still constitutes a challenge. There has been a decline in the socio-economic status of countries within the region partly due to COVID-19, and the ongoing ripple effects will continue for years to come. As governments responded to the health crisis through lockdown measures and border management, many industries were negatively impacted and saw a decline in income and profitability. This led to several layoffs, an upsurge in crime, and overall decline of economies. Many national governments have also offered social protection measures, which have further strained their economic position. This impacted availability of resources and personnel in key regional and national institutions and overburdening of women's groups and CSOs involved in the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme. In the case of Caribbean Community (CARICOM), a Programme Coordinator is being recruited to support the implementation of activities under Pillar 2 and 5 for example, and to increase the capacity of the CARICOM Secretariat to manage and deliver within its mandate.

Though not specific to the current reporting period, it is critical to highlight that at the time of writing this progress report, the Caribbean has been impacted by the eruption of La Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The natural disaster exacerbated the already existing risk posed by the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns in driving gender-based violence within the region as at least 20,000 citizens were displaced and over 12,000 evacuees registered in shelters. The UN RC's Office coordinated the launch of a US\$29 million appeal to support the relief efforts. The social protection pillar of the appeal is geared towards prevention and response to FV and VAWG.

Programme Governance and Coordination

There is significant progress towards establishing the programme governance and coordination mechanisms as below:

UN Coordination

As part of UN Reform, the RC is coordinating the SI Regional Programme to ensure that the UN delivers as one, while UN Women's role is to ensure technical coherence during implementation. The RUNOs met periodically to review progress on delivery, share experiences, as well as opportunities for synergies to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money.

The Regional Steering Committee

The Regional Steering Committee has been established and is co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General for the CARICOM Secretariat and the UN RC for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. Other members of the Steering Committee include a high-level representative from the OECS Secretariat; the European Union Delegation Head of Delegation to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM; Representative from UWI – Institute of Gender and Development Studies (*IGDS*); Representative from Caribbean Development Bank (regional institution); Representatives from the four RUNOs - UN Women, UN Population Fund (UNFPA); United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as well as a Civil Society National Reference Group representative. A representative from the UN system in Haiti serves as a permanent observer on the Regional Steering Committee.

Terms of Reference (TORs) were shared and adopted by the Steering Committee. The first meeting was held on 1 March 2021 and was attended by 19 members.

Key Decisions Made Include: an agreement that a quorum for any meeting will constitute six members of the Steering Committee. Four of these are compulsory being – the two co-chairs, EU representative and a representative of civil society. The Regional Steering Committee will meet quarterly to review progress towards achievement of results and jointly plan for execution of planned interventions. Progress reports in the form of a Gant Chart should be shared at least a week ahead of the quarterly meetings. The Regional SI Programme Management Unit provides secretarial support by facilitating logistics for setting up meetings, inviting members, preparing the agenda, preparing progress reports, and recording minutes.

Members of the Steering Committee have a better understanding of the role of the UN RC in the SI, as well as how the Regional Steering Committee links with and complements the six country programmes, including the importance of including Haiti.

Regional Technical Advisory Group

With the support of the UN RC (Barbados and the OECS), the Regional Technical Advisory Group was established. The first meeting of the Technical Advisory Group was held in November 2020 and this gave stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the key activities and results expected under the Programme, as well as to strategize based on lessons learned in the national programmes and within the COVID-19 context.

Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CS-RRG)

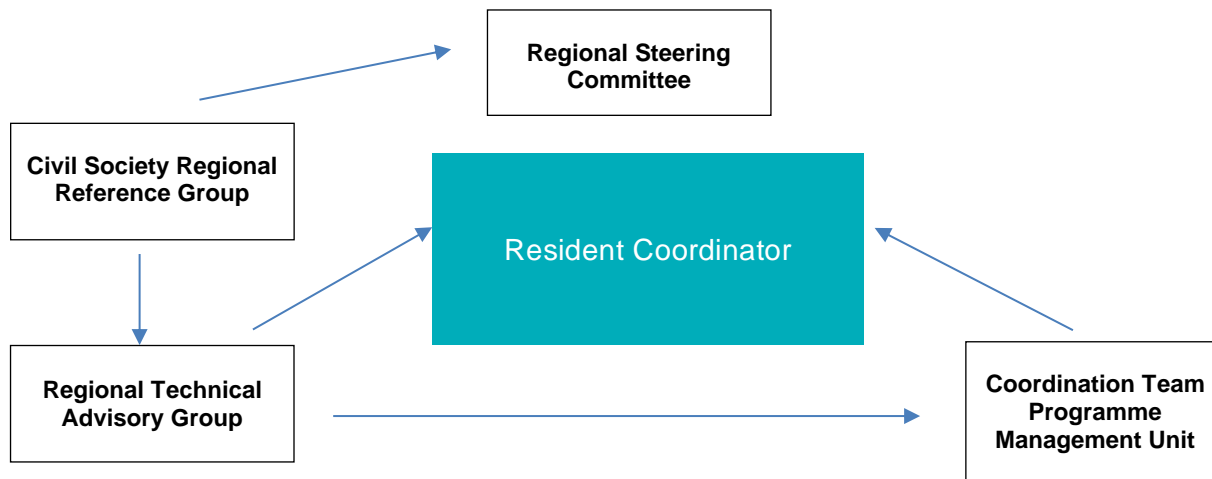
The Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CS-RRG) has been established. The process began with a Call for Nominations to the CS-RRG, which was issued in November 2020. Following a low rate of responses, the call was re-issued on the 18th of December 2020, and closed on the 15 January 2021. Fourteen nominations were received, and an evaluation committee was established, comprising representatives from the RUNOs, CSO, the EU, and the CARICOM Secretariat. It was also determined that a representative from each of the national reference groups would sit on the CS-RRG to ensure coordination and coherence with engagement of CSOs throughout the Programme.

A budget of US\$61,216 has been allocated to support the functioning of the CS-RRG and the establishment of linkages with the country reference groups, as well as the creation of a virtual platform for dialogues, and knowledge sharing.

Inter-agency Coordination, Technical Committees, and other Governance Mechanisms

There are concerted efforts to ensure joint implementation of interventions by UN agencies against pillar results and to ensure overall success of the joint programme. To achieve this joint pillar working groups have been established to facilitate joint delivery, sharing of information and improve effectiveness. All RUNOs and Associate Agencies such as Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (*ECLAC*), International Labour Organization (*ILO*), and Pan-American Health Organization (*PAHO*) collaborated in the process of selecting the CS-RRG. All RUNOs and associate agencies have demonstrated commitment through participation at the highest level during regional technical committee meetings and consultative meetings. The programme also taps into the Essential Services Community of Practice for the Caribbean that is spearheaded by UNFPA.

Figure 1 - Governance Structure



Programme Partnerships

Inter-governmental Agencies

CARICOM & *Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)* – A strategic partnership with CARICOM & OECS and its organs and institutions has been established to facilitate an integrated approach that would activate the role of the different inter-governmental institutions providing VAWG and FV services. Increasing the capacity of the personnel within these influential regional institutions gives impetus to streamlining of information about VAWG and FV and building a network of skilled and informed service providers. Several meetings were held with various units within CARICOM Secretariat to discuss the terms and conditions of the partnership. Various RUNOs are working with the different units on several pillars. For example, within CARICOM Secretariat, the Regional SI Programme will focus on strengthening the capacity of the Gender Programme and Human Resources Development (HRD) to implement the Gender Equality Regional Strategy, and in particular the objective of ending VAWG. RUNOs will support CARICOM Secretariat in the recruitment of a Coordinator to manage the implementation of these activities. The interventions will also strengthen the ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean by supporting the inclusion and analysis of data on Caribbean countries on family violence, including in times of crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic.

A draft proposal and workplan would be developed by CARICOM Secretariat for the project, and an agreement specifically with UN Women would be drafted for review to guide the work of Pillar 2 and 5. CARICOM is an organization of 15 Member States throughout the Caribbean having primary objectives to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared, and to coordinate foreign policy. As a regional body with oversight on key mechanisms across governments, the private sector and civil society, CARICOM Secretariat is best positioned to leverage its influence and mandate to support the implementation of key aspects of the SI Regional Programme.

Existing relationships with the CARICOM Secretariat's Gender Bureau will facilitate accelerated delivery and open communication. The Bureau also possesses the technical expertise around VAWG, FV and Gender Equality and brings a regional perspective of the challenges, gaps, and opportunities.

Civil Society

RUNOs leveraged existing partnerships in working with regional CSOs. Several have already been identified as implementing partners and will soon begin implementing activities. For example, under Pillar 5, which focusses on existing public policies and legislative frameworks on FV that impact the lives of LGBTQI+¹ youth such as Being LGBTQI+ in the Caribbean (BLIC) Project (<https://www.bb.undp.org/content/barbados/en/home/projects/BLIC.html>) the Programme will partner with Eastern Caribbean Alliance for Diversity and Equality (ECADE), Caribbean Forum for Liberation and Acceptance of Genders and Sexualities (CARIFLAGS), and the United Caribbean Trans Network (UCTRANS). The organizations will also strengthen the integration of gender perspectives and VAWG and FV in the collection of regional data.

European Union (EU)

The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme is actively engaged with the EU delegation. The UN RC is in direct communication with the Head of the EU delegation. The EU attended the Signing Ceremony and the launch of the Regional Programme in September 2020, the first Steering Committee meeting on 1 March 2021 and several consultative meetings during the project initiation phase. There has also been bilateral communication.

With the onboarding of the SI Regional Programme Management Unit, this relationship will be strengthened at a technical level.

Other Partners including UN Associate Agencies

A process of onboarding and meaningfully engaging more strategic partners as well as UN Associate Agencies such as ECLAC, ILO, and PAHO in being implemented as the Programme implementation gains momentum. There have been initial consultations with regional media houses and academic institutions to be partners in the design, launch and implementation of a culturally relevant, multi-media campaign targeting the whole of society. The campaign seeks to promote respectful relationships and challenge negative social norms and gender stereotypes that perpetuate VAWG and FV.

Implementation Status

As the Regional Programme is in its early stages, during this reporting period implementation focused on foundational processes.

The foundational processes carried out in the first six months of the programme included: Several consultation meetings convened, initial dialogues with partners, advocacy with inter-governmental agencies, sending out calls for proposals and development of concept notes and TORs in collaboration and with the participation of the Spotlight Initiative's counterparts. This served to initiate several of the activities as highlighted in this section. This process created ownership and affirmed trust amongst RUNOs, CSOs, regional institutions and other counterparts.

¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex.

There was notable progress under Pillar 2. Consultations were held with the CARICOM Secretariat and its relevant organ - Council for National Security & Law Enforcement (CONSLE), and the Regional Security System (RSS), as well as regional institutions such as the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) and among others, aimed at aligning efforts and interventions to ensure better coordination and leverage on the individual comparative advantage in delivering on the Pillar 2. Based on these consultations, the process of developing concept notes and ToRs started for each of the activities to be implemented which will commence in the first half of 2021.

The ToRs outline the vision of each of the activities including the SI's role in supporting the integration of gender perspectives in the revision of regional citizen security frameworks and the standards for policing and justice sectors. In addition, preliminary modalities put in place to guide coordination across the various sectors that provide VAWG and FV services will be finalized and institutionalized. There is buy-in on the scope of the activities under Pillar 2, with minor adjustments made. For example, CARICOM Secretariat expressed the need to have training of Gender/Women's Bureaus in the region on women economic empowerment programming, which corresponds to the need for economic empowerment programmes to support women and families recover from the hardships caused by COVID-19 and will indirectly contribute to prevention of VAWG and FV.

A draft framework for gender competencies was completed, including stakeholder consultations (participants included CARICOM officials and service providers within CARICOM and the Eastern Caribbean). This process was part of a Latin American and Caribbean process but is a foundational step to having the draft competency framework completed under Pillar 2, with a core set of Caribbean actors.

Under Pillar 3, a roadmap of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) activities was developed in the last quarter of 2020. It is expected that the roadmap tool will keep the regional CSE spotlight activities on track, and also serve as a strong enabler of communication between stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of the interventions. A consultant was recruited to support CSE activities. The CSE programme was launched regionally through a webinar attended by 115 participants. In addition, there has been engagement with regional partners and CSOs such as IGDS, PCI Media, Dance for Life (Barbados) and Eve4Life (Jamaica) to establish alliances and contacts towards adolescent girls' empowerment and the Caribbean model of cultural change. This activity facilitated collaboration and partnership between UNFPA, CARICOM Secretariat, Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (*PANCAP*) and member states.

A technical officer to support the development of the Observatory of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights has been recruited and is expected assume the post in Q1 of 2021. In addition, an individual consultant has been hired for Mapping of Gender Equality, Prevention of Violence Against Children and Caribbean New School Model. The methodology was approved, and mapping has been underway to inform key areas for synergies and measurement. A draft Whole-of-School Approach Framework to VAWG within the Caribbean New School Model was prepared and strategies to strengthen education systems and create enabling environments within educational settings as well as Gender-responsive teaching and learning are on-going. While these activities have all been affected by the disruption of school because of COVID-19, preparation for school reopening and "Bringing Girls Back" is underway. The Regional Programme has also adopted the lessons learned from the Trinidad and Tobago experience in FV and the workplace. Engagements with CARICOM Secretariat's Directorate of Human and Social Development (*HSD*) and the Human Resource Development strategy (*HRD*) to reach agreements on approaches to VAW-VAC and Caribbean New School Model have progressed.

Seven areas of action have been identified following the completion of a digital consultation on Girls' Rights in Latin America and the Caribbean (consultation concluded in 2020; report launched in 2021).

These seven areas will form the basis for deeper consultations across the Caribbean around the Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Index in Pillar 3.

Under Pillar 5, a call for proposals and workplan on Understanding Manifestations and Measurements of Child Marriage and Early Unions (CMEU) in the Caribbean (SDG5) was issued in November 2020. The selection process was held jointly between UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women and will contribute to raising awareness and provide insights on the ways in which adolescent girls are at risk of being left behind, and relegated to a cycle of violence and inequality, through harmful practices such as early unions.

In addition, the conceptualization of a qualitative study on existing public policies and legislative frameworks on FV that impacts the lives of LGBTQI+ youth has begun. This is motivated by a lack of sufficient data about LGBTQI+ youth in the Caribbean, which is needed for stakeholders to make informed and evidence-based decisions and take appropriate measures to address their needs. The actual study, which will also explore existing support systems that help LGBTQI+ youth with their needs and well-being will commence in first half of 2021. This will include a mapping of existing Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice (KAP) evidence of the norms and behavior towards VAWG and FV in the region.

Further, dialogues were held between the RUNOs and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) towards an agreement on how to strengthen the integration of VAWG and FV in the data collection efforts of ECLAC's observatory. A ToR was developed for the Young Researcher Attachment Programme, targeting five young CARICOM-based researchers, including young feminist economists, to understudy the lead researchers conducting the UN Women-led study on Economic Costs of VAWG. The aim is to expand the pool of young Researchers in CARICOM with the skillsets required to undertake studies on the economic costs of VAWG. Analyses of economic costs will generate an understanding of the wider effects of family violence on society, beyond the immediate victim.

Partnerships and synergies with other ongoing projects have been an important milestone for a participatory approach to data collection efforts at the regional level. The production of regionally owned data will ensure that policy and programmatic approaches are evidence-based, and that the region will have a robust data observatory.

A monitoring and evaluation framework is being developed that will be presented at the next technical advisory group and regional steering committee meetings.

Capturing Broader Transformations Across Outcomes

During the first six months of implementation, SI has positioned itself as a reference Programme working to address FV in the region. The Regional Programme is working jointly with different sectors to ensure an integrated approach to addressing FV. These partnerships will allow the Programme to develop specific elements to advance women-centered responses, considering key population groups such as adolescent and young women, girls, the LGBTQI+ community and women and girls who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Partners are identified through internal assessments whose criteria includes technical capabilities and expertise on inter-sectional, intercultural, and inclusive methodologies necessary to ensure region-wide impact. Through CSE activities, the Regional Programme also captures broader transformations across outcomes such as human rights, the right to self-determination, gender equality and acceptance of diversity by young people across the region.

Challenges and Mitigating Measures

The delay in the recruitment of the Programme Coordinator and Technical Coherence focal point, impacted a coordinated strategy for accelerated implementation in the early stages of the Programme. The first tranche of funding for the programme was received in December 2020, which further constrained RUNOs from moving ahead with commitments and delivery. However, this was mitigated by RUNOs increasing their contributions, and or borrowing resources from other projects until funds were finally disbursed to avoid delays in the implementation. In addition, an approved acceleration plan is being implemented.

All activities with implementing partners, whether UN agencies, government institutions, regional mechanisms, academic institutions, or CSOs, require the establishment of a formal agreement with each of the RUNOs, which takes a long time and had an impact on speed of implementation. Even though initial discussions with counterparts took place at the beginning of 2020 to obtain buy-in and agree on plans, after the launch and signing of the Regional Programme, discussions had to be re-established in late September in a new context including i) the new global circumstances under the COVID-19 pandemic, and ii) some counterparts had changed focal points and negotiations had to be re-established. To address these challenges, coordination meetings took place between each of the RUNOs and its counterparts to get buy-in of the joint work, establish the necessary steps that needed to be taken before implementation, collaborative development of concept notes and ToRs as well as signing agreements.

COVID-19 continues to pose restrictions in travel and gatherings which has impacted programme delivery. Partners have since agreed that activities that require in-person contact be postponed until 2022, repurposing some travel budget for connectivity and logistics of virtual activities, virtual data collection, or the inclusion of a COVID-19 approach to products to adapt them to the new reality. With counterparts that had new focal points, such as Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), new introductory meetings had to be made, relevant documents were shared and follow up meetings were held to re-establish the relationships.

The COVID-19 lockdowns affected the implementation of activities in Pillar 2 and 3 which focus on prevention interventions within the Education sector. There were challenges related to school closures and the transition to remote and blended learning methodologies as the programme had to adjust its approaches. While the pandemic provides a key opportunity to integrate VAWG prevention and response in schools, the methodology and approaches will need to be tweaked in a way that is aligned with the Caribbean New School Model.

Further, in some of the consultations connectivity and availability of data is an issue. This was especially evident during the regional consultation on girls' rights, a foundational input for the Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Index (Pillar 3), where the participation of girls in the Caribbean was lower than expected. It is unclear if digital platforms are the best mechanisms to engage adolescent girls and boys – solutions to ensure participation will be further explored with girl-focused CSOs.

During meetings it was established that the CARICOM Secretariat required additional support from the Programme to achieve an effective accompaniment in joint activities. As a mitigation strategy, all RUNOs repurposed funds aimed at capacity strengthening of CARICOM Secretariat's Gender and Human Social Development areas.

Lessons Learned and New Opportunities

Using lessons learned from the National Spotlight programmes, the Regional Programme ensured early adaptation by substituting face-to-face activities with virtual platforms to connect with partners, key stakeholders, and beneficiaries. The virtual engagements and consultations have been effective in moving the Programme forward. Where possible, RUNOs have designed activities such that they will be supported by partners on the ground where needed, however, consultations and engagement has been effective through virtual platforms.

An emerging lesson from the national programmes, which will be applied within the Regional Programme is to establish ways to ensure meaningful engagement of civil society, and integration across Pillar working groups, rather than just under Pillar 6 and the Reference Group. Civil Society provides the backbone of support to survivors and victims of FV, GBV and CSA across the region, and has a firsthand perspective of service delivery, access to justice, institutional weaknesses, and availability of data to support their work. It is critical that civil society meaningfully engages and takes ownership to ensure success.

As the Programme commences, it has become apparent that it is important to coordinate with CARICOM Secretariat and its organs and institutions to ensure programmatic coherence with the Regional Programme across the relevant pillars. This allows complementarity and contributes to capitalizing on the results achieved by other programmes.

Communications and Visibility

There are few Communications and Visibility activities in the reporting period but expected to gain momentum in 2021. During the first six months of implementation, the Regional Programme disseminated information on the launch and signing ceremony of the SI Regional Programme in the Caribbean through mainstream media, partner institutions' websites and social media platforms. The Regional Programme also utilizes social media to expand its outreach in getting qualified staff and talent to join the Programme team².

Article:

1. <https://unsdg.un.org/un-in-action/barbados-and-eastern-caribbean-mco>
2. <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/press/regional-spotlight-initiative-programme-launched-reduce-family-violence-across-eastern>

Social media: UNDP's LAC Gender Team's twitter account.

https://twitter.com/PNUD_ALGenera/status/1309143590451511296

The Spotlight Initiative Programme reported on the virtual launch of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Activities in the Caribbean through the Spotlight Initiative. See link:

<https://today.caricom.org/2021/02/09/webinar-launching-comprehensive-sexuality-education-cse-activities-in-the-caribbean-through-the-spotlight-initiative/>

² See Twitter post: https://twitter.com/PNUD_ALGenera/status/1309143590451511296

Next Steps

- Priority activities will include the revision of police and justice standards, scaling up of Community of Practice (CoP) and/or Coordination Platforms for exchanging knowledge between stakeholders working on VAW and FV. It will also include training of key stakeholders such as parliamentarians and gender bureaus on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) and women economic empowerment programming.
- Under Pillar 2, the Regional Programme will utilize the expertise of professionals in areas of Gender, Law, Policing and VAWG to fast-track the implementation of the different activities in partnership with CARICOM Secretariat and its different organs and institutions. Assessments will be conducted when needed to identify knowledge gaps and training needs for sectors operating to support VAWG/FV services. Priority activities will include the revision of police and justice standards. UNDP and UN Women, together with ECLAC, will resume dialogues to improve the study design.
- A regional data review on the intersections between VAW and VAC will support an inter-agency approach to developing policy and programme guidance for Caribbean regional bodies. A consultative process will determine professional standards and measurable competencies for gender-responsive service delivery.
- A prevention strategy will be rolled out under Pillar 3, with adolescent girls empowered to mitigate the risks of violence and education actors will be equipped with standards and guidelines to prevent VAWG, including referral pathways to support survivors.
- Innovations under Pillar 3 are particularly important – *Model for Cultural Change and Engaging Traditional and Non-traditional Influencers*. The Adolescent Girls' Empowerment Index is a key innovation in that it begins from the perceptions of girls' in defining their own pathways to empowerment – as opposed to an inherited framework for empowerment that may or may not be relevant to the prevailing context of their lives.
- Under Pillar 5, the implementation of the planned Study on Protection and Response to FV experienced by LGBTQI+ Youth will start in the first half of 2021. Finalization of an agreement with CARICOM Secretariat, as well as the recruitment of a Coordinator to support the activities within the agreement is a priority. A consultant will also be recruited to conduct an assessment of the regional and national budgets on VAWG.
- The Multi-Caribbean Country Study on the Economic Costs of VAWG and FV will commence, along with capacity building and training of the regional pool of experts on VAWG prevalence and administrative data.
- Funding opportunities will be advertised under Pillar 6, to support the women's movement through a small grant modality. Two consultancies will be advertised for the Development of a Regional Social Accountability Strategy and Strengthening the Business Capacity of Caribbean Regional Women's Movement and CSOs.
- The Regional Programme will ensure its interventions are relevant and responding to the current public health crisis as a result of COVID-19, especially through prioritizing women and girls' needs as they have been disproportionately impacted by increased poverty, unemployment, food insecurity and gender-based violence.



Spotlight Initiative

