Spotlight Initiative
To eliminate violence against women and girls

Global

Annual Narrative Progress Report

01 January 2020 – 31 December 2020

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:

5 GENDER EQUALITY

Table of Contents

Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Administrative Agent
AFP	Agency Focal Point
AR	Annual Report
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUC	African Union Commission
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
C4D	Communication for Development
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CHAMP	Collaborative HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Programme
CMI	Count Me In! Consortium
CoP	Community of Practice
CONSLE	Council for National Security & Law Enforcement
COSI	Community of the Spotlight Initiative
COTLA	Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSRG	Civil Society Reference Group
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CTA	Technical Advisory Committee
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DGC	United Nations Department of Global Communications
DG INTPA	EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships
DHS	Demographic Health Survey
DPOs	Disabled Persons Organizations
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General
DV	Domestic Violence
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EoI	Expression of Interest
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary-General
ESP	Essential Services Package
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EVAWG	Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls
EVAWMW	Eliminating Violence Against Women Migrant Workers
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCI	Foundation for Community Initiatives
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence

GRB	Gender-Responsive Budgeting
GRG	Global Reference Group
GP	Global Platform
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HoA	Head of Agency
HP	Harmful Practice
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
IDWF	International Domestic Workers Federation
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IMPACS	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
INAM	Instituto Nacional de la Mujer (National Institute for Women)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IP	Implementing Partner
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
JLOS	Justice, Law and Order Service
LAD	Legal Aid Directorate
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Intersex +
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
LPA	Lukautim Pinkini Act
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEF	Malaysian Employers Federation
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework
MGCSV	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTFO	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MSC	Multi-Stakeholder Case Management Committee
MTA	Mid-Term Assessment
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OM	Operations Manual
ONPG	National Observatory for Gender Promotion
OSC	Operational Steering Committee
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PFLN	Platform of Women Leaders of Niger
PIAPS	Programme Implementation Action Plans
PME	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
PNG	Papua New Guinea

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PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
REC	Regional Economic Communities
RSS	Regional Security System
RSM	Salvadoran Media Network
RUNOs	Recipient United Nations Organizations
SAP	Slum Aid Project
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SBCC	Social and Behavioural Change Communication
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SERNIC	National Criminal Investigation Service
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SI	Spotlight Initiative
SMART	Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
SYVA	Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassadors
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
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	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNTF EVAW	UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WFP	World Food Programme
WHRD	Women Human Rights Defenders
WPHF	Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

CHAPTER 1:
Executive Summary

Introduction

The COVID-19 global pandemic has made 2020 an incomparable year. Over the course of the 12 months, the still ongoing pandemic has upended daily routines, created national lockdowns, resulted in 3.3 million deaths, especially among marginalized populations, and pushed countries' health systems to their limits. The "shadow pandemic" of violence against women and girls has deepened, with a massive spike in male violence against women and girls[1] enabled by lockdowns, restrictions on movement, and the closure of physical spaces for outreach, services and support. The acute and wide-ranging socio-economic impacts of the pandemic have exposed and exacerbated global inequalities and injustices. Addressing violence against women and girls has never been more pressing. In response to this new reality, on 5 April 2020, the UN Secretary-General issued a global call for peace in the home, with 146 Member States committing to support efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative was well positioned to address this critical need, being in its third year of operation as the world's largest global effort to end violence against women and girls.

The Spotlight Initiative is a global partnership between the United Nations and the European Union. With the European Union's historic investment of EUR 500 million in the Spotlight Initiative, programmes were able to rapidly adapt to the pandemic, accelerating and **redirecting more than USD 21 million**[2] **in funding to address violence against women and girls within the COVID-19 response**. Guided by the principle of "leaving no one behind," programmes paid particular attention to reaching women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

USD 391 million allocated so far

5 regions

11 UN Agencies

34 programmes

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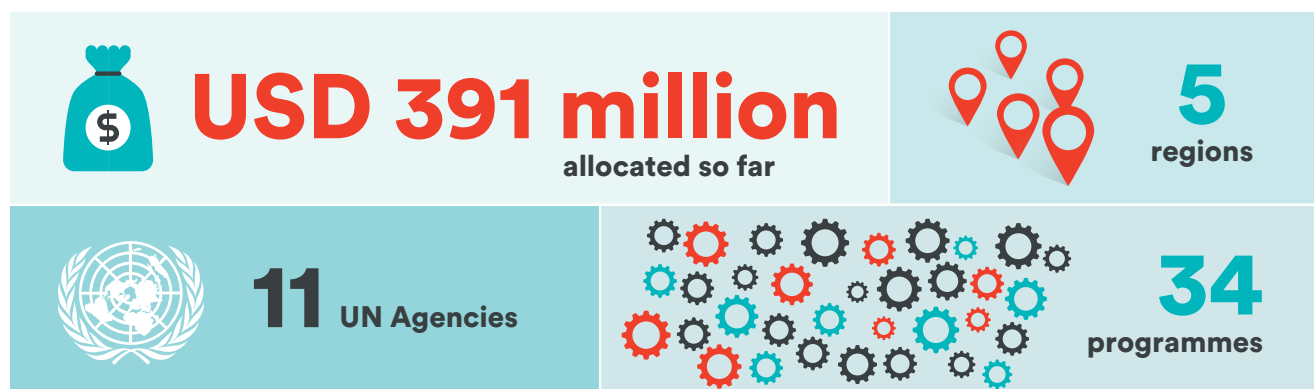
1   State of World Population report. UNFPA, 2021; Impact of COVID-19 on Family Planning: What we know one year into the pandemic. UNFPA, March 2021; Responding to Rising Intimate Partner Violence Amid COVID-19 A rapid global review. Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, February 2021.

2   Estimated figure based on self-reporting by Spotlight Initiative programmes as of August 2020.

Fund overview and governance

From 2018 through to the end of 2020, the Spotlight Initiative allocated over USD 391 million in funding to 34 programmes across five regions, including two trust funds for civil society.[3] Of that sum, USD 51.7 million was allocated in 2020 to eight new Spotlight Initiative programmes. By December 2020, almost USD 300 million had been disbursed to Spotlight Initiative programmes, of which USD 169 million were disbursed in 2020. Based on progress made, a European Union replenishment brought in USD 148 million in 2020. Eleven UN agencies are delivering the Spotlight Initiative's programmes, including the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as core agencies, working closely with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Ensuring a streamlined allocation of the Fund, the governance structure of the Spotlight Initiative provides clear lines of accountability and supports decision-making and oversight. At the global level, the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee provide Fund governance, with the Secretariat providing operational and administrative support to these bodies and the Administrative Agent administering the Fund portfolio. At country and regional levels, Spotlight Initiative programmes have parallel governance structures as Country and Regional Programme Steering Committees providing oversight and accountability mechanisms. Across these decision-making bodies, the Spotlight Initiative has ensured that civil society plays a meaningful role, with representatives serving as full voting members in global- and programme-level steering committees.

Spotlight Initiative programmes

In 2020, country programmes in **Afghanistan**, **Ecuador**, **Kyrgyzstan**, and **Tajikistan** were approved in addition to the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, **Caribbean Regional Programme**, and the **Pillar 6 (support to women's movement)** of the **Pacific Regional Programme**.[4] **Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes** were approved through the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund for **Papua New Guinea**, **Haiti**, and **Afghanistan**. Additionally, USD **9.1 million was reallocated to address COVID-19** realities from the Spotlight Initiative **sub-Saharan Africa** multi-country grants envelope of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. These programmes joined the Initiative's existing first year programmes, totaling 21 new country, regional and grant-giving programmes in the **Caribbean, Central Asia**, and **the Pacific** as well as the **Africa Regional Programme**.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative launched its first **mid-term assessment**. The assessment covers all programmes, focusing, first, on programmes in Latin America and Africa with their assessment to be completed in the second quarter of 2021. Then, in mid-2021, the programmes in the Caribbean, Pacific, and Asia will undergo the same exercise. Preliminary findings from the assessments of programmes in Africa and Latin America revealed compelling results across the 6 Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative: the

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[3]   This total figure does not include the Guatemala Programme that was approved for closure in 2020. Allocations per programme may be found in Chapter 3.
[4]   The Pacific Regional Programme was approved in 2019, but in 2020 an additional allocation to fund its Pillar 6 to support the women's movement was approved.

mid-term assessment validated the assumptions underpinning the Spotlight Initiative's comprehensive Theory of Change, the Fund's participatory and multi-stakeholder methodology, as well as the central role given to civil society in the governance, design and implementation of the Initiative. In a survey conducted for the mid-term assessment, **more than 700 programme stakeholders (government, civil society, EU and UN teams) confirmed the gender-transformative, survivor-centred and human-rights based approach of the Initiative**. Of survey respondents, 90 per cent also expressed that they considered the Spotlight Initiative to be in line with the UN Reform's principles, contributing to more efficient and better coordinated action on ending violence against women and girls. The results also highlighted the agile adaptation of programmes to the COVID-19 context.
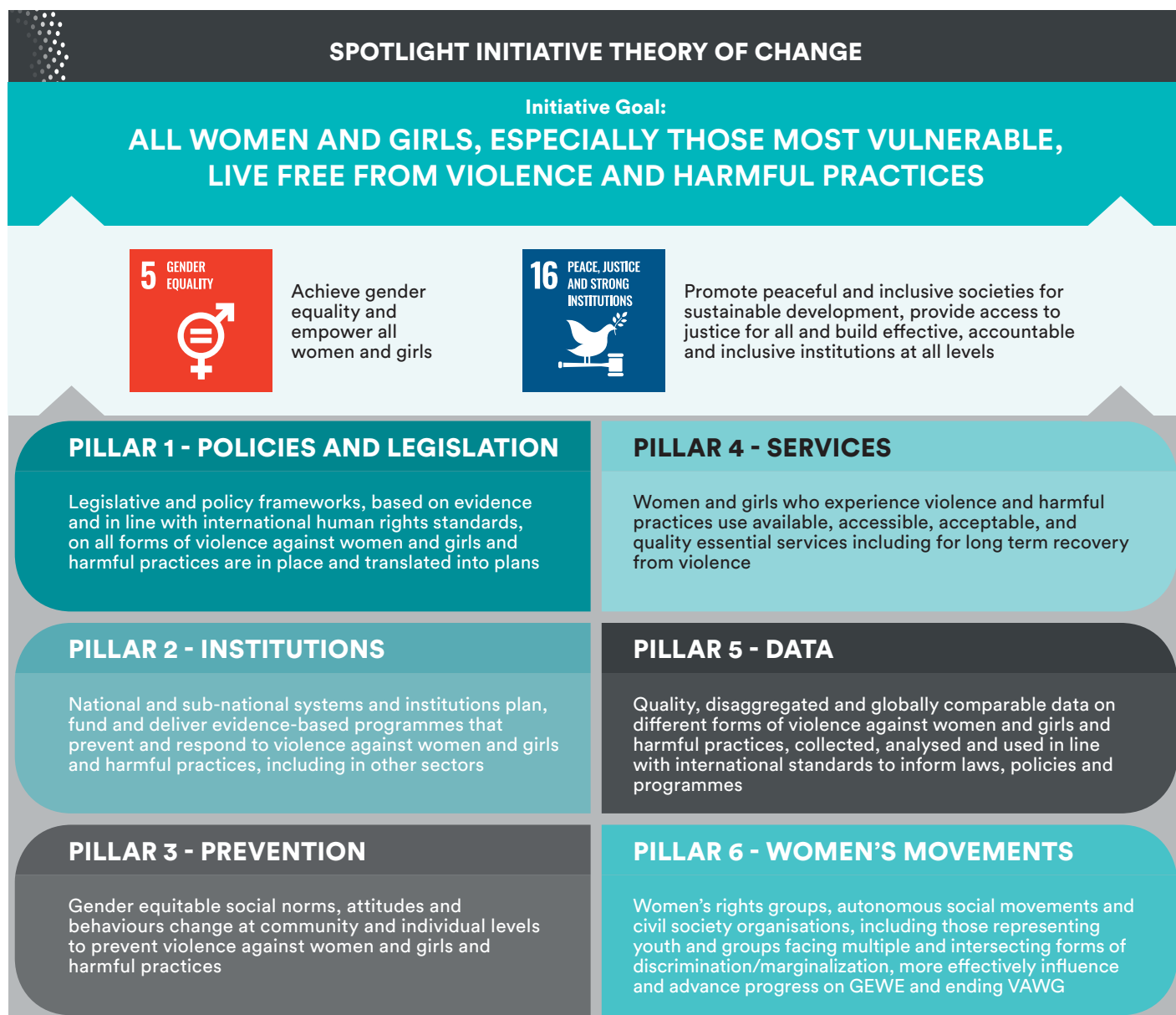
Partnerships

At the heart of the Spotlight Initiative is the UN-EU partnership: these two organizations have pooled their resources and expertise on international development to implement stronger integrated programmes and offer a new model of international, multilateral partnership. As a Sustainable Development Goal and UN Development System reform model fund, the Spotlight initiative is pioneering an unprecedented integration of UN agency efforts under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. Country and regional programmes also engage with government and regional entities as essential partners, in order to foster local ownership and political buy-in to the elimination of violence against women and girls. Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has also pursued a new way of working with civil society, particularly local and grassroots organizations and feminist and women's rights organizations, recognizing the unparalleled expertise and leadership of civil society in the elimination of violence against women and girls. In addition, the Initiative has engaged the UN system across agencies, as well as media, religious institutions, academia, traditional leaders, and the private sector to ensure effective interventions and lasting results. In 2020, the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls was established. Chaired by the European Union, the Group of Friends collaborates in support of the Spotlight Initiative, aiming to amplify its reach, leverage co-funding, and deepen efforts to end all forms of violence against women and girls.

The Spotlight Initiative channelled USD 96 million of critical funding to civil society and women's organizations to continue their essential work in delivering quality, life-saving services to survivors and advocating for prevention. A total of **77 per cent of civil society funding so far has been delivered through national and grassroots organizations. Forty six per cent of all civil society funding delivered so far has gone to first time civil society organization partners, expanding their funding opportunities**. The Initiative also contributed to ensuring these organizations were consulted in both Spotlight Initiative COVID-19 response plans, where programming pivoted to adapt, as well as national COVID-19 response plans. The Spotlight Initiative mobilized prevention and response efforts and galvanized support aligned with the Secretary-General's global call, including through the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls.
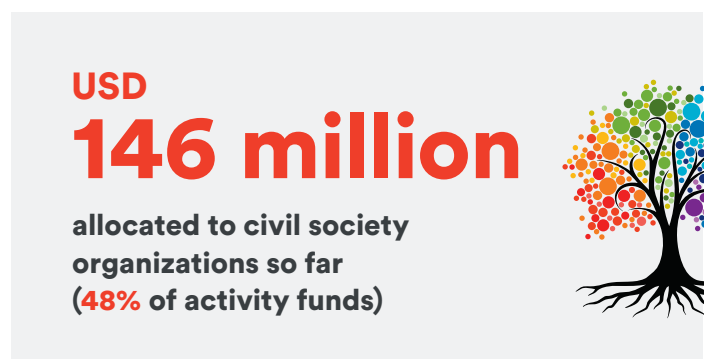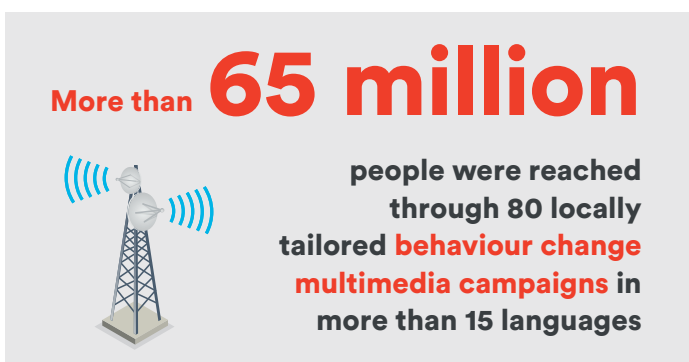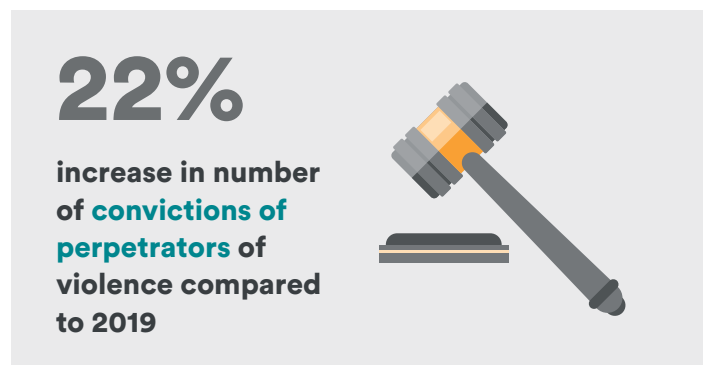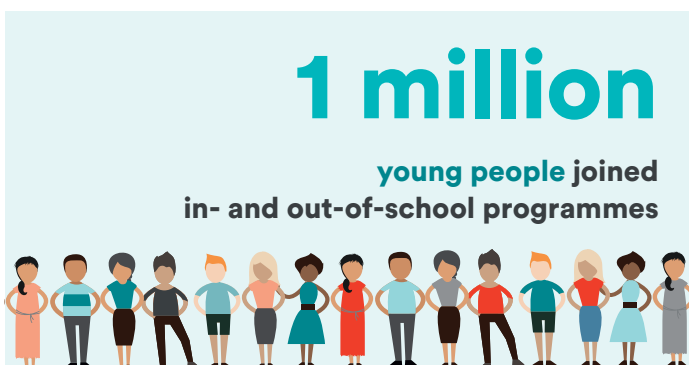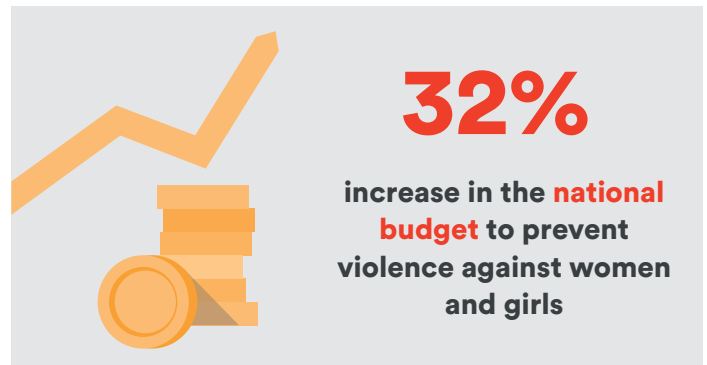
Results across pillars

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the following results across the six Pillars of its comprehensive Theory of Change:

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE THEORY OF CHANGE

Initiative Goal:
ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST VULNERABLE, LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

5 GENDER EQUALITY — Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS — Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

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

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

PILLAR 2 - INSTITUTIONS

National and sub-national 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

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

PILLAR 3 - PREVENTION

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

PILLAR 6 - WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and civil society organisations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending VAWG

2020 Spotlight Initiative Global Annual Report Results

Over 650,000 women and girls were provided with gender-based violence services despite COVID-19 related constraints and lockdowns

32% increase in the **national budget** to prevent violence against women and girls

84 **laws and policies** have been signed or strengthened across 17 countries

880,000 **men and boys** were educated on positive masculinity, respectful family relationships, non-violent conflict resolution and parenting

1 million **young people** joined in- and out-of-school programmes

22% increase in number of **convictions of perpetrators** of violence compared to 2019

More than 65 million people were reached through 80 locally tailored **behaviour change multimedia campaigns** in more than 15 languages

1,111 local and grassroots women's rights organizations reported having **greater influence** and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girl

6 new countries have developed methodologies to produce **national level data** on violence against women and girls

USD 146 million allocated to civil society organizations so far (**48%** of activity funds)

Outcome 1: Policies and legislation

Adequate responses to violence against women and girls require comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that ensure effective rights protection and specific and coordinated response mechanisms. The Spotlight Initiative contributed to a diverse set of results in 2020, including strengthened legal and policy analysis of stakeholders and the promotion of gender sensitive laws and policies, more national action plans on violence against women and girls, and a greater number of laws and policies signed or strengthened to stop and criminalize violence against women and girls. During the reporting period, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, **84 laws have been developed or strengthened in 17 countries on eliminating violence against women and girls or gender equality**. Spotlight Initiative teams also provided **technical and operational capacity building assistance to 6,347 parliamentarians in nine countries with strengthened ability to design laws and policies to end violence against women**.

Outcome 2: Institutions

Institutions at the national and subnational level play a critical role in ensuring that laws and policies are implemented and adequately funded. Through the Spotlight Initiative's contributions, **19 national action plans to eliminate violence against women and girls were developed** and a range of countries in which the Spotlight Initiative operates strengthened institutional mechanisms or bodies to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices. In addition, during the reporting period, **in the ten countries that prioritized these activities, 180 parliamentarians, 995 government officials and 365 women's rights advocates were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and are now better equipped to advocate for the allocation of resources for eliminating violence against women and girls**. As a result of gender-responsive budgeting efforts, there was a **32 per cent increase from 2019 reporting in the proportion of national budgets allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls** across ten countries targeted by the Spotlight Initiative.

Outcome 3: Prevention

Prevention efforts are central to the Spotlight Initiative's strategic approach and investments. Prevention efforts tackle systems of oppression and gender discrimination as the root causes of violence against women and girls, which are driven by patriarchal social norms and practices. This includes addressing gender stereotypes, bias and power, as well as inequalities in resources and rights. To this end, Spotlight Initiative programmes launched anti-violence campaigns that reached a broad public through various platforms - television, the internet, printed publications, billboards and radio. Over the course of 2020, **80 campaigns were undertaken across 14 countries, reaching more than 65 million people with locally designed messages and behaviour-change methodologies**. Spotlight Initiative programmes also supported community-level interventions, dialogues and mobilization activities, targeting traditional and religious leaders, as well as men's and boys' networks. **With Spotlight Initiative support, 3,405 villages, districts and other communities have developed advocacy platforms promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, and nearly 2 million community members (men, women, boys and girls) were reached through community dialogues aimed at transforming collective**

norms, stereotypes, and promoting behaviour change. Extensive evidence shows that in order to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, comprehensive sexuality education, both in- and out-of-school, is also important. The Spotlight Initiative **reached 978,165 young people through in- and out-of-school programmes despite school closures due to COVID-19.**

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Outcome 4: Services

Providing quality and timely access to comprehensive multisectoral services can significantly contribute to breaking cycles of violence, and this need was even more pressing in 2020 as levels of violence against women girls spiked due to COVID-19. To address this specific context, the Spotlight Initiative adjusted its activities and **reached 1,865,476 women and girl survivors of violence (more than ten times the number that had been originally planned for 2020) with specific information about services**. There was also an increase in access to, and improvement in, the quality of services, including ensuring services better respond to, and are accessed by, marginalized women and girls. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 20,655 government service providers in 24 targeted countries increased knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence. Work in this area resulted in **more than 650,000 women and girl survivors of violence accessing services supported by the Spotlight Initiative, through the opening of new service delivery points, longer opening hours, and mobile service delivery.**

Outcome 5: Data

Quality, reliable, comparable, and disaggregated data by gender, type of violence, and populations are essential for understanding the trends in, and designing and delivering programmes to address, violence against women and girls. **Overall, the Initiative's interventions have contributed to an increase in the percentage of targeted countries that have publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on intimate partner violence from 63 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020**. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative supported partners in collecting, analysing and using data for planning and policy formulation; budgeting on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls and ending harmful practices; and monitoring trends in violence against women and girls at national and subnational levels. Through the Initiative's support, **251 national statistics officers, 124 women and 127 men, have strengthened capacities to produce data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and incidence where appropriate**. A total of 4,101 participants, including government personnel and women's rights advocates, supported by Spotlight Initiative programmes, have enhanced capacity to collect, analyse and disseminate data on violence against women and girls.

Outcome 6: Women's movements

The activism of women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, is at the core of efforts to end violence against women and girls and harmful practices. Spotlight Initiative contributed to a myriad of results in 2020, including having supported **1,254 local and grassroots women's organizations to design and expanded their activities to end violence against women and girls**. A total of 556 civil society organizations - 356 representing youth and 200 representing other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination - were able to integrate with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society to work on ending violence against women and girls. **From 2019 to 2020, 82 per cent of civil society funding was invested in women's rights and women-led organizations**. To further support women's organizations and address the increased funding needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, through its partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, the Spotlight Initiative reallocated USD 9.1 million for institutional funding of 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa. This underscores the Initiative's dedication to flexibly resourcing and supporting women's organizations at the local and national levels.

> **"The Spotlight Initiative is a significant and ground-breaking investment to end violence against women and girls that has a huge potential to model the way we do development funding towards nations recovering from colonization - the Global South - by way of meaningful partnerships with civil society and taking the cue from grassroots organizations as partners rather than just 'grantees'".**
>
> - Shamah Bulangis, Representative of the Civil Society Global Reference Group on the Operational Steering Committee

Timor-Leste

"We are all in this together and we will overcome this together."

- Norberta V. Soares da Cruz, Advocate and activist

©UN Women/Helio Miguel

Communications and visibility

The Spotlight Initiative relies on communications to build momentum and support to end violence against women and girls, and enhance the visibility of the UN-EU partnership, its national and regional programmes and global campaigns. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative held 11 high-level national and regional launches and spearheaded several campaigns, both globally and nationally, to raise awareness of violence against women and girls and to engage communities in the prevention of this violence. **The Initiative also launched two new official social media channels (Facebook and Instagram) and premiered its flagship digital campaign, #WithHer. The #WithHer campaign** spotlights the work of activists globally who are helping to eliminate violence against women and girls; it also leverages UN Global Advocates for the Spotlight Initiative and international sports stars to support elimination efforts. More than 1,000 media outlets, reaching **3.7 billion readers across more than 100 countries covered the Spotlight Initiative's work- a significant achievement in the pursuit of wide-ranging communications, public outreach and visibility for the Spotlight Initiative and its partners**.[5]

Challenges and lessons learned

In 2020, the global community faced unprecedented challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, as did organizations and institutions working to end violence against women and girls. As the Spotlight Initiative adapted to the challenges COVID-19 posed, **more than USD 21 million[6] in Spotlight Initiative**

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[5]   Meltwater media keyword search (1 Jan-31 Dec 2020). Raw data available here.
[6]   Estimated figure based on self-reporting by Spotlight Initiative programmes as of August 2020. This figure includes the USD 9.1 million that the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women allocated for immediate support to its existing 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

funds, across all five regions, were redirected to address violence against women and girls within the COVID-19 response. Though many challenges were programme-specific, contextual obstacles included the need to reimagine activities in light of COVID-19 and the corresponding restrictions, as well as the further exacerbation of violence by COVID-19 and coinciding natural disasters and national emergencies. Common actions to address restrictions on movement and meeting face-to-face included:

- Deploying remote service delivery options to scale up the provision of essential services and case management

- Leveraging existing partnerships and coordination mechanisms to provide and strengthen comprehensive referral mechanisms, case management and swift service delivery during the pandemic

- Using accessible and localized multi-media as well as non-traditional channels to raise awareness on the exacerbated risks of violence, and available services for timely access.

In addition, the Spotlight Initiative faced contextual, programmatic, and technical challenges often typical of any large-scale international development effort (as well as those resulting from COVID-19). From a programmatic angle, challenges included the learning curve of adapting to the new way of working under the UN Reform, the time-consuming recruitment and capacity-building processes for teams and implementing partners, the long-term meaningful engagement of government in the face of political instability or turnover, and the constrained access of civil society to UN funding due to the United Nation's complex processes. **Across regions, Spotlight Initiative programmes faced technical challenges as well, in regressive cultural norms and persistent harmful traditions, increased violence against women's human-rights defenders, challenges with the supply, access and quality of services for survivors, and limited availability of high-quality, disaggregated data**.

With the support of the Secretariat and programme partners, Spotlight Initiative teams implemented mitigating measures not only to monitor and overcome challenges but also to learn from each other and enhance coordination in order to build more resilient programming. **For example, in 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes developed deeper coordination and shared practices across countries and regions, such as common calls for proposals, shared reporting templates, and joint tools to streamline programme management and inter-agency work. Mitigating measures ultimately led to greater flexibility, deeper inter-agency coordination, more sustainable partnerships, and higher-quality implementation - all of which lead, in turn, to more transformative results over time**. Furthermore, teams identified lessons learned that will influence and inform future programming, following the principles of the UN Reform and leaving no one behind, both across the Spotlight Initiative and beyond.

Innovative, promising and good practices

After two years of implementation, Spotlight Initiative programmes have created a wealth of knowledge on ending violence against women and girls and on implementing in alignment with the UN Reform. Moreover, valuable lessons and results have emerged from the mid-term assessments. As such, the

Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has worked with programme teams to identify and amplify innovative, promising and good practices to advance the work of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as to equip the broader international development community, particularly those working to end violence against women and girls, with the knowledge necessary to achieve maximum impact. **Across Spotlight Initiative programmes, promising practices in 2020 included mobile and remote provision of essential services, scaling up pioneering prevention initiatives related to attitude and behaviour change, partnering with traditional and religious leaders to transform harmful masculinities, elevating women and girls and youth as agents of change, leveraging the newly empowered role of the Resident Coordinator, advancing more integrated coordination and joint operations, building communities of practice, and harnessing global partnerships for stronger advocacy.**

The way forward

Looking ahead, the Spotlight Initiative will redouble its efforts to advance inter-agency coordination and achieve multidimensional, transformative impact in the lives of women and girls. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat will continue its targeted support to programmes as they continue to implement in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and shadow pandemic. Africa and Latin America programmes will also move into their second phase of implementation based on the recommendations of the mid-term assessment that will be carried out early 2021.

The Spotlight Initiative's priorities for the coming year include advancing knowledge generation, analysis and uptake on the elimination of violence against women and girls, deepening meaningful engagement with civil society, particularly local and grassroots groups, bolstering and expanding the partnership base, and reaching more communities, particularly young people and new audiences, to change cultural norms and promote rights more broadly. The Spotlight Initiative Global Platform will be launched in 2021 as a virtual exchange and convening platform that will 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. Finally, as the Fund will be reaching a near full allocation of its current resources in 2021, and with a now proven model of effectiveness, efforts will focus on donor base expansion and additional funds to scale up and broaden the reach of the Initiative.

CHAPTER 2:

Report Structure and Scope

This Annual Report details the critical contributions, transformative achievements, and lessons learned of the Spotlight Initiative's work over the past year, from 1 January to 31 December 2020, as well as results built on progress made in 2019.

The report begins with an executive summary, a report overview and signature results in the past year of the Spotlight Initiative's work to eliminate violence against women and girls.

Chapters 3 and 4 highlight the Spotlight Initiative's fund structure and governance mechanisms and its unique model: as a Sustainable Development Goal model fund and a new way of working in support of national governments, within the UN system, and with civil society, particularly women's and feminist organizations and movements.

Results from the 34 Spotlight Initiative programmes in their first or second year of implementation are then detailed in Chapter 5:

- Africa Country Programmes (8): Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe

- Latin America Country Programmes (5): Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico

- Caribbean Country Programmes (6): Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago

- Pacific Country Programmes (4): Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu

- Asia Country Programmes (3): Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan

- Regional Programmes (6): Africa Regional Programme, Latin America Regional Programme, Caribbean Regional Programme, Pacific Regional Programme, Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme, Safe and Fair Programme in ASEAN countries

- Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes (2):

  - For Africa and Latin America through the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF-EVAW)

  - For Africa, Haiti, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)

Honduras

"I share my experiences with other young, Afro-Honduran women, encouraging us not to remain silent."

- Marissa Gabriela Solano
Filmmaker

©UN Women/Carolina Pereira

The report then covers the communications and visibility work of the Spotlight Initiative in Chapter 6, while Chapter 7 details challenges and lessons learned, followed by innovative, promising and good practices, which are set out in Chapter 8. Adaptations to programme interventions are also captured, including those that may have emerged as a result of Spotlight Initiative programmes' flexible response to the COVID-19 crisis. In the closing section, the report outlines the way forward for the Spotlight Initiative as it enters a second phase of programming in 2021 and starts looking into the sustainability of the expansion of the fund. The report also includes the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office Consolidated Annual Financial Report, in adherence with the requirements specified in the contract with the European Union.

CHAPTER 3:

Spotlight Initiative Fund Overview and Governance

This chapter provides an overview of the Spotlight Initiative and its 2020 funding portfolio, including how funding was allocated to programmes, the Initiative's governance structure, and what makes it unique. It closes with an overview of the Secretariat's roles and contributions to knowledge management, quality assurance, accountability and monitoring and evaluation in 2020.

Though featured in this chapter, as well, the transformative principles underpinning the Spotlight Initiative's approach, and the overarching results to which the Spotlight Initiative has contributed, are woven throughout the report. The report details how a commitment to: 1) meaningfully implementing the principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB), 2) centring partnerships with feminist and women's rights organizations and grassroots groups, and 3) demonstrating the effectiveness of UN Reform in supporting country level delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals, all contribute to the elimination of violence against women and girls, and advances in gender equality more broadly.

3.1 Overview

The Spotlight Initiative's overarching goal is to *ensure that all women, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable, live free from violence and harmful practices*. Achieving this goal is critical to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In order to reach this goal, the Initiative has engaged multi-stakeholder partnerships across governments, UN agencies and the European Union, civil society (focusing on women's and feminist movements in particular), the media and the private sector.

Together with these groups, the Spotlight Initiative seeks to achieve its aim of ending all forms of violence against women and girls through a comprehensive response that spans six key Pillar areas:

Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

Pillar 2: Institutions

Pillar 3: Prevention

Pillar 4: Services

Pillar 5: Data

Pillar 6: Women's Movements

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative distributed its investments to 32 country and regional programmes across 5 regions, complemented by 2 civil society grant-giving programmes through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund.

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME PORTFOLIO: PHASE I BUDGETS AND START DATES

CARIBBEAN

Belize **$2,475,000**	Jan 20
Grenada **$1,650,000**	Jan 20
Guyana **$3,700,000**	Jan 20
Haiti **$9,900,000**	Jan 20
Jamaica **$6,600,000**	Jan 20
Trinidad & Tobago **$3,700,000**	Jan 20
Caribbean Regional Programme **$9,552,830**	Jul 20

ASIA

Safe and Fair **$29,370,587**	Jan 18
Afghanistan **$16,500,000**	Nov 20
Kyrgyzstan **$4,700,000**	Jan 20
Tajikistan **$4,900,000**	Jan 20
Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme **$4,248,584**	Jul 20

PACIFIC

Papua New Guinea **$15,680,000**	Jan 20
Samoa **$2,900,000**	Jan 20
Timor Leste **$9,900,000**	Jan 20
Vanuatu **$2,475,000**	Jan 20
Pacific Regional Programme **$7,077,830**	Jan 20

LATIN AMERICA

Argentina **$5,400,000**	Jan 19
Ecuador **$2,900,000**	Nov 20
El Salvador **$7,200,000**	Jan 19
Honduras **$7,200,000**	Jan 19
Mexico **$6,300,000**	Jan 19
Latin America Regional Programme **$3,500,000**	Jun 19

AFRICA

Liberia **$15,844,000**	Jan 19	Nigeria **$25,000,000**	Jan 19
Malawi **$20,000,000**	Jan 19	Uganda **$22,000,000**	Jan 19
Mali **$18,000,000**	Jan 19	Zimbabwe **$21,000,000**	Jan 19
Mozambique **$20,000,000**	Jan 19	Africa Regional Programme **$25,620,000**	Jul 20
Niger **$17,000,000**	Jan 19		

CIVIL SOCIETY GRANT GIVING PROGRAMMES

UNTF EVAW Africa **$20,636,792**	Jul 19
UNTF EVAW Latin America **$5,660,378**	Jul 19
WPHF Africa **$7,075,472**	Jul 19
WPHF Afghanistan **$2,000,000**	Jul 20
WPHF Haiti **$2,000,000**	Jul 20
WPHF Papua New Guinea **$2,000,000**	Jul 20

*Civil society grant-giving programmes and the Safe and Fair Programme funding covers both Phase I and II.

3.2 Governance

3.2.1 Governance Structure

A global partnership between the United Nations and the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative is a flagship initiative of the United Nations Secretary General, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and globally coordinated from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. As the Spotlight Initiative works to achieve the bold goal to end violence against women and girls, the Secretariat relies on a multi-tiered and multi-sector governance structure to manage the fund. There are two main tiers of governance at the global level: the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee (OSC). The Administrative Agent (AA) administers the fund while the Fund's Secretariat manages the programmatic investments. This structure supports the decision-making and oversight of the Spotlight Initiative. Notably, civil society and the women's movements have been given meaningful membership across all Spotlight Initiative's decision-making bodies.

The Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls can provide a new model for partnerships with both national governments and civil society. Civil society is involved in its design, implementation, monitoring and decision-making at all levels.

António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
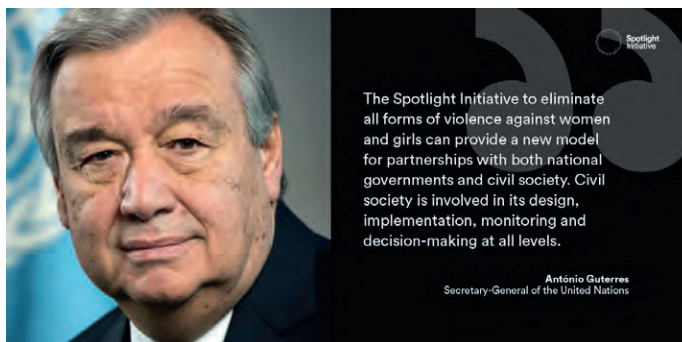
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Global governance structure

Governing Body

The Spotlight Initiative's **highest tier of governance is the Governing Body**, which provides strategic direction, high-level advocacy, and oversight. It is co-chaired by the United Nations and European Union: United Nations Deputy Secretary-General and the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission. Other members of the Governing Body include the Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General of UN Women and the European Union's Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development. A civil society representative also serves as a member on the Governing Body nominated by the Spotlight Initiative's Civil Society Global Reference Group.

Operational Steering Committee

The second tier of governance is the **Operational Steering Committee**, tasked to ensure effective management and coordination of all managerial, implementation, and technical aspects of the Spotlight Initiative. This includes decisions on country selection and resource envelopes and the formal approval of all Spotlight Initiative country and regional programmes. The Operational Steering Committee is co-chaired by a representative at the Director level of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) from the United Nations and the European Union Director-General for International Cooperation and Development. Other members include UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP, as well as UNICEF as a permanent observer and an additional United Nations entity as a rotating observer. The European Union also has three other member representatives (the Director from Peace and People, and two Directors from Africa, Asia or Latin America Directorates) and two observers. Given the Operational Steering Committee decision in December 2019 to grant full and equal membership to civil society in all the Spotlight Initiative Governance bodies, in line with the Spotlight Initiative's core principles, a

civil society representative has been granted full member status and is nominated by the Civil Society Global Reference Group.

The Executive Office of the Secretary-General coordinates the Spotlight Initiative, and a nine-person global Secretariat works in close collaboration to support the Spotlight Initiative Fund's implementation.

Administrative Agent

The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office is the **Administrative Agent (AA)** of the Spotlight Initiative, using a pass-through arrangement. In this role, it provides the Secretary-General and Recipient UN 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.

Civil Society Global Reference Group

The Civil Society Global Reference Group is an established institutional mechanism of 20 peer-selected women's rights activists who advise the Fund and hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable to its commitments to civil society.[7] Group members represent a diverse cross-section of civil society, balanced by region and issue-orientation, and representing, or themselves facing, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.[8] One representative from the Civil Society Global Reference Group serves as a full member on the Global Operational Steering Committee and one serves on the Governing Body of the Spotlight Initiative. As a new model for a Sustainable Development Goals fund, having the representation of the Civil Society Global Reference Group on the highest governance mechanisms embodies a new way of working with civil society and reflects the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to meaningfully engage civil society at all levels.

In 2020, the Civil Society Global Reference Group worked to identify bottlenecks (detailed further in Chapters 4 and 7) in the United Nation's processes that restrict grassroots funding, and the shifts needed to enable more effective human rights-based programming that respond to the lived realities of women's organizations on the ground. Through monthly meetings with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, focused sub-working groups on monitoring, advocacy and communication, webinars,[9] and meetings with the United Nations Deputy Secretary-General, the Civil Society Global Reference Group effectively elevated critical issues related to policy and implementation as it impacts civil society for action at the highest levels of the Spotlight Initiative.

In 2021, the Civil Society Global Reference Group will have a more deliberate focus on advocacy, specifically around flexible feminist funding mechanisms and engagement with the Generation Equality Action Coalitions on Gender-Based Violence and Feminist Movements and Leadership. Another priority area is to establish a more robust and coordinated Civil Society Global Reference Group system with vertical and horizontal communication streams to connect Global, Regional and National Reference Groups. This will allow for more coordinated efforts, cross-regional learning and joint advocacy.

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[7] The biographies of the Civil Society Global Reference Group members can be found here.

[8] 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, LGBTQI+ persons, women and girls living with disabilities, sex workers, domestic and informal workers, women of diverse sexual orientations, gender diverse women, etc.

[9] For example, in November 2020, the Civil Society Global Reference Group members moderated a Secretariat hosted learning sprint on flexible feminist funding for the women's movements.

"The civil society reference group structure is more than a simple advisory mechanism to Spotlight: it is a key partner in decision-making and an accountability mechanism towards women's movements. The Global Reference Group was encouraged to self-define our role to this end... and our request for full membership of global-level decision-making structures has been met and realized over 2020. We look forward, with support from the Secretariat and Spotlight Initiative teams, to improving communication with sister reference groups at national and regional levels over the coming year, with a view to amplifying civil society voices in the Spotlight Initiative and coordinating our collective advice and advocacy to the Initiative."

- Lara Fergus, Member of the Civil Society Global Reference Group

Governance related decisions in 2020

The following section summarizes Spotlight Initiative management and programme development decisions in 2020.

The Governing Body met once in 2020, on 14 September 2020, where members agreed on the necessity to expedite implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as the critical importance of the mid-term assessment and for it to begin as soon as possible. The Operational Steering Committee held four written procedures in 2020 due to the ongoing pandemic.

2020 Operational Steering Committee Key Decisions:

Operational Steering Committee - 21 January 2020
- **Kyrgyzstan** and **Tajikistan** country programmes approved

Operational Steering Committee - 24 July 2020
- Additional Pillar 6 (Women's Movements) to the **Pacific Regional Programme** approved
- **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** (inclusive of Pillar 6) approved
- **Caribbean Regional Programme** (inclusive of Pillar 6) approved
- Grant-giving programmes for civil society organizations through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund for **Papua New Guinea**, **Haiti**, and **Afghanistan** approved
- Reallocation of **USD 9.1 million in response to the Covid-19 pandemic** from the Spotlight Initiative **Sub-Saharan Africa** multi-country grants envelope of the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women Civil Society Global Reference Group budget totalling USD 250,000 for 2020-2021 approved

Operational Steering Committee - 7 September 2020
- **Guatemala** country programme closure approved

Operational Steering Committee - 13 November 2020
- **Afghanistan** and **Ecuador** country programmes approved

Programme level governance structure

Steering Committees

At the country and regional levels, Steering Committees provide implementation oversight and coordination of the country and regional programmes. This is done by ensuring proper communication with and coordination of the Spotlight Initiative, approving annual work plans, budget revisions and annual reports, and managing stakeholder relationships.

National Steering Committees are context-specific and aligned with the priorities and dynamics of each country. This reflects the Spotlight Initiative's principles of inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decision making, and national participation and ownership. The following members are expected to be part of a Country Steering Committee: 1) United Nations Resident Coordinator; 2) European Union Representatives; 3) Government and participating national organizations; 4) Recipient United Nations Organizations; and 5) Civil society representatives. Regional programmes have a similar composition of their **Regional Steering Committee** substituting national governments with intergovernmental regional bodies as relevant.

Notably, in 2020, Country and Regional Steering Committees have taken on an essential role in reviewing and endorsing the 2020 COVID-19-adapted country annual work plans, with Steering Committee representatives regularly engaged and playing critical roles in decision making and coordination for Spotlight Initiative programming and implementation.[10]

Civil Society National and Regional Reference Groups

Each regional and country programme has a **Civil Society Reference Group (CSRG)** that enables the systematic engagement of civil society in the design, implementation and accountability of programmes. Civil Society Reference Groups are comprised of approximately 15 diverse regional, national and local experts on eliminating violence against women and girls, as well as on women's rights and gender equality more broadly, and are selected through an open civil society-led selection process. Representatives of the Civil Society Reference Groups serve as full members on the Country and Regional Steering Committees of Spotlight Initiative programmes with at least 20 per cent membership, giving civil society full insight into and access to the highest decision-making body at country and regional levels.

3.3 Role of the Global Secretariat

This section highlights the role and contributions of the Spotlight Initiative's Fund Global Secretariat. The Secretariat ensures the servicing of the governance mechanism and decision-making processes, portfolio management and fund transfers, coordination across stakeholders, cross-functional quality assurance over programmes, results monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and capacity development, and civil society engagement. It also helps to amplify the communications and visibility of the Spotlight Initiative's programmes and messages globally, bringing coherence to the different elements of its work.

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[10] Further information about the composition, functions, and achievements of Country and Regional Steering Committees may be found in the respective programmes' 2020 Annual Narrative Reports.

The Secretariat consists of a Management Unit and a Technical Unit. The two units work in close cooperation and in a complementary manner. The units share the functions of reporting on the Spotlight Initiative's results and resource mobilization and partnership-building as whole-of-Secretariat responsibilities.

- The Management Unit fulfils core management functions, as well as reporting and coordination. It functions as the Secretariat of the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee and coordinates inter-agency engagement. It is responsible for overseeing programming cycles, supporting the Spotlight Initiative's programme development and budgeting, operating procedures, and programme and budget revisions, including compliance and oversight.

- The Technical Unit ensures the technical quality and coherence of all Spotlight Initiative programmes, oversees programme implementation, supports capacity development, leads global monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge management efforts, drives communications and visibility, promotes cross-regional cooperation, and engages strategically with global and regional civil society partners. Cross-regional cooperation is promoted through knowledge management, communications, and programme design work.

Fund management: administering the Fund

The Secretariat is responsible for executing and coordinating all management functions of the Spotlight Initiative. In 2020, the Secretariat planned and serviced the Operational Steering Committee approval processes to ensure proper fund governance and timely decision-making, particularly on the approval of programme components. The Secretariat ensured that key decisions were clearly communicated to programme offices and monitored the implementation of these decisions, both fund-wide and at programme-level, in coordination with the European Union and United Nations agencies.

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The Secretariat also collaborated with the Administrative Agent to advise the Operational Steering Committee on strategic investment priorities, regional and country level financial allocations, implementation performance, and cash management planning in compliance with European Union disbursement policies. To do so, the Secretariat monitored delivery and implementation rates, maintaining cash balance projections and fund replenishment plans. The Secretariat also supported programme teams in cash flow management and funding requests to the Administrative Agent. In 2020, the Secretariat reviewed the required provisional narrative and financial reports from programmes to approve submissions of fund transfer requests for first tranches of funding (typically 40 per cent of their Phase I allocation) after Operational Steering Committee approval; and to receive second tranches of funding after reaching a 70 per cent delivery rate on the previously transferred amount. The Secretariat also coordinated with the Administrative Agent to produce a Fund replenishment report to request the next instalment of funding from the European Union in September 2020.

Across management functions, the Secretariat works closely and communicates frequently with the UN agencies, particularly the agency focal points designated to support Spotlight Initiative matters. In 2020, the Secretariat convened monthly meetings with the agency focal points to cover both technical and operational matters, to problem-solve and provide additional support to Country Offices as needed, and to ensure common expectations and priorities across the UN system.

Global portfolio management: supporting programme teams

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat supported programme teams to quickly and effectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretariat offered immediate guidance and support to teams to roll out adaptation plans and develop national strategies. The Secretariat also provided flexibility to shift funds as needed to address the impacts of COVID-19 in each programme context, with a focus on directing funds to civil society organizations and other groups working on the frontlines of the pandemic. This flexibility allowed programmes to adjust to this new context that has been accelerating the incidence of violence against women and girls and impacting the ways the United Nations and its partners can work. As a result, the Spotlight Initiative was one of the most responsive initiatives in the UN system to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In November 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat finalized the allocation of the Fund's full programme portfolio with the Operational Steering Committee of nine final programme components. Funding for these programmes will complete the disbursement of the European Union's initial investment. With the programme development phase complete, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has been able to dedicate more of its focus on offering strong support to Spotlight Initiative programme teams with adequate and timely decision-making for measures to promote implementation acceleration, problem-solving and course-correction as needed and a nimble adaptation to major contextual changes.

In 2020, the Secretariat coordinated with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund to ensure portfolio analysis capacity to systematically track quarterly implementation rates. This information offered important insight into the progress of programmes and allowed for swift acceleration measures to be put in place for programmes that were off track. This financial data has served the Executive Office of the

Secretary General as well as recipient agencies in their own internal decision making and allowed the Secretariat, in consultation with the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, to provide more targeted support and guidance to the programme level.

The Secretariat continued to develop guidance and offer tailored support on a rolling basis to programme teams, focusing on programmes' alignment with the UN Development System Reform Agenda, contractual compliance and the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change. Key programmatic guidance was consolidated in an "Operations Manual Compendium," officially issued early 2021, offering a comprehensive programme management tool and knowledge product that will enhance implementation efficiency and compliance. This manual compiles the experience and lessons learned of the Fund so far, and codifies policies, rules of procedure and guidance and ensures compliance with signed legal agreements as well as the overall strategy of the Spotlight Initiative. It is also set to ensure that Spotlight Initiative programmes function under the United Nations Development Group standards.

The Secretariat was particularly engaged in supporting programmes in relation to annual work planning, budget revision management, securing full Spotlight Initiative teams, and accelerating and optimizing the engagement of implementing partners, particularly civil society. It worked with teams to creatively problem-solve and identify new ways of working including through surveys, focus group discussions and structured check-in calls. For example, in terms of optimizing the composition of Spotlight Initiative teams and their timely recruitment, which has been a recurring challenge, the Secretariat carried out an internal examination that has informed UN stakeholders for measures that will enable programmes to deliver on their mandate to end violence against women and girls.

Global knowledge management: consolidating a community of practice

The Spotlight Initiative is committed to accelerating efforts through evidence-based programming. To ensure both catalytic and sustainable impact, the Spotlight Initiative serves as a knowledge platform, accessible to stakeholders within and beyond programme contexts. The Spotlight Initiative identifies best practices and lessons learned, promotes innovation, and builds the evidence base on ending violence against women and girls. Toward this end, a Global Platform is being established to amplify lessons and best practices from across the Spotlight Initiative's 25+ countries and 6 regions, facilitate knowledge exchange, and create direct links between those in positions of political power and local, grassroots activists. The Spotlight Initiative Global Platform would 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 and a coalition of diverse stakeholders, such as the United Nations, civil society organizations, governments, researchers and non-traditional partners to connect and form coalitions around areas of action. As a demonstration fund in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Spotlight Initiative is critically aligned to the principle of universality: recognizing that violence against women and girls exists in every region, country, and society. Therefore, as a model for comprehensive programming to end violence against women and girls, it will be essential to share the wealth of knowledge and lessons generated from the Spotlight Initiative through the Global Platform with net contributing countries for increased global impact and sustainability.

Knowledge management efforts expanded in 2020 to include the **Caribbean**, **Pacific**, and **Central Asia programmes**, and notably, strengthened exchange not just among UN staff working on the Spotlight Initiative, but across all Spotlight Initiative stakeholders. Through the wealth of knowledge cultivated across its programmes, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has continuously shared the latest evidence and resources to inform evidence-based programme development and implementation, and to support rapid responses to the spike in violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19. Established in 2019, the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI) offers a one-stop shop continuously updated with all Spotlight Initiative platforms, resources and tools, and was expanded in 2020 to support programmes pivoting in the context of COVID-19.

In 2020, the Secretariat also supported knowledge production across programmes, including through the development of a Knowledge Product Guideline, and continued to provide capacity development resources across the six Pillars of the Theory of Change and on cross-thematic areas. Additionally, monthly newsletters were shared. These newsletters feature a variety of relevant resources as well as knowledge products developed by Spotlight Initiative programmes to showcase regional and national expertise, encourage other programmes and practitioners to build off the evidence-base, and to foster deeper learning and reflection.

Furthermore, in 2020 the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat strengthened and expanded its knowledge management focal points network across all regional and country programmes. Knowledge management focal points from **Central Asia**, **the Caribbean**, and **the Pacific** joined the network along with focal points across **Africa**, **Latin America**, **and the Safe and Fair programme**. This closer community of practice engages in dialogues on their experiences, promising practices, and lessons learned. Each programme developed or adapted its knowledge management strategy and workplan to build and strengthen knowledge management across all elements of implementation and to ensure teams were adequately equipped to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through an email and active WhatsApp groups, the network has fostered a greater sense of community among focal points and provided an open space to support one another in the process of knowledge generation, capture, dissemination and uptake across Spotlight Initiative programmes. The network is regularly engaged with consistent bilateral support, and in 2020 the Secretariat and knowledge management focal points drove global and country-level capacity development on knowledge management.

The Secretariat, in collaboration with regional and country programmes, held eight knowledge exchanges in 2020 that drew over 1,120 participants from the United Nations, civil society, government, the European Union and other constituencies engaged in the Spotlight Initiative. The first series of webinars focused on pivoting programming to address the exacerbated violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19. The second included a series of global learning sprints, the first of its kind, to promote cross-regional knowledge exchange and bottom-up capacity development. These learning sprints were tailored to focus on needs-based thematic topics and technical gaps across programming. The learning sprints drew over 800 participants from the United Nations, government, civil society, non-traditional partners, the European Union and other Spotlight Initiative stakeholders, resulting in a better understanding across multiple elements of the issue, in-depth learning, and a strengthened global community of actors joined in an effort to end violence against women and girls. One learning

sprint focused on lessons learned, innovations, and promising practices for programme management. This session provided a platform for programmes to showcase learnings and facilitate peer-to-peer information exchange, which is particularly critical as programmes face an inevitable learning curve as they work to become a new generation of country teams under UN Development System Reform. Feedback surveys have shown that these learning sprints have resulted in a strengthened COVID-19 response across 25+ programmes, quality evidence-based programme implementation overall towards ending violence against women and girls, and deepened connections in the Spotlight Initiative global community in 2020.

Communications and visibility: amplifying Spotlight Initiative's work

At global, regional, and national levels, Spotlight Initiative's communication and visibility efforts contribute to its programmes by raising awareness on issues related to violence against women and girls and by promoting the Spotlight Initiative's impact and results for the communities it serves. Strategic public outreach efforts also strengthen the design and delivery of prevention programmes, and help ensure appropriate visibility for the United Nations, the European Union, governments, donors and partners. Several different parts of the development system operate in unison to enable Spotlight Initiative's multilateral and multi-agency outreach operations.

At the Secretariat, the communications team is led by a communications and visibility specialist, with support from a digital communications officer and a digital editor officer. The team is responsible for the implementation of the global communications strategy, providing guidance to national and regional teams, activating campaigns, managing owned corporate channels (web, social media), organizing high-visibility events and engaging the global media to cover our issues.

The communications unit of the European Union Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA 02) remains a vital partner for Spotlight Initiative's communications team. Together, both teams co-created major campaign activations, including the #WithHer campaign, its launch event and several media opportunities in 2020. Through weekly meetings and with a collaborative spirit, INTPA 02 routinely provides substantive feedback and support across all of the Secretariat's planned communication activities.

The United Nations Department of Global Communications and the headquarter units of United Nations agencies collaborate with the Secretariat to produce and promote high-quality content across their owned channels. An example of this collaborative effort in 2020 was the video message featuring 10 UN agency chiefs in support of the Secretary General's appeal for peace everywhere during the COVID-19 pandemic.

But, the main strength of the Spotlight Initiative's outreach abilities lies in its communication focal points -- a network of more than 20 communications officers hired in each of its programmes across the globe. Applying the "issue, action, impact" model of storytelling, they source and produce the majority of the human-interest stories and content used across all channels. They work with national media outlets to promote stories and they lend their expertise in design and branding to inform social norms programme interventions.

Communications focal points coordinate national and regional communications groups where the main stakeholders for each programme (for example, government, European Union, United Nations, civil society organizations) plan communications and visibility activities, allocate resources and jointly execute the annual communications and visibility action plan.

The Spotlight Initiative also works with several partners, influencers and creative agencies to amplify its messages and campaigns to reach broader audiences. Most notably in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative engaged the Social Good Club -- a community of content creators and artists, working with experts in social impact to create a culture that engages, guides, and ignites social good -- to empower content creators to leverage their influence and shape a culture that creates a safer, more equitable world for women and girls.

More details and results from the Spotlight Initiative's communications and visibility efforts in 2020 can be found in Chapter 6.

Monitoring and evaluation: supporting strategic analysis and sharing of lessons learned

In 2020, advancements were made to monitor the progress of the Fund and collect evidence in a more coherent and participatory way. 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 UN 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 the Spotlight Initiative's SMART platform).

Moreover, the Secretariat initiated the development of a participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy (PME), which aims to make the monitoring and evaluation tools and framework as inclusive and participatory as possible. In order to streamline this inclusive and feminist approach to monitoring and evaluation, a detailed guidance note with practical tools has been produced and pilot participatory monitoring and evaluation efforts were supported in **Belize**, **Zimbabwe**, **Malawi**, and **Niger**. The Secretariat will convene a Global Reference Working Group meeting in 2021 on participatory monitoring and evaluation to advise on the implementation of the recently launched participatory monitoring and evaluation strategy at Spotlight Initiative.

A critical aspect of its monitoring and evaluation function, the Spotlight Secretariat, in collaboration with European Union counterparts, launched a mid-term assessment of the Spotlight Initiative in 2020. The assessment covers all programmes, focusing, first, on programmes in **Latin America** and **Africa** with their assessment to be completed in the second quarter of 2021. Then, in mid-2021, the programmes in the **Caribbean**, **Pacific**, and **Asia** will undergo the same exercise.

Conducted by Hera, an evaluation and research company based in Brussels, the mid-term assessment offers 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 the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change. Finally, the assessment provides critical information to guide the Operational Steering Committee's decision on the allocation and/or reallocation of Phase II funding.

While the mid-term assessment reports are under finalization, a preliminary review of the findings shows compelling results across the 6 Pillars of the Spotlight Initiative.

- Overall, the mid-term assessments validate the assumptions and key principles of the 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.

- Programmes' stakeholders (government, civil society, EU and UN teams), through a survey of more than 700 respondents, overwhelmingly confirmed the gender-transformative, survivor-centred and human-rights based approach of the Spotlight Initiative. In the same survey, around 90 per cent of respondents also expressed the view that they considered the 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 below).

- Reports also highlight the efficient and nimble adaption of programmes to the COVID-19 context, including in ensuring that services for survivors of violence are seen as essential and in seeking new ways to reach communities during COVID-19 restrictions.
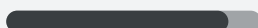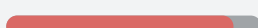

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Latin America and Africa Mid-Term Assessments (Covering 2019 and 2020)

The Spotlight Initiative conducted mid-term assessments for all country programmes in Latin America and Africa over a five-month period between November 2020 and April 2021. These assessments follow a results-oriented monitoring methodology and provide an analysis of country programmes' relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, as well as concrete recommendations for Phase II.

A system of "traffic lights" was used to assess the performance and compliance of country programmes for each of the assessment questions.

Relevance:	57	14	1		
Efficiency:	35	23	2		
Effectiveness:	19	16	1		
Sustainability:	8	4	0		

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…

Gender-transformative	95%
Human rights-based	94%
Survivor-centered	87%
Evidence-based	92%
Strengthening women's movement	87%
An integrated approach to SDGs	89%

The findings will be presented to the Operational Steering Committee for a decision on Phase II funding, as noted above, and to each programme's steering committee to foster collective reflection on Phase I's achievements and programming adaptations needed in Phase II, where necessary. The findings will also feed into a meta-analysis, which will surface trends and commonalities across programmes, and issues related to the global management of the Spotlight Initiative.
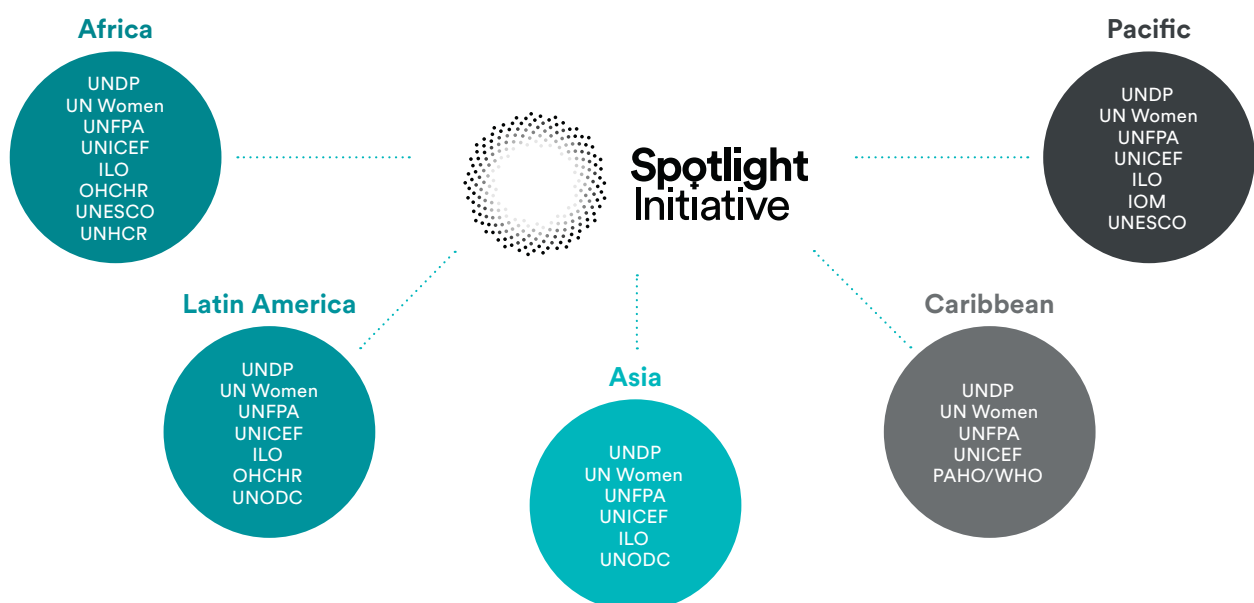
What Makes Spotlight Initiative Unique: Engaging Meaningful Partnerships and Civil Society in Ending Violence Against Women and Girls

This chapter describes the innovative model of the Spotlight Initiative, including how through its multi-stakeholder partnerships and role as a flagship programme of the UN Development System Reforms it can accelerate the implementation of the Strategic Development Goals. It includes details on the new way of working between the United Nations and European Union and a reflection on how a diverse set of programme partners supports the achievement of the Spotlight Initiative's ambitious goal to end violence against women and girls. The chapter closes with a summary of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goal on Partnerships and the Spotlight Initiative's strength in collaborating with a range of partners, including civil society, and particularly local and grassroots women's rights and feminist organizations, which is one of the signature elements of the Fund. The Spotlight Initiative also partners with media, academia, and the private sector.

The Spotlight Initiative relies on the expertise of the Initiative's core agencies, namely UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP – and UNICEF, with which it works closely – alongside the range of Recipient UN Agencies to implement and operationalize the work. In 2020, United Nations engagement on Spotlight Initiative included the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) and 11 Spotlight Initiative Recipient UN Organizations: UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), 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).

11 RECIPIENT UN ORGANIZATIONS

Africa
UNDP
UN Women
UNFPA
UNICEF
ILO
OHCHR
UNESCO
UNHCR

Pacific
UNDP
UN Women
UNFPA
UNICEF
ILO
IOM
UNESCO

Latin America
UNDP
UN Women
UNFPA
UNICEF
ILO
OHCHR
UNODC

Asia
UNDP
UN Women
UNFPA
UNICEF
ILO
UNODC

Caribbean
UNDP
UN Women
UNFPA
UNICEF
PAHO/WHO

In addition, 13 UN agencies are associated with Spotlight Initiative programmes by sharing their expertise on specific components of their affiliated programmes: 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 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).[11] The involvement of a total of 18 UN agencies truly illustrates how the Spotlight Initiative is bringing in a whole of system approach to eliminating violence against women and girls. It is under the UN Resident Coordinator's leadership and assessment of the context, the programme's focus, as well as the expertise and capacities present in the country or region that the UN agencies' best fit to achieving the goals of the Spotlight Initiative have been selected.

4.1 A Partnership to Accelerate the Implementation of the Strategic Development Goals and Implement UN Reform

4.1.1 The Spotlight Initiative as a Sustainable Development Goal Model Fund

As a Sustainable Development Goal model fund, the Spotlight Initiative directly contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) by supporting the joint achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by all development actors. Building and expanding upon the Millennium Development Goals - which did not address significant aspects of violence and discrimination faced by women and girls - the 2030 Agenda gives prominence to eliminating violence against women and girls, specifically under Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) on Gender Equality (Targets 5.2[12] and 5.3[13]), as well as under Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) on Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (Targets 16.1.1,[14] 16.2.2 and 16.2.3).[15]

Violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and other forms of discrimination severely limit the overall achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Spotlight Initiative contributes to ensuring that violence against women and girls is fully addressed, and women's human rights are realized, by accelerating investments in, and mobilizing a wide range of stakeholders to, address this crucial and underfunded area of sustainable development. This investment yields benefits well beyond SDG 5 and SDG 16, affecting the outcome of all Sustainable Development Goals. Violence against women and girls is an accelerator of poverty and furthers the marginalization of women and girls (SDG 1). The Initiative also contributes to creating a world where women and girls live free from threats to their security in cities

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[11]   Out of these 13 associated agencies, 6 agencies are also Recipient UN Organizations in other Spotlight Initiative programmes.
[12]   SDG Target 5.2: Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
[13]   SDG Target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
[14]   SDG Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere. SDG Target Indicator 16.1.1: Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age.
[15]   SDG Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. SDG Target Indicator 16.2.2: Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation. SDG Target Indicator 16.2.3: Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

(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, which in turn contributes to promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth (SDG 8). Furthermore, by bringing together the United Nations and European Union to collectively advocate for the worldwide elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative supports the achievement of SDG 17, to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

4.1.2 UN Reform Demonstration Fund

Building on the Delivering as One pilot programmes, UN Reform calls on agencies to leverage a "one UN" approach in service of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and maximizing the effectiveness of the United Nations in eliminating violence against women and girls. At the global level, the Spotlight Initiative is positioned at the highest levels of the political agenda of the European Union and the United Nations, as a flagship initiative of the UN Secretary-General, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General and coordinated within the United Nations by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General.

As a demonstration fund to illustrate the UN Development System Reform, Spotlight Initiative programmes are overseen by UN Resident Coordinators, who lead UN country teams towards an integrated working model that supports the Spotlight Initiative's implementation with accountability and impartiality. The UN Resident Coordinator also guides the coordination with key stakeholders and partners, such as the government, EU Heads of Delegation, Civil Society Reference Groups, national religious leaders, the donor community, and Chief Executive Officers of private-sector companies. In most Spotlight Initiative teams, a dual reporting line with the UN Resident Coordinator and the respective UN agency has been established for the Spotlight Initiative Coordinator and relevant technical officers to strengthen oversight from a managerial, technical and coordination point of view.

Reporting in 2020 shows that the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to this "new way of working" supported deepened partnerships, including with grassroots and local organizations, and improved the Spotlight Initiative's reach to marginalized communities. A key informant representing civil society in Zimbabwe, who was interviewed in the mid-term assessment exercise that was conducted in Latin America and Africa countries in early 2021, was quoted saying: "this is the first time that a concerted effort has been placed on giving voice to this particular vulnerable segment of society on issues that directly affect them at the national stage". By leveraging the complementary areas of expertise of core and Recipient UN Organizations, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to stronger coordination and collaboration across the Initiative's key technical agencies, which, in turn, has more readily fostered the development of powerful coalitions at country level, enhanced national capacities, and facilitated a better working relationship among UN agencies and with government. This was also noted in the mid-term assessments of early 2021 through a survey of more than 700 stakeholders (government, civil society, European Union and United Nations). Overwhelmingly, stakeholders identified the Spotlight Initiative as contributing to more integrated, more efficient and better coordinated UN country teams. In **Uganda**, for example, United Nations joint coordination and cooperation extended beyond Spotlight

Initiative programming, positively affecting the coordination and achievements of a joint programme on gender-based violence. While in **Mozambique**, as with most other countries, the Spotlight Initiative not only contributed to a mobilization of the sectors traditionally involved in the response to violence against women and girls, but also contributed to an all-of-government approach and to significantly greater investments through the national budget.

Embodying the principles of UN Reform, country and regional teams have established innovative structures of coordination and implementation to ensure collaboration, deeper synergies, and reduced transaction costs, detailed further below in the subsection on global partnerships and inter-agency cooperation.

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

Through the Spotlight Initiative, the European Union's significant investment in addressing and eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, coupled with multi-stakeholder governance and commitment to collaborative action, resulted in a new partnership model that combines the comparative advantage of two multinational organizations for more transformative results.

> **"I would like to invite you all to stand #WithHer, to speak up and make a difference. Help us end violence against women and girls and create a better world for all."**
>
> - European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, 5 March 2020, at the launch of the Spotlight Initiative's #WithHer campaign.

The UN-EU partnership puts into practice the shared values of human rights, multilateral cooperation, and cooperative achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the governance level, the European Union has been a key member of the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee, contributing to programmatic and financial decision-making. The European Union played a strategic role at the Spotlight Initiative Governing Body in 2020 and maintained regular dialogue at the country and regional level with the UN teams to shape the strategic direction of the various programmes, as well as to mobilize their respective institutions and other stakeholders on the Spotlight Initiative's objectives.

Collaborating on the day-to-day strategic direction of the Initiative, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the EU Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) held weekly exchanges in 2020 to coordinate actions and jointly advise UN and EU teams at all levels. The regularity of exchanges, joint UN-EU guidance notes issued for the benefit of programme-level coordination amongst UN country teams and EU Delegations, and candid discussions to troubleshoot bottlenecks all demonstrate the close relationship between the European Union and the United Nations.

> Through Spotlight Initiative we work on multiple levels to end violence against women and girls: with legislators and decison makers to pass new laws that protect women and girls; with grassroots and civil society organizations to help survivors and to raise awareness of the issue.

Jutta Urpilainen
European Union Commissioner
for International Partnerships

#SpotlightEndViolence

©European Commission

At country and regional levels, EU Delegations actively collaborate on Spotlight Initiative programme implementation and participate in governance functions. In 2020, EU Delegations played a particularly important role in supporting UN country teams to reprogramme Spotlight Initiative funding in order to respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19, lockdown measures that impacted programming, and further exacerbated levels of violence against women and girls. On an ongoing basis, UN teams consulted their EU Delegations on major decisions and coordinated on strategic planning, partnerships (including the mobilization of non-traditional partners), monitoring, and communications and visibility, as well as strategic advocacy with national governments. In many programmes, the European Union participated in technical committees that coordinate and decide on day-to-day programme management, offering technical insights to inform decision-making. In **Jamaica,** the EU Delegation leveraged its wide civil society network to make recommendations on civil society organization engagement and provide feedback on joint calls for proposals, allowing the Spotlight Initiative to benefit from the European Union's experience in the country and to undertake better informed strategies to secure the meaningful participation of civil society in implementation. In the **Latin America Regional Programme**, the Spotlight Initiative's technical team has established continuous communication with the EU Delegation, based on a calendar of monthly meetings, to review progress in the work plan and jointly establish programmatic priorities. In the context of the pandemic, the EU Delegation played an instrumental role in defining the partnerships with shelters in the region.

Additionally, EU Heads of Delegation and Heads of Cooperation have complemented the role of the UN Resident Coordinator, and jointly engaged to secure high-level political buy-in and support country and regional teams to navigate challenges. In **Nigeria,** the European Union and United Nations have worked together with the Government to develop a sustainability plan that manages risks and incorporates a financial strategy to ensure funding and services for survivors of violence continue uninterrupted.

In **Malawi**, the UN Resident Coordinator led the UN team in joint efforts with the European Union to elevate the Spotlight Initiative as a priority with line ministers and to build strong alliances for the successful continuation of the programme. For the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme**, which does not have a predetermined modality for government engagement as country programmes do, the EU Delegation has been instrumental in identifying the best strategic approach for adequate government involvement in programme implementation.

Furthermore, the Spotlight Initiative has leveraged the partnership with the European Union to identify synergies with other EU initiatives in-country or in the region, which enables more comprehensive programming, prevents duplication of efforts, and allows programmes to build off of existing networks with local communities that are familiar with UN-EU programming and thus more open to the Spotlight Initiative's interventions. For example, the **Pacific Regional Programme**'s close partnership with the EU-funded Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls has resulted in the Pacific Partnership committing to integrating technical coherence mechanisms in future technical working group meetings, with the goal of strengthening efforts in ending violence against women and girls across initiatives throughout the region.

In sum, the renewed model of partnership between the United Nations and European Union that informs the Spotlight Initiative is a collaborative example for the broader international development sector. The critical role of the European Union in communications and visibility efforts, and their contribution to results, is further presented in Chapter 6.

> **"The Spotlight Initiative is an unprecedented effort, through its level of funding and coordinated efforts of multiple stakeholders, in the global fight to eliminate violence against women and girls."**
>
> - Ambassador of the European Union for the Pacific H.E Sujiro Seam

4.3 Partnering Meaningfully: Engagement Across Stakeholders

4.3.1 Global Level Partnerships: Forged by the Spotlight Secretariat for Results

At the global level, forging diverse partnerships – with a focus on engaging groups from diverse segments of society, such as civil society actors, feminist groups, influencers, politicians and leaders, – supports a more comprehensive public outreach strategy.

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

Established in December 2020, the Group of Friends for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls, chaired by the European Union, collaborates in support of the Spotlight Initiative, aiming to sustain its gains in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Development System Reforms, and to end all forms of violence against women and girls, and to support substantive resource mobilization on the issue. The Group of Friends' steering committee members include Argentina, the European Union,

Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand and Namibia. Aligned with the Generation Equality Forum's Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence, the Group of Friends brings together over 100 Member States and Observers, together with UN agencies, to coordinate action to eliminate gender-based violence. In 2021, the Group of Friends will expand its high-level membership across all UN Member States and Observers with an interest in ending violence against women and girls.

Count Me In! (CMI!) Consortium

The Count Me In! (CMI!) Consortium is a coalition of intersectional feminist groups that has supported the Spotlight Initiative and its civil society partners since 2017 to centre in its efforts women, girls and trans, non-binary, and intersex people who are most marginalized, and often face disproportionate rates of violence. Through consultative processes, engaging hundreds of women's rights and feminist activists, the CMI! Consortium has successfully lobbied to strengthen the feminists and women's rights activists' role in the Initiative and to strengthen the ways and processes in which the Spotlight Initiative works with these key stakeholders. The CMI! Consortium's support to the Spotlight Initiative phased out in December 2020, once there was a structure in place through the Civil Society Reference Groups, at global and programme level, to ensure the voices of feminist activists were heard.

Media work and public awareness work

In addition, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with celebrities, influencers, and popular figures to promote messages to eliminate violence against women and girls and expand outreach to different communities through campaigns in both social and traditional media channels. The aim of this work was to reach the public both within and beyond Spotlight Initiative countries, given the universality of violence against women and girls. More information on these global-level partnerships, including Spotlight Initiative Champions, is detailed in Chapter 6 on Communications and Visibility.

Together, let's declare in one voice: I am #WithHer.

- Amina J. Mohammed
UN Deputy Secretary General

Spotlight Initiative

Photo: Screenshot from video message

Inter-agency collaboration

With 11 Recipient UN Organizations and 13 other agencies associated with Spotlight Initiative programmes,[16] inter-agency collaboration remains one of the hallmark approaches to implementing Spotlight Initiative programming. At the global level, the Secretariat and UN headquarters agency focal points have set the tone for the new way of working by coordinating closely to operationalize the Spotlight Initiative's core principles. This intentional coordination has had a ripple effect in strengthening inter-agency partnerships at the programme level. Embodying the principles of UN Reform, country and regional

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[16]   Out of these 13 associated agencies, 6 agencies are also Recipient UN Organizations in other Spotlight Initiative programmes.

teams have established innovative structures of coordination and implementation to promote deeper programme synergies and reduce transaction costs.

As a pooled fund, the Spotlight Initiative seeks to find avenues for efficiency and reduce transaction costs while maximizing results for women. It is able to mobilize processes and operational solutions across UN agencies to streamline implementation. At the same time the Spotlight Initiative offers flexibility to each UN agency to employ its own operating procedures for procurement and financial management and its own methods of engagement with implementing partners.

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Throughout 2020, the Secretariat and agency focal points coordinated to provide timely and comprehensive support to Spotlight Initiative programmes on implementation, including on acceleration measures for programmes in **Africa** and **Latin America** and COVID-19 reprogramming efforts for all programmes. By maintaining regular contact with regional and country offices, the agency focal points were well placed to share experiences, challenges, and good practices with the Secretariat. As a result, the Secretariat and agency headquarters benefitted from a clear assessment of the status of implementation across programmes, agencies, and regions and were better able to exercise strategic oversight, adjust guidance in order to respond to changing contexts, and intervene to support programmes where needed. The Secretariat also built out the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI), a global community of practice and virtual knowledge management platform with linkages to other relevant knowledge platforms of core agencies to share learnings, as referred to in Chapter 3.

In 2020, agency focal points were instrumental in the development and approval of the **Afghanistan** and **Ecuador Country Programmes** and the **Caribbean** and **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional**

Programmes, as well as the Pillar 6 component of the **Pacific Regional Programme**. They provided inputs on programme guidance, design, and budget reviews, and undertook technical field missions as needed. The significant coordination and contributions from these inter-agency partnerships resulted in both high-quality and rapid programme design within a limited timeframe even in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Results from the past few years of deeper inter-agency collaboration have begun to bear fruit. In **Argentina,** the UN Resident Coordinator led the Spotlight Initiative team in instituting joint planning efforts for the UN country team and government partners regarding the development of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), to coordinate on the elimination of violence against women and girls beyond the Spotlight Initiative. In **Malawi,** the Spotlight Initiative's joint work in the spirit of UN Reform contributed to the establishment of district communities of practice, which led to greater coordination and a more holistic approach to programme implementation. The communities consisted of the Spotlight Initiative's field staff, civil society, key government officials, community leaders and implementing partners working on sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices. Across multiple programmes, for example **Honduras**, **Africa Regional Programme**, **Nigeria**, **Papua New Guinea** and **Trinidad & Tobago,** programme teams launched calls for proposals for civil society implementing partners. This process embodies the One UN approach and showcases UN Development System Reforms. UN agencies harmonized and merged documents to enable incorporation of rules and procedures of all engaged UN agencies. This streamlined the process for national and grassroots organizations, which only had to submit one proposal for activities across multiple outcome areas.

©Spotlight Initiative

4.3.2 Diverse Programme Partnerships

Across programmes, the Spotlight Initiative engages with a diverse set of partners including governments, civil society actors, women's and grassroots organizations, the media, academia, traditional leaders, the private sector, and other development actors.

Involvement of national institutions and diverse sectors in the design, implementation, and monitoring of programmes is essential. All Spotlight Initiative programmes have been designed through consultations with governments, in alignment with countries' multiannual United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

More information on the importance of the types of partnerships detailed below to the achievement of results will be provided in Chapter 5 on Results and Chapter 6 on Communications and Visibility.

Engagement at the highest level of government

The success of the Spotlight Initiative hinges on the willingness of governments to lead on this issue by setting national priorities, guiding ministries and national institutions, and mobilizing their populations to fully eliminate violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative engages governments at the highest levels, such as Heads of States and Prime Ministers, to secure political buy-in and direction and to give visibility to leadership that promotes prevention and response to violence against women and girls as essential to attaining all development priorities. The Spotlight Initiative is then able to highlight the commitment of supportive governments while leveraging the national platform of governments to disseminate critical messages, raise awareness and contribute to deeper social norms change.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative was successful in politically elevating the issue of violence against women and girls and in supporting a whole-of-society approach by engaging all actors of a community. In **Liberia**, for example, the programme supported extensive consultations and increased advocacy efforts with government partners that ultimately contributed to the President of Liberia's decision to declare rape as a national emergency, to appoint a Special Prosecutor for Rape, and to establish a National Security Taskforce on sexual and gender-based violence. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the programme collaborated with the Office of the Vice Prime Minister, the highest government institution that works on gender equality and violence against women and girls, to revive the National Gender Council and extend its membership to include civil society activists, and to organize a meeting with ministry-level representatives on the Rapid Gender Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on women and men. By facilitating this kind of high-level political buy-in for the elimination of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative strengthens national ownership and increases the sustainability of its results.

> **"Spotlight has been instrumental in mobilizing the President. We have created a quite extraordinary and really significant policy dialogue that did not exist a year ago. One that is transformative in its impact and is extremely positive."**
>
> – EU Delegation, Nigeria

Engagement with and across ministries

Much of the Spotlight Initiative's work with government partners takes place at the ministry level. Across the Spotlight Initiative, national governments (typically at the ministry level) co-chair National Steering Committees along with UN Resident Coordinators, an arrangement that supports coherence and coordination between the UN country teams and government. In partnering with ministries, Spotlight Initiative programmes aim to work with the ministers responsible for planning or national development, or other ministers that can draw in diverse arms of government and coordinate a whole-of-government approach. The newly empowered role of the Resident Coordinator is critical to advancing government partnerships. For example, in **Haiti,** the team was able to leverage the courtesy calls that ministers took following the arrival of a new Resident Coordinator in order to raise the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative and to secure political buy-in through a series of bilateral meetings that followed.

Since its inception, the Spotlight Initiative has recognized that governments must allocate resources and engage their finance ministers and treasuries to unleash financing for development, drawing from a range of sources including other ministries, investors, and the business community. This approach to mobilizing development finance or blended finance for sustainable development was reflected in a majority of Spotlight Initiative programmes. Concrete examples of how countries increased budget lines to eliminate violence against women and girls are described in Chapter 5, Outcome 2.

Additionally, Spotlight Initiative programmes partnered with a wide range of ministries in order to ensure a whole-of-government approach to ending violence against women. For example, in **Malawi,** strong partnerships have been established with the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare as well as the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, which ensures that ending violence against women and girls is strategically positioned within district development plans and strengthens the role of traditional leaders (whose work falls under the Ministry) in eliminating violence against women and girls. In **El Salvador,** the capacity of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Office of the Attorney-General were considerably strengthened in order to guarantee women's access to justice. The Spotlight Initiative supported the Attorney-General's Office, the police and the Procurator-General's Office to ensure a more comprehensive and appropriate investigation of cases of violence against women. In **Belize,** the Spotlight Initiative is mobilizing the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Youth, Sports and E-Governance to roll out a strategy addressing significantly high rates of violence against girls aged 10-19. In **Jamaica,** the programme partners with the Ministry of Education to engage students and teachers in the elimination of violence against women and girls, such as by supporting the National College for Educational Leadership to design and implement a programme on ending gender-based violence in schools and educating school leaders on topics of violence. Finally, the **Africa Regional Programme** is building on existing partnerships with the National Statistics Offices in the majority of countries on the African continent. The partnership aims to strengthen, through training and provision of analytical tools, the capacity of national statistical officers in data collection and analysis of household survey data such as the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) and the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), under Outcome 5.

Engagement with other national institutions: legislation, judiciary, and parliament

The Spotlight Initiative also partners with legislative bodies to bring about transformative and systemic change in legal frameworks and practices that impact violence against women and girls. These national entities play a critical role in addressing the impunity of perpetrators and protecting survivors' rights. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative worked to mainstream a gender perspective and facilitated the drafting of numerous bills and the implementation of regulations promoting the elimination of violence against women and girls. In **Zimbabwe**, the Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the Parliament has influenced the body to apply the principle of "leaving no one behind" to its work. In 2020, the Parliament welcomed the participation of women and girls with disabilities, which the Spotlight Initiative facilitated, in parliamentary consultations and hearings on a draft bill and is considering their recommendations for stronger provisions on discrimination against women and girls with disabilities.

The Spotlight Initiative also aims to address diverse barriers to women and girls obtaining justice, from discrimination to corruption and impunity, in order to ensure that all survivors have equal access to justice. In **Uganda**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative programme partnered with the Justice Law and Order Sector Secretariat to build the capacities of the Uganda Police Force and the Directorate of Public Prosecution in the case management of gender-based violence cases. Several Spotlight Initiative programmes trained officials from legislative bodies and duty bearers, such as police, on gender awareness and gender-based violence issues.

Additionally, the **Caribbean Regional Programme** is supporting the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Secretariat to hold consultations with its relevant organs, including the Council for National Security & Law Enforcement, the Regional Security System, and the Implementation Agency for Crime and Security, to align efforts and interventions across sectors and to leverage each organ's comparative advantage in implementing under Pillar 2. One particular goal of these consultations is to integrate gender perspectives in the revision of regional citizen security frameworks and the standards for policing and justice sectors.

From local to regional: engagement across all levels of government

Decentralizing the response to eliminating violence against women and girls to local governments and institutions has occurred across the majority of Spotlight Initiative programmes. This is important because subnational authorities and networks are often the first interface for survivors of violence. As such, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative worked to strengthen the capacity of local-level institutions and organizations to implement strategies for eliminating violence against women and girls and to shape successful prevention and response programmes. This partnership has been crucial for local ownership, community buy-in, and more relevant (and efficient) response mechanisms to protect against and prevent violence. In **Nigeria**, **Mexico** and **Argentina**, Spotlight Initiative teams supported federal and national actors to address contradictions between national and federal laws as well as to better delineate the roles and responsibilities of the different levels. In **Niger** and **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative supported dedicated trainings of local government officers on gender equality and violence against women and girls and supported districts and municipalities to design plans that

include prevention strategies. In **Malawi,** the government led training on gender and disability at five community-based decision-making structures that were developing village action plans to enhance local strategies and ensure that marginalized groups were addressed. In the **African Regional Programme**, the African Union Commission (AUC) is a key partner in programme implementation and governance. The African Union Commission co-chairs the highest governance structure, the Africa Regional Steering Committee and plays a critical role as the main partner in implementing the programme's activities with overall engagement. For instance, the African Union Commission and its Member States validated two five-year strategies for the *Saleema* Initiative on Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation and the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage. These strategies articulate the African Union Commission's vision and agenda to accelerate the elimination of female genital mutilation and child marriage on the continent, capitalizing on the organization's mandate, enhancing greater coordination, and amplifying regional- and country-level efforts, making important links to the 55 Member States of the African Union. See Chapter 5 for more examples.

Private sector

In order to further connect the elimination of violence against women and girls to other development goals[17] and to advance its comprehensive Theory of Change, in 2020, the Spotlight Initiative forged partnerships with the private sector to address gender-based violence. The goal of this partnership is to convince private-sector actors to become change agents against gender-based violence and harassment, especially given that workplaces present unique potential to reach vulnerable or isolated women who have limited contact with community networks and organizations. To this end, the Spotlight Initiative collaborates with companies and entrepreneurs to ensure that the private sector is working to eliminate gender-based violence and discrimination, particularly sexual harassment, in the workplace.

In 2020, the **Safe and Fair programme** co-hosted a workshop with the Malaysian Employers Federation to identify good practices on addressing violence and harassment in the world of work. This partnership is important, as some employers may not have an understanding of violence and harassment as issues in their businesses and may be unaware of the specific needs of women workers and migrant workers. In **Belize**, the Spotlight Initiative launched a campaign to share information on access to services with 15 private-sector organizations by hanging posters on domestic violence, human trafficking, and early and child marriage in and around these private-sector establishments. Additionally, the programme trained 16 private-sector representatives on family violence and challenged the entrenched ideas about gender roles that promote family violence, with the goal of encouraging men in community leadership positions to speak out against violence against women and girls in their communities. In **Mexico**, the team established a partnership with Grupo Posadas, one of the largest hotel chains in the country, to provide free accommodation to women and girls who were victims of violence in four Spotlight Initiative municipalities, as part of the programme's COVID-19 response plan. An employee of Grupo Posadas commented on this partnership, "the value of this initiative is immeasurable in financial terms because, by offering a safe space, we are saving lives." In the **Latin America Regional Programme**,

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[17]   Under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG 17 focused on global partnership as essential to the mobilization of diverse financial and in-kind resources from multiple sources, including the private sector.

the Spotlight Initiative developed an innovative partnership with the private sector to prevent cases of violence against women and girls in the workplace and strengthen the referral pathways for survivors. Currently, the Spotlight Initiative is contributing to the capacity building of nine private companies across five countries (Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and the Dominican Republic).

> **"It is a very beautiful space, I never thought I could be in such a place," she said of the accommodation. "The people at the hotel have been very kind to me and my children. At first I was afraid that we might be discriminated against, but it has been the opposite. This time in the hotel has helped me to talk with my children... It has been a space to get to know them better, I feel less fearful than when we started this nightmare. We are very grateful for the treatment and the space."**
>
> - a 27-year-old indigenous woman who fled her violence from her husband in Chiapas, Mexico, and found safe accommodation with Grupo Posadas

Media, religious institutions, academia and other stakeholders

The Spotlight Initiative has collaborated closely with the media and arts and culture organizations as key allies in debunking gender stereotypes and raising awareness about women and girls' rights across communities. In 2020, in **Honduras,** a unique partnership was established with Women in the Arts, an organization that promotes equality and social-norms change through technology, culture and art. The joint objective of this partnership is to equip municipal councils to lead strategies on norms change and prevention in their communities through collective mobilization and reflection.

Indeed, the Spotlight Initiative emphasized the important role that traditional and religious leaders play in "moving the needle" to end harmful practices and transform cultural norms around violence against women and girls. Women faith leaders play a paramount role in ending gender-based discrimination and violence and influencing male religious leaders to address these issues vocally, in churches and in other spaces where faith-based leaders have influence. In **Mozambique,** the programme has worked closely with community and religious leaders, who in the past accepted and even promoted traditional harmful practices but are now agents of change, working with civil society organizations and community based organizations to prevent child marriage and violence against women and girls, and serving as the linkages between families and referral services. In one district, community and religious leaders supported the rescue of 15 girls from forced unions. In **Mali,** innovative television and radio messages denouncing violence against women were shared through both Muslim and Christian faith perspectives. The messaging ran for two months, during which time the television message was viewed more than 40 million times and the radio message was heard more than 4 million times. More details are provided in Chapter 6.

Academia, research institutes and universities also play an important role in forming the next generation of leaders and policy-makers and in designing inclusive and non-discriminatory public policies; as

such, these institutions have been a focus of Spotlight Initiative programme interventions, as well. For example, the Spotlight Initiative's **Pacific Regional Programme**, engaged in a multi-stakeholder partnership among UN agencies, University of Melbourne, and civil society to coordinate the roll-out of gender-based violence information management systems across countries in the region. Additionally, the **Caribbean Regional Programme** is partnering with ECLAC to fund a "young researcher attachment," for five young CARICOM-based researchers to shadow the lead researchers conducting a study on the economic costs of violence against women and girls. In support of a participatory approach to data collection efforts at the regional level, the objective of this work is to expand the pool of young researchers in CARICOM with the skill sets required to undertake studies on this topic, as analyses of economic costs will generate an understanding of the wider effects of family violence on society, beyond the immediate victim.

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The wide-reaching set of results from the above-mentioned diverse set of prioritized partnerships, as noted, are further detailed in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

"As the custodians of culture and traditional practices, traditional leaders play an important role in ending all forms of violence against women and girls. We commend the European Union and the Government of Liberia for providing the platform to eliminate harmful practices."

- Marie Goreth Nizigama, UN Women Country Representative for Liberia

4.3.3 A Critical Partnership: Investing in and Recognizing Women's Movements and Civil Society

USD 146 million

**allocated to civil society organizations so far
(48% of activity funding)**

Broader landscape: the importance of civil society in ending violence against women and girls

Since its inception, women's rights and feminist activists have called for a deep partnership with the Spotlight Initiative, both in the governance structure and as recipients of funding. The recognized expertise and leadership of civil society is critical for the Spotlight Initiative to achieve transformative and sustainable change in eliminating violence against women and girls and advancing gender equality more broadly. Civil society is significantly represented at every phase of the Spotlight Initiative, at the advisory and decision-making levels, and as programme implementers. This key partnership demonstrates the Initiative's relevance, impact, and sustainability.

Centring the partnership with civil society across global and programme levels, the Spotlight Initiative has embarked on a transformative new way of engaging with civil society, guided by the principle of "leaving no one behind" and the Sustainable Development Goal on Partnerships. The Spotlight Initiative's partnership with civil society is a unique differentiator and is a fundamental aspect of its structure and functioning. The Spotlight Initiative aims to demonstrate a new paradigm of working with civil society that is equal, inclusive and transparent, and underpinned by an anti-colonial, human rights-based and feminist approach, and rooted in broad-based national ownership.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit globally, affecting lives and livelihoods around the world, exacerbating gendered inequalities in all spheres and contributing to a horrifying increase in already high levels of violence against women and girls. As a result of the pandemic, frontline civil society organizations and women rights organizations had to find ways to adapt to meet the urgent needs of women and girls and to implement measures to mitigate the risks of violence. Despite this unprecedented context, civil society organizations and women rights' organizations more specifically, have been the first responders and essential service providers to survivors of violence. Civil society organizations also play a vital role in ensuring that the voices of structurally stigmatized, marginalized and socially excluded groups are heard and centred in both recovery plans and emergency policies.

In parallel, the resistance to women's rights has continued in some quarters, closely linked to a patriarchal backlash to the advancements in women's rights and gender equality. Thi is reflective of political developments, including the rise of populism, violent extremism and intersecting fundamentalism across the world, linked to increased repression, violence and impunity. Reflecting a deepening trend, civic space is continuing to be threatened and further diminished in an increasing number of contexts

where administrative and legal reforms are being implemented to restrict rights to freedom of opinion, expression, association and assembly.[18] The use of violence against women in political life, women human-rights defenders and environmental activists has also increased, including online.

Investing in feminist and women's movements: why it matters

The Spotlight Initiative's work is rooted in the evidence-based belief that the leadership and deep engagement of civil society, in particular women's rights and feminist activists, networks and movements, is at the core of transformative and sustainable change to eliminate violence against women and girls. 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.[19]

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic's heightened inequalities, civil society organizations have been pushing for a bold feminist response and fair recovery to the crisis. 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 core funding is required to ensure that grassroots organizations can pursue their instrumental role in promoting and protecting women's and girls' fundamental human rights.

Despite evidence of their relevance and critical edge in making legal, policy, and normative changes, women's rights organizations and movements remain severely underfunded. Studies show that 1 per cent of gender-focused aid from governments goes to autonomous women's organizations.[20] 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.[21] To address this challenging funding landscape and resource gaps at the local level, the Spotlight Initiative has committed to deliver 30 to 50 per cent of its programmatic funds through civil society organizations, with the majority targeting national, local and grassroots women's organizations, as discussed further below and in Annex C of this report. The results achieved so far in supporting the women's movement can be found in Chapter 5 under Pillar 6. In November 2020, as part of the Initiative's global learning sprints, a session was dedicated to fostering exchange, lessons learned, promising, and best practices on how to provide flexible and demand-driven funding and better access to funding to the women's movement. The key lessons learned from the sprint can be accessed here.

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[18] The Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Situation of women human rights defenders R - A/HRC/40/60, page 6, para 23-24

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

[20] OECD, (March, 2019). Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Donor Charts. Available online here.

[21] 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.

Civil society's role in governance, advising, and monitoring of Spotlight Initiative

Governance and Advice

Representatives of women's rights groups and human rights-based civil society organisations (including those representing groups facing intersecting forms of discriminations[22]) have been critically engaged in shaping the Initiative from its inception through advisory and governance activities. Spotlight Initiative teams have established **Regional, National and Global Civil Society Reference Groups** engaging diverse women's rights and feminist activists as well as subject-matter experts and marginalized groups from local to global levels to advise on and monitor the implementation of the programmes, recommend changes, and hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable for its commitments. The Spotlight Initiative has secured full voting representation by civil society on the National, Regional, and the Global Operational Steering Committee, the highest decision-making bodies at each level, and the Governing Body, the highest advisory body at the global level. In 2020, civil society partners were engaged in key decision-making related to budget reallocations, COVID-19 response plans and annual work plans, including, as noted above, through their membership on the Steering Committees. Reflective of decades of work and advocacy, and to hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable to the transformative principles it espouses, to date, civil society activists have shared 53 recommendations on how to strengthen the engagement of civil society and better support organizations and movements, of which the Spotlight Initiative has fully or partially addressed 48.[23]

On 11 March 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat held its annual civil society consultation on the side-lines of the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The consultation highlighted gaps in the Spotlight Initiative's engagement with civil society and provided concrete action points for improvement. Based on the feedback, the Secretariat, in close collaboration with Reference Group members, developed a Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement of Reference Groups (available here). This note aims at guiding and strengthening the partnership between programme teams and Reference Group members, with concrete guidance on work-plan development, budgeting, and monitoring. This note was followed up in September 2020 with a Reference Group survey and cross-regional calls, to further strengthen communication, collaboration and community across Reference Groups (a summary of meeting outcomes can be found here). These calls are held on a twice-yearly basis and serve as a platform for feedback and exchange of experiences.

Transparency is a key principle of the Spotlight Initiative. To ensure the timely and accurate flow of information and to establish a community of practice, during 2020, the Secretariat launched a set of diverse online platforms to facilitate communication mechanisms across Reference Groups, including a Civil Society Reference Group Community of Practice page on Facebook with over 170 members and a dedicated page on the Spotlight Initiative website.[24]

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[22] 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, LGBTQI+ persons, women and girls living with disabilities, sex workers, domestic and informal workers, women of diverse sexual orientations, gender diverse women, etc.
[23] Three recommendations are in the process of being discussed and two recommendations are not addressed.
[24] The Civil Society Engagement page can be accessed here.

"**Spotlight Initiative cannot be successful without the central leadership and ownership of civil society. The progress made in ending violence against women and girls is thanks to the boundless work of civil society, in particular the local, community-based, grassroots women's rights organizations, groups and movements, who will continue doing this important work after the Initiative. This Spotlight Initiative is for you and with you.**"

Dr. Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Executive Director, Global Civil Society Consultation, 11 March 2020

Taken together, these efforts have helped foster more meaningful engagement of Civil Society Reference Groups in 2020. Examples across programmes include:

- in **Belize**, meaningful engagement of Civil Society Reference Group members was codified in the Standard Operational Procedures to include the Civil Society Reference Group in periodic technical team meetings for joint planning and monitoring activities, thereby ensuring their engagement is institutionalized in the programme

- in **Malawi**, the Civil Society Reference Group members participated in the internal mid-term assessment and Phase II planning process. Each Civil Society Reference Group member was assigned a specific Pillar based on their area of expertise and was invited to partake in quarterly Pillar coordination meetings, deepening participatory monitoring and evaluation and improving the relevance of programming

- in **Kyrgyzstan**, the Civil Society Reference Group receives monthly work-plan updates to ensure that Civil Society Reference Group members are aware of the programme's day-to-day priorities and how the group's mandate fits into implementation. These improved arrangements continue to strengthen the partnership and contribution of the Civil Society Reference Group to the entire Spotlight Initiative programme cycle.

The partnership with the Count Me In! Consortium[25] has actively advised the Spotlight Initiative since its inception in 2017. Through their advocacy, advisory and monitoring roles, the Consortium helps ensure that no one is left behind by guiding Spotlight Initiative programmes to attend to important diversities in identities and experiences. In 2020, the Consortium continued to provide regular guidance mainly through a dedicated Spotlight Initiative consultant who was resourced by the Consortium. The partner was instrumental in the development and implementation of the Civil Society Monitoring Toolkit, the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and the Guidance Note on Meaningful Engagement with Reference Groups, to name a few of its achievements. On 14 April 2020, the Initiative publicly responded to the Open Letter regarding accessibility of Spotlight Initiative funding that was shared by the Count Me In! Consortium in November 2019. While acknowledging that structural barriers

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[25] Mama Cash, Count Me In! Consortium.

currently hinder direct funding of unregistered groups, the Spotlight Initiative is continuously working with country and regional programme teams to find innovative ways to make the partner engagement processes more inclusive. For example, Spotlight Initiative has extended deadlines for calls for proposals, offered open days workshops for applicants and ensured calls for proposals are accessible in official languages.[26] Aligned with its commitment to a feminist funding approach, the Spotlight Initiative is working to transform the partner selection and reporting processes within the UN system to become more agile and flexible to further reach and fund national and grassroots organizations.

> **"The CSNRG has facilitated positive conversations at the national and provincial levels. The group has a close working relationship with the Technical Coordination Team and has an active WhatsApp chat for information-sharing and coordination on events. Members actively participate in meetings with stakeholders and in the National Steering Committee, and want to believe their contributions are taken seriously."**
>
> CSRG member from Zimbabwe, Global Civil Society Consultation, 11 March 2020

Monitoring

Independent monitoring and reporting by civil society on the Spotlight Initiative's contributions are also critical for the legitimacy of the Spotlight Initiative. In 2020, the Count Me In! Consortium, discussed above, 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 process 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; and implementation, including how well the Spotlight Initiative integrates the perspectives of feminist activists, and constituency led organizations. The monitoring may result in an Advocacy Scorecard, as illustrated, for example, by the **Zimbabwe** Reference Group's Scorecard here.

In February 2020, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat initiated the development of a Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (PME), which aims to make the monitoring and evaluation tools and framework as inclusive and participatory as possible. The Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation 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 in the process from the design stage to the implementation of corrective actions. By valuing and centring primary stakeholders' knowledge,

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[26] For example, Women's Peace and Humanitarian Funds calls for proposals in Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea were advertised for 8 weeks each in 2020.

experience and expertise, participatory monitoring and evaluation actively reframes monitoring and evaluation from a top down exercise, to one of mutual engagement and learning. Through participatory monitoring and evaluation, programmes actively contribute to enhancing the rights, empowerment and autonomy of historically marginalized groups, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, ensuring proper alignment with the principle of "leave no one behind".

During the reporting period, several Reference Groups engaged in monitoring activities. The Civil Society Reference Group in **Niger** developed a national strategy to lead participatory monitoring and evaluation. As part of this initiative, the Civil Society Reference Group will independently monitor the functioning of Spotlight Initiative's processes and systems, including through field visits and the development of advocacy dashboards. In **Malawi** and **Mozambique**, the group members conducted independent monitoring visits to Spotlight Initiative districts, the results of which will inform any programmatic adjustments in year three of the programme.

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Funding for civil society through Spotlight Initiative country and regional programmes: more than a twin track approach

The Spotlight Initiative aims at addressing 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. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the vulnerabilities and scarce funding of women's organizations, reaffirming organizations' need for flexible funding to sustain themselves, strengthen their institutional capacity and remain resilient throughout and beyond the pandemic.

With the aim of contributing to this transformative funding landscape, and in line with the Spotlight Initiative's comprehensive Theory of Change – which aims to centre support to civil society to ending violence against women and girls and advance the Sustainable Development Goals – the Spotlight 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 through partnering with civil society organizations to implement programmes. 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.

Spotlight Initiative has made the following commitments to civil society in terms of funding:

- Civil society organizations will receive and deliver 30 to 50 per cent of the programmatic funds across all Outcome Areas, of which it is recommended that 50 to 70 per cent be delivered by national, and in particular, local and grassroots women's organizations

- 10 to 15 per cent of all country and regional programmes must be dedicated to Outcome 6 on supporting women's movements

- 10 per cent of each regional investment envelope is dedicated to direct grants or support to women's organizations through regional grant-giving programmes (the following section has more details on this).

Our commitment to delivering 30 to 50 per cent of Spotlight Initiative programme funds through civil society organizations

30% target commitment

48% allocated

USD 146 million

allocated to civil society organizations so far (48% of activity funds)

Almost USD 100 million was delivered to civil society, women's and national organizations
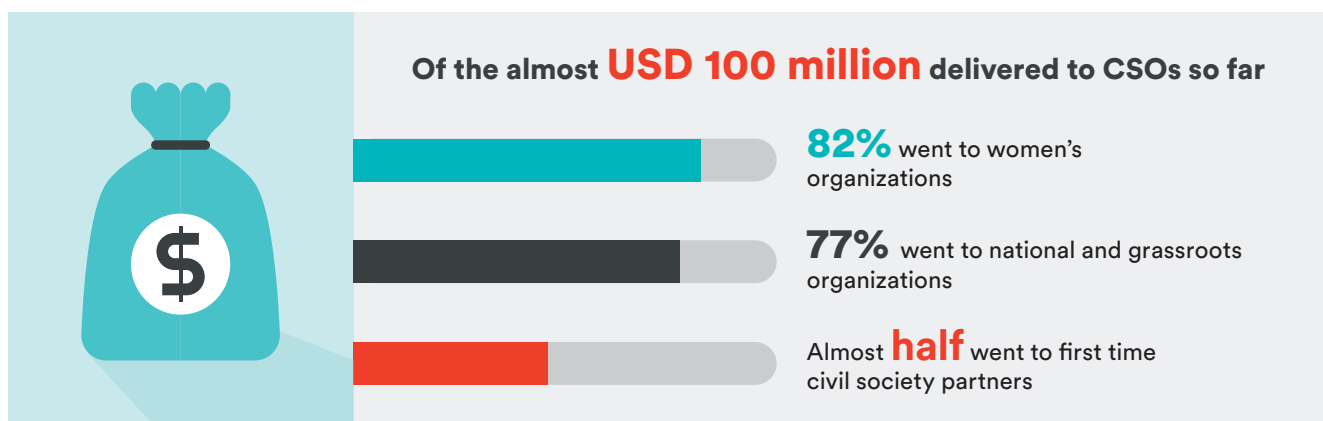
* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

The Spotlight Initiative programmes portfolio allocated 48 per cent, about USD 146 million, of its Phase I activity funds across all five regions directly to civil society organizations as of December 2020. All regions are exceeding the minimum target of 30 per cent, with Central Asia leading at 58 per cent. By reaching the set commitment close to the higher bracket, the Spotlight Initiative sent a strong signal around the importance of investing in autonomous women's movements and in national and grassroots civil society organizations as essential partners in eliminating violence against women and girls.

As of December 2020, programmes that have completed their first or second year of implementation have delivered about 78 per cent[27] of the total allocated for civil society organizations. In all regions, the high implementation rate of funding through civil society organizations demonstrates how Spotlight Initiative is prioritizing engaging civil society organization partners as effective implementation partners.

Our commitment to key stakeholder groups: national and grassroots organizations, women's organizations, and new partners

Of the almost **USD 100 million** delivered to CSOs so far

82% went to women's organizations

77% went to national and grassroots organizations

Almost **half** went to first time civil society partners

* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

Of the USD 96 million delivered to civil society organizations in the first phase of programming, 77 per cent went to national and grassroots organizations, underscoring the Spotlight Initiative's dedication to resourcing and supporting local actors that are at the forefront of the transformative and sustainable change in the elimination of violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative is committed to delivering 50-70 per cent of civil society organization funding to national and grassroots organizations. All regions are currently exceeding the 50 per cent minimum threshold, with Africa leading at 82 per cent.

Partner organizations that are either led by women, feminist organizations, or women's rights organizations received 82 per cent of funds delivered through civil society organizations. This ranges from 66 per cent in the Pacific to 81 per cent in Central Asia. This demonstrates the Spotlight Initiative's recognition of the women's movement and dedication to centring women and girls as leaders in its work.
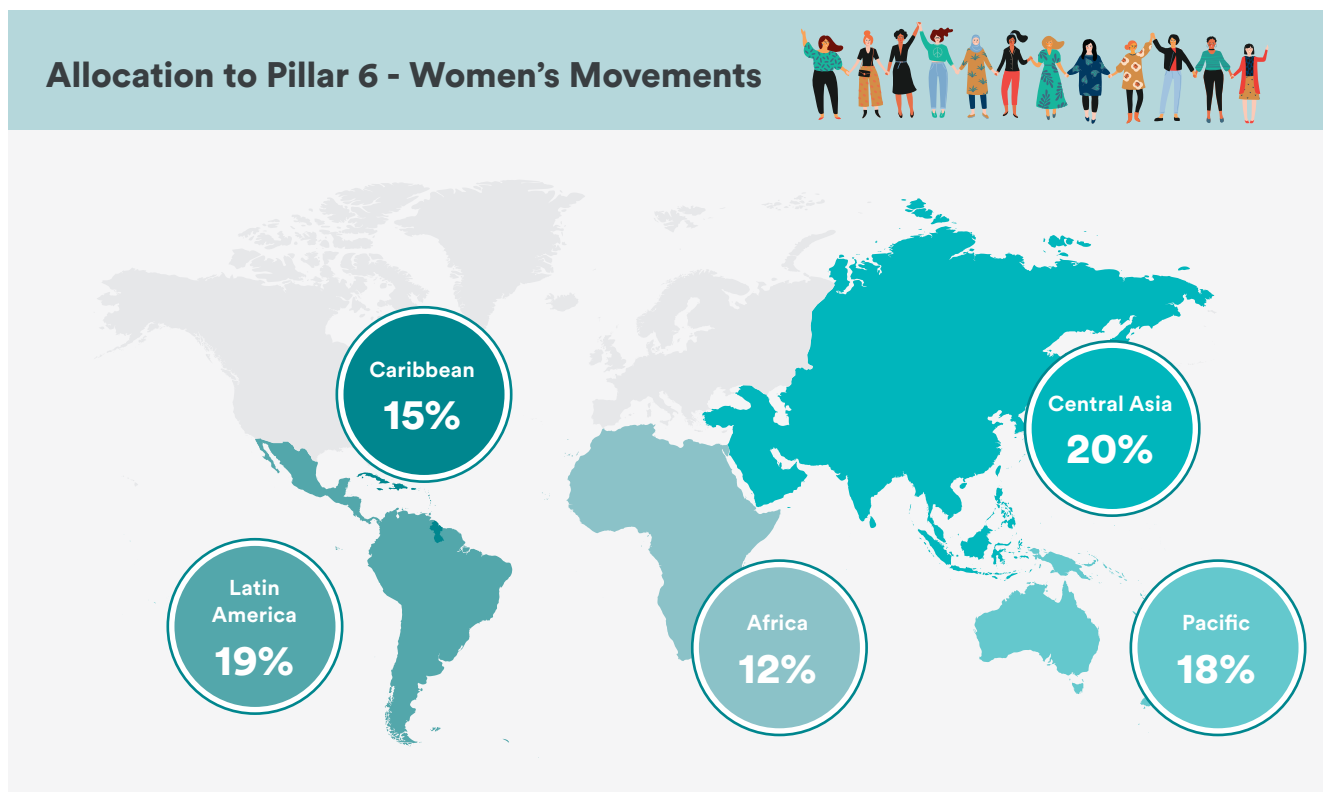
Lastly, Spotlight Initiative programmes delivered 46 per cent of civil society funding to new partners, which had not previously worked with the respective UN agency. In this field, Latin America led with 54 per cent. This demonstrates the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to support an expanded range of partners, in particular when looking at working under the leave no one behind principle, as well as increasing the number of women's organizations and other civil society organizations that have access to UN partnership opportunities.

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[27] This figure reflects all programmes for Africa and Latin America that completed their first two years of implementation, as well as programmes for Pacific, Caribbean and Central Asia that completed their first year of implementation. Please see methodology for additional information.

Our commitment to supporting the women's movement through a dedicated outcome area

The recognition that the women's movement is at the core of efforts to end violence against women and girls and harmful practices led, in 2017, to the expansion of the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change with the inclusion of Outcome 6 focusing investments on strengthening the women's movements. This includes network building, capacity strengthening, institutional funding of organizations and efforts to increase civil society organizations' influence and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls.

All Spotlight Initiative programmes commit to investing 10-15 per cent of total activity funding to Outcome 6, which is focused on supporting women's movements. Across all five regions, the Spotlight Initiative has achieved this target, with 14 per cent, about USD 33 million, of activity funding currently allocated to Outcome 6, and exceeding the target range in three out of five regions.[28]

Allocation to Pillar 6 - Women's Movements

Caribbean **15%**

Central Asia **20%**

Latin America **19%**

Africa **12%**

Pacific **18%**

* See methodology for this data in Annex C of this report.

A complete analysis on civil society organizations funding through Spotlight Initiative can be found in Annex C of this report. This includes a region-by-region analysis, further details on civil society grant-giving programmes through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women Peace and Security Fund, and detailed methodological notes and definitions related to this analysis.

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[28]   Data on implementation of planned funding at outcome level was not available for the production of this report.

Leveraging Existing Granting Mechanisms to Reach Civil Society

The Spotlight Initiative has committed to channelling 10 per cent of the overall regional envelope of each of the five regions for civil society grant-giving programmes. The partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund helps to mobilize resources to reach smaller and grassroots feminist organizations and to support women's movements.[29] The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women brings 25 years of experience in funding women's organizations and movements to prevent and end violence against women and girls, including well established systems to reach vulnerable groups and build capacities of partners. The Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund further helps bridge the development, peace and security, and humanitarian nexus by investing in enhancing women's engagement, leadership, and empowerment across all phases of crisis, peace and security, and development.

In 2019 and 2020, the **UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women** awarded about USD 24 million in direct grants to 55 civil society organizations in 25 countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. 72 per cent of the funding went to national and grassroots organizations, 93 per cent went to women's organizations and 70 per cent to first time partners to the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. In July 2020, as a COVID-19 response, USD 9.1 million was repurposed to institutional funding of existing Spotlight Initiative and UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

During the reporting period, the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund** delivered USD 4.4 million to 48 grantees in Africa, of which 100 per cent were national and grassroots organizations and 97 per cent were women's organizations with 68 per cent of funds being delivered to first time partners of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund. In July 2020, the Operational Steering Committee approved an additional USD 6 million for civil society grants channelled through the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund in **Afghanistan**, **Haiti and Papua New Guinea**. The related calls for proposals were designed to respond to the dire impacts of COVID-19 by offering organizations the option to apply for institutional and programmatic funding. In response to COVID-19, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund also provided the flexibility for existing grantees in Africa to reallocate funds in their budget to build their institutional capacity.

Further information on grant giving programmes through these two civil society grant-giving UN Trust Funds can be found in Annex C and also in Chapter 5, under Outcome 6.

Adapting UN systems and processes to improve access to funding

Aligned with Spotlight Initiative's commitment to a feminist funding approach, the Spotlight Initiative is also working to transform the partner selection processes within the UN system to become more agile, flexible and responsive to specific contexts.[30] UN agencies capitalized on simplified and joint partner selection and procurement processes to further reach and fund national and local organizations. In **Grenada,** funding was made more accessible to all groups by including the participation of civil society representatives in the design phase of the programme. This meant that the extensive requirements for those types of partners are not included in this funding modality, and it is geared towards grassroots organizations.

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[29] The civil society grant giving programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and Pacific are integrated as a Pillar 6 in their respective Spotlight Initiative Regional Programmes.

[30] For example, by simplifying requirements and application templates, providing support for legal registration of small organizations, offering a webinar on the application process, conducting extensive local outreach, etc.

©UN Women Indonesia

The team also conducted market research to develop a list of civil society organizations that could be directly invited to apply, and simplified application processes were utilized for the COVID-19 response and small grants processes (for example, risk-capacity assessment was not required and extensive requirements were not included). In **Papua New Guinea**, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund developed a pilot tutorial video,[31] which was also streamed online for prospective applicants to provide additional support in the application process, especially for those applicants with no prior UN funding experience. This led to an increased number of new partners. In **Guyana**, in the context of the COVID-19 response plan, implementing partners were selected through a competitive process that used a joint call for proposals. In **Liberia**, responding to 2019 concerns raised by civil society organizations that the different UN processes to apply for calls for proposals as implementing partners were time-consuming, complicated and cumbersome, the United Nations conducted extensive civil society organization capacity-building and held open-day orientation sessions to train potential applicants. A major achievement was a joint call for potential civil society organizations to apply for partnerships through an Expression of Interest using a single partnership platform. More than 50 civil society organizations and 100 civil society organization representatives participated in the orientation

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[31] United Nations Papua New Guinea, Call for Proposals: Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund & Spotlight Initiative Partnership.

session and gained knowledge on using the platform, including the registration process and submission of Expressions of Interest and concept notes. This resulted in the use of one standard process by all civil society organizations through one platform.

In the **Caribbean**, **Central Asia**, and **the Pacific**, several programmes pivoted toward a small grants programme that provides core institutional funding to civil society organizations. The small grants are geared towards funding grassroots organizations and fund groups traditionally unreached by funding for ending violence against women and girls. However, challenges still remain with complex proposal templates, the need for official registration and audits, resource-heavy assessments and short deadlines that may exclude small organizations from accessing funding.

A Small Grants Programme: Examples from Regional Programmes

Through a small grants component, the **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** was able to prioritize and select 12 organizations working with vulnerable women at national and grassroots levels. Members of the regional civil society reference group were particularly helpful in the targeted outreach of small grants organizations in Turkmenistan, where existing legislation on the activity of civil society organization, that regulates mechanisms on grant provision from foreign donors, might have resulted in a limited pool of civil society organization applicants in the country. One of the mandatory requirements for the applicants was the creation of information and knowledge materials with a further aim of building a regional knowledge hub, and documenting and sharing best practices among women's rights organizations and activists in the region.

In the **Pacific Regional Programme**, resourcing civil society, especially smaller civil society organizations in Pacific Island Countries that often receive less funding opportunities and investment, encourages their engagement in advocacy at national and regional levels. By targeting countries that have little to no access to funding for ending violence against women and girls, the programme was able to break the mould on feminist partnerships and support groups with a more intersectional focus. To better reach small organizations, the application process was simplified, with the requirements limited to an Expression of Interest form and the organization's registration certificate. Other supporting documents were required only from shortlisted candidates. The process aimed to reduce access barriers to funding due to bureaucratic requirements, access to technology to apply online and accessible language of funding calls and applications. Targeted technical support and mentoring throughout the process was also facilitated, in addition to learning sessions on topics of interest to grantees.

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

This chapter opens with the Theory of Change and intended Outcomes of the Spotlight Initiative and then presents the results for each of the six Pillars. This chapter will also include an analysis of and specific results on the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the Spotlight Initiative's programmes in Africa; sexual and reproductive health and rights featured prominently in these programmes, with dedicated funding to ensure the links between ending violence against women and girls and eliminating harmful practices, and the advancement of sexual and reproductive health (including a reduction in teenage pregnancy). More detailed case studies appear under each Outcome to illustrate compelling examples of change and innovative programming examples.

5.1 Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change

The Spotlight Initiative's overarching goal is to *ensure that all women, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable, live free from violence and harmful practices*. In order to achieve this, we have engaged multi-stakeholder partnerships across governments, UN agencies and the European Union, and civil society (focusing on women's and feminist movements in particular), as well as the media and the private sector.

Together with its partners, the Spotlight Initiative aims to make concrete changes in six Outcome Areas or Pillars of work:

Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation

Pillar 2: Institutions

Pillar 3: Prevention

Pillar 4: Services

Pillar 5: Data

Pillar 6: Women's Movements.

Changes in these six Outcome Areas contribute to achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but in particular, make significant contributions to SDG 5 and SDG 16.

The Spotlight Initiative's work is rooted in empirical evidence that demonstrates that the leadership and deep engagement of civil society, and particularly progressive movements, including women's rights and intersectional feminist activists and movements, is at the core of transformative and sustainable changes to eliminate violence against women and girls. This is reflected across the design and operations of the Spotlight Initiative, including in its governance structures, and features as a dedicated Pillar in the Theory of Change: Pillar 6 of the Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change that aims to strengthen women's movements and amplify their impacts across all Outcome Areas. This work is particularly

relevant given the current global context of intersecting crises, including the COVID-19 global pandemic. Globally, rates of violence against women and girls have increased, as has the economic vulnerability of women. Concomitantly, feminist, women's human rights defenders, and progressive movements have continued to face a backlash, with an uptick in the influence of right-wing conservative groups and populist political leaders whose ideologies include restrictions and rollbacks on women's rights and bodily autonomy. Research and practice have shown that the most effective way to advance policies on eliminating violence against women and girls is by supporting and strengthening progressive civil society organizations, including local and grassroots groups, and strengthen feminist movements.

Violence against women and girls manifests in different ways across local, country and regional contexts. However all forms of violence against women and girls are interlinked, and addressing the root causes in one area will impact across others. For this reason, the Spotlight Initiative has focused on and prioritized certain forms of violence in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific as entry points to addressing all violence.

- 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

- Pacific: Domestic violence and intimate partner violence

To more fully support the ecosystem to end violence against women and girls, Spotlight Initiative programmes address three cross-cutting themes, reflected below in the Initiative's Theory of Change: *mainstreaming women's rights* to ensure the equitable distribution and access to resources and opportunities and gender equality; *leaving no one behind*, ensuring that all women and girls' needs are addressed regardless of status due to poverty, geography, sexual orientation, health status, race, migratory status, profession, etc.; and *civil society organization engagement*, supporting a human rights and participatory approach to change.

5.1.1 The Context

Globally, the status of women's rights has experienced significant regression over the past year. Women have been the hardest hit by unemployment and economic impacts, owing to the precarious nature of their employment, the sectors worst impacted by the crisis, and the increased toll of unpaid care responsibilities in the home with schools shut and health facilities overwhelmed. Reports point to the possibility of a generation of gains lost on labour force participation and advances on equality. Rates of violence against women and girls have increased exponentially, with movement restrictions and lockdowns leaving many women and girls trapped inside their homes with their abusers, and without adequate opportunities to seek safety and care. Violence has increased in all quarters however, not just inside the home. Moreover the worst economic crisis in a generation has exacerbated harmful coping mechanisms, including child marriage. All of this while services and support were constrained, shut down, or overwhelmed.

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE THEORY OF CHANGE

Initiative Goal:

ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS, ESPECIALLY THOSE MOST VULNERABLE, LIVE FREE FROM VIOLENCE AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

5 GENDER EQUALITY
Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

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

1.1 Partners have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination
1.2 Partners are better able to develop evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending VAWG
1.3 Partners have greater knowledge and awareness of human rights obligations and are able to draft laws and/or policies that guarantee the ability of CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda

PILLAR 2 - INSTITUTIONS

National and sub-national 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

2.1 Officials in relevant institutions are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG
2.2 Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms established at the highest level that are adequately funded and include multi-sectoral representation and representation from the most marginalized groups
2.3 Partners have greater knowledge, capacities and tools on gender-responsive budgeting to end VAWG

PILLAR 3 - PREVENTION

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

3.1 Evidence-based programmes are developed to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours for in and out of school settings
3.2 Community advocacy platforms are established to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours
3.3 Key decision makers are better able to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending VAWG

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

4.1 Government authorities and women's rights organisations have better knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services
4.2 Survivors of violence and their families are informed of and can access quality essential services

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

5.1 Partners have strengthened capacities to regularly collect data related to VAWG
5.2 Quality prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG is analysed and made publicly available

PILLAR 6 - WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and civil society organisations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending VAWG

6.1 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate
6.2 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs are better supported to use social accountability mechanisms
6.3 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement and monitor their own programmes on ending VAWG

At the same time, this past year has also seen robust movements and demands for rights and justice globally, including gender, racial and climate justice. Social justice movements took centre stage in 2020, and activism increasingly became a part of more and more people's lives: demonstrations and protests to address the climate crisis coalesced globally, as did collective action against police brutality - from Black Lives Matter in the United States, to the End SARS protest in Nigeria, among others - with demands for an end to femicide in Mexico and France, as well. The COVID-19 pandemic generated calls for social justice, too, with health care workers demanding social protections and, in some countries, organizations pushed for legislation to cancel evictions. The Spotlight Initiative has embraced and supported this momentum, amplifying its comprehensive and unique approach, which centres civil society organizations and support to women's and feminist movement, and focuses on social-norms change.

> **"The COVID-19 pandemic has been like an X-ray – it has shown us the strengths but also the weaknesses of our societies... What we are trying to do through the Spotlight Initiative is work at two different levels: to influence legislators and decision-makers... [and] at the grassroots level, to work with civil society organizations in order to provide help and raise awareness of the issue."**
>
> - European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen, 15 September 2020, Al Jazeera 'Inside Story'
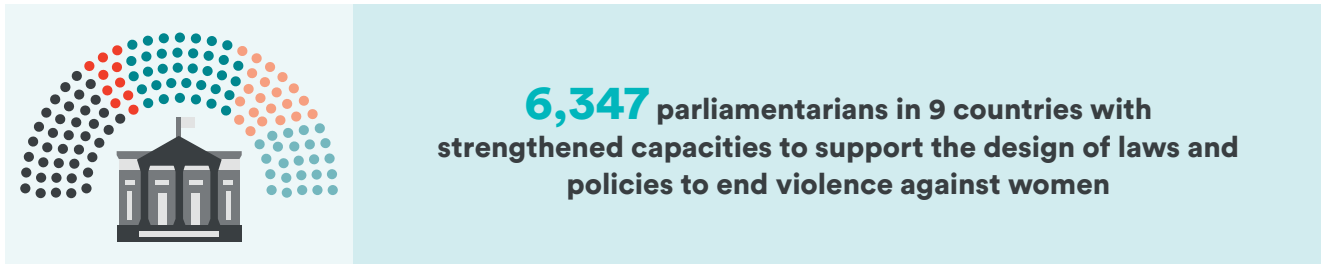
COVID-19 realities highlight the relevance and importance of the way that the Spotlight Initiative is working and its focus on civil society organizations, and feminist organizations and movements in particular. It underscores the need to invest heavily in ending violence against women and girls, the most pervasive and universal human rights crisis in the world, and in particular the need to direct resources to the actors that have been shown to make the biggest difference in achieving gender equality and legal, policy, and normative results: women's rights and feminist organizations, and progressive movements.

5.2 2020 Results: Contributing to Changes at Outcome Level

This section captures the high-level results under the Initiative's six Outcome Areas and closes with reflections on how Spotlight Initiative programmes adapted to COVID-19 realities. To see more detailed programme level information, please see the two-page summaries of the programme annual reports in Annex B.

5.2.1 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.

6,347 parliamentarians in 9 countries with strengthened capacities to support the design of laws and policies to end violence against women

Adequate responses to violence against women and girls require comprehensive legal and policy frameworks that ensure effective rights protection and specific and coordinated response mechanisms. Under this Pillar, the Spotlight Initiative focuses on developing and strengthening policies and legislation on violence against women and girls, and establishing and strengthening existing mechanisms for implementation - including through the development of national and subnational action plans - as well as ensuring alignment with international standards.

The main results achieved include:

- Laws developed or further strengthened to end violence against women and girls

- Strengthened legal and policy analysis to promote gender sensitive laws and policies

- Mobilized a range of stakeholders to strengthen implementation

- Strengthened capacity to advocate for, and input to, legislative processes

Developed new or strengthened existing laws and policies

To ensure a comprehensive legislative approach, the assessments of legal and policy frameworks served as a valuable tool that contributed to new laws, draft bills and amendments. Given that evidence shows that patriarchy is the root cause of violence against women and girls, and that ending violence requires a comprehensive approach, the Spotlight Initiative has worked on both laws and policies on violence against women and girls specifically, as well as those that promote gender equality more broadly, including family laws, personal status laws, and property laws, such as those in relation to the minimum age of marriage, divorce, child custody, identity, nationality, inheritance, and access to or control over assets and services. In 17 countries, 84 laws and policies have been signed or strengthened, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, to address violence against women and girls or to improve gender equality and women's rights.

84

laws and policies have been signed or strengthened across 17 countries

Important achievements in legal and policy frameworks were made in 2020. The Spotlight Initiative in **Mozambique**, contributed to the finalization of critical legislation and policies, including the Gender Strategy for Public Administration, HIV and AIDS Strategy in the Public Sector, and the one-stop Integrated Assistance Centres Regulation. These policies ensure that the country has an evidence-based legislative and policy framework that protects women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence, and ensures the provision of integrated, survivor-centred care, increasing access to justice. Key legislative measures were taken in **Trinidad and Tobago**, as well, including the adoption of the Ministry of Health's National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, and the development of the country's first National Child Policy and Child Protection Plan in Parliament. Taken together, these advances help to alleviate the incidence of family violence. The **African Regional Programme** also supported Mozambique, Zambia and Burkina Faso in developing new laws and strengthening existing ones to end child marriage to ensure alignment with international human rights standards.

CASE STUDY

A Survivor-Centred Approach to Legislative Development

Together with its civil society organization partners, and the strong engagement of survivors, the Initiative in **Kyrgyzstan** provided support to the improvement of four legal and policy frameworks: 1) legislation relating to domestic violence, 2) alimony, 3) free legal aid, and 4) the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace, resulting in amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code. A parliamentary working group under the Committee on Public Order, Counter-Crime and Corruption was established, which included members of the Spotlight Initiative team, that continuously consulted with survivors to develop effective measures to increase protection against domestic violence and mechanisms for its implementation. The amendment to the Law on State-Guaranteed Legal Aid encompasses a specific provision ensuring, for the first time ever, that state-funded free legal aid be made available for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. Just as meaningful as the eventual promulgation of these new laws and policies were the programme team's work to integrate the perspectives of survivors of gender-based violence in these legal processes and encouraging the use of adaptive, evidence-based approaches in governmental policy planning.

In **El Salvador,** the programme supported efforts to harmonize laws and policies on violence against women, which resulted in nine reform proposals to enhance existing policies, including ensuring reparations and addressing online violence, as well as violence against women in the political sphere.

In an effort to address a form of violence that remains largely neglected, the Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi** supported the renowned Msundwe case,[32] which resulted in groundbreaking legal precedents to protect survivors from sexual violence perpetrated by the Malawi police, and establish mechanisms to prevent such incidents.

Given the importance of leaving no one behind and due to the intrinsic linkages between violence against women and violence against children,[33] Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as those in **Papua New Guinea**, **Uganda and Nigeria**, worked to promote legislation and policies addressing these intersections with a focus on violence against young girls and adolescents. For example, in **Papua New Guinea**, the Spotlight Initiative team supported its partners to review the draft National Youth Policy, ensuring entry points for youth support, and to seek their approval for its finalization. The policy is explicitly framed within and links with the provisions of the Disability Policy, the National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence and the National Lukautim Pikinini Policy (national child protection policy). It calls for youth-led advocacy for girls' equal education and their participation in its proposed youth governance and decision-making architecture, which includes the establishment of Provincial and District Youth Councils, five-year Youth Development Plans for all provinces, a National Youth Forum and Youth Parliament, and biannual Youth District Conventions. The policy also addresses a specific focus on young people who face multiple and intersectional forms of discriminations, including those living with disabilities, those in conflict situations, and young girls and young mothers.

Women migrant workers often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination as well. Through the support of the **Safe and Fair programme,** 17 adopted or drafted legal and policy instruments were strengthened in addressing violence against women migrant workers, sexual harassment and human trafficking in **Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand** and **Viet Nam**. Safe and Fair's inputs included a specific focus on women's rights in line with normative standards from the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as the inclusion of measures for the prevention of violence and harassment in line with the recent ILO Convention C190.

Religious and traditional leaders also represent key partners with whom the Spotlight Initiative continuously engages, as customary or religious laws - regularly practiced through informal courts – provide the main avenue to address violence against women in numerous countries. Through these partnerships, the Spotlight Initiative works on advocacy and attaining commitments from traditional

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[32] The State v The Inspector General of Police and Others Ex parte M.M. and Others Judicial Review Cause No 7 of 2020 –commonly referred to as the Msundwe and Mbwatalika case. The case entails the rape of 14 women and 4 girls by the Malawi police during the post electoral violence that erupted in October 2019.

[33] Existing global research demonstrates important intersections between violence against women and violence against children, that have significant implications for health programmes, policies and research. In "Bridging the gaps: a global review of intersections of violence against women and violence against children" (Guedes A, Bott S, Garcia-Moreno C, Colombini M, Global Health Action, 2016), the authors identify six areas of intersection between violence against women and violence against children: 1) shared risk factors for perpetrating violence against women and violence against children, 2) social norms; 3) co-occurrence; 4) intergenerational effects; 5) common and compounding consequences; and 6) adolescence (the social constructs of 'violence against women' and 'violence against children' intersect at adolescence).

and religious leaders to ensure the mainstreaming of a gender-responsive approach in laws and policies addressing violence against women and girls. For example, in **Uganda** in recognition of the common use of the informal justice courts as the first recourse for communities, Spotlight Initiative supported the engagement of the Council Courts, as well as cultural and traditional leaders in gender-sensitive alternate dispute resolution techniques that are aligned with normative human rights standards.

Finally, the Spotlight Initiative recognizes that women and girls standing up for human rights have been facing increased repression and violence. Throughout its programmes, the Spotlight Initiative has been tirelessly working to ensure that governments recognize the specific challenges and risks women defenders face and has advocated for laws and policies to ensure that such defenders are recognized, supported and enabled to participate equally, meaningfully and powerfully in the promotion and protection of human rights. During the reporting period, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 21 laws and policies were developed to guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and women human-rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda.

21

laws and policies were developed to protect women human rights defenders

Conducted legal assessments, reviews, and studies to promote gender sensitive frameworks

More than 13 Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Grenada**, **Honduras**, **Kyrgyzstan**, and **Tajikistan**, conducted assessments and reviews of legal and policy frameworks related to violence against women and girls, as well as harmful practices, identifying gaps, inconsistencies, barriers to implementation, and overlap with existing framworks. These reviews engaged a wide range of stakeholders – including survivors and marginalized groups – to ensure that a plurality of perspectives were taken onboard. The assessments and reviews leveled a deeper analysis on the drivers of violence related to gender inequality and discrimination, and the various forms of violence that impact different groups differently.

Through the **Safe and Fair programme**, a review of Thailand's legal framework was finalized, covering harassment and violence in the world of work, in alignment with the Convention on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (ILO-C190). To support a regional standardization of legal frameworks and a comprehensive approach to addressing violence against women and girls, the **Latin America Regional Programme** conducted a multidimensional research study covering eighteen countries. The study explored different forms of violence in the public sphere, including femicide, human trafficking, cyber violence, and mixed migration movements, and examined their linkages with organized crime (as well as the impact of COVID-19). The study also investigated the discriminatory elements that persist in laws and legal frameworks in the region, and proposed concrete recommendations for their reform. Finally, in **Argentina**, the programme supported the country's first attempt to systematize and

assess the level of implementation of the legal protection frameworks that acknowledge the rights of the families of femicide victims, and incorporates an examination of reparations for their children and extended families.

These assessments show that significant challenges - often similar across countries - remain, including limited implementation of laws and policies, the lack of a comprehensive approach to tackle violence against women and girls, inadequate enforcement of laws, the persistence of discriminatory laws, and a lack of resources and coordination. Assessments provide a crucial source of data to inform the Spotlight Initiative's targeted approach and strategic advocacy related to strengthening and enforcing legislative and policy frameworks that are evidence-based on violence against women and girls.

Mobilized a range of stakeholders to strengthen implementation

To ensure the adequate follow up and implementation of laws and policies on violence against women, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the creation of mechanisms to ensure the enforcement of laws, strengthen legal literacy, and enable the localization of laws to community levels. In response to government resolutions, for example, the programme in **Mozambique** supported the creation of Gender Units within the Justice System Administration Institutions, which support a more coordinated gender-responsive approach and, as such, promote the rights of victims of violence against women and girls to access quality justice services. Similarly in **Haiti**, the Spotlight Initiative is supporting the Office for the Protection of Citizens to strengthen its expertise in the protection of women and the capacity of the violence against women and girls investigation units.

©Refuge des Femmes d'Haïti

In **Papua New Guinea**, the Spotlight Initiative team supported the organization of the first ever "National Summit on Ending Gender-Based Violence 2020: Focus on Women and Children." This resulted in the establishment of the first Parliamentary Committee on Ending Gender-Based Violence, a long-awaited mechanism to address concerns about the high prevalence of violence against women and children. The **Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme** is supporting the establishment of a regional network, representing the first attempt in Central Asia to develop a road map for generating and consolidating political will to address violence against women and girls. The network will work on accelerating the delivery of commitments on gender equality and on providing key recommendations to decision-makers to support progressive policy development on violence against women and girls in the region.

Partnership building and engagement with women's organizations is also a crucial Pillar of the Spotlight Initiative. Facilitating the space for women migrant workers to engage in policy advocacy, the **Safe**

and Fair programme supported the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) and migrant worker associations Persatuan Pekerja Rumah Tangga Indonesia Migran (PERTIMIG), Indonesia, and Asosasyon ng mga Makabayang Manggagawang Pilipino Overseas (AMMPO), Philippines to initiate an online dialogue with the Malaysia Government on Inclusive Labour Law Reform "Domestic Workers Have Their Rights Too!" This was attended by 69 participants, including the Ministry of Human Resource, Indonesian and Filipino migrant domestic workers (MDWs), Malaysian Trades Union Congress (MTUC), and local civil society organizations in Malaysia. The dialogue series pushed for legal protection of migrant domestic workers through the existing labour law reform, as well as to strengthen the dialogue among different stakeholders on migration issues. IDWF-facilitated dialogue also followed up on the pending Memorandum of Understanding on recruitment and protection of migrant domestic workers between Malaysia and Indonesia. The Indonesian ambassador subsequently committed to ensure key provisions are integrated: the embassy now requires the presence of both the worker and the employer in renewing the contract; and embassy staff will conduct interviews with both parties to make sure workers are getting the minimum protection, such as standard wages, holidays, and access to communication.

Since lack of legal literacy represents a key challenge to upholding the rights of victims, Spotlight Initiative programmes also worked to sensitize the public on legislative frameworks, including by presenting policies in an easy-to-understand way, raising awareness and translating laws and policies into local languages. For example, in **Nigeria**, the programme contributed to the translation of the Violence Against Persons Prohibition into four local languages and promoted its dissemination, which has resulted in improved knowledge among various communities, including people living with disabilities. In **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative programme supported the distribution of pamphlets detailing various legislative frameworks on preventing violence against women and girls (translated to Liberian English for the first time) to 150 communities, and it also supported stakeholder sensitization workshops which contributed to an increase in survivors' reporting of violence in 23 communities, with more perpetrators arrested.

Strengthened capacity to advocate and influence laws and policies

Partnership with civil society organizations is a crucial principle of the Spotlight Initiative. Through the support of the programme in **Nigeria**, seven laws and policies received direct inputs from civil society organizations, while in **Niger,** the Civil Society Reference Group leveraged and combined the experience of a range of stakeholders to develop common policy recommendations to prevent the risk of violence during the electoral process. In **Jamaica,** the programme held multisectoral dialogues to facilitate a more coordinated approach between civil society organizations and the Government to develop laws and policies that promoted gender equality and the advancement of human rights. In **Grenada,** a National Victim's Rights Policy is being drafted by civil society organizations in consultation with survivors to ensure high quality services are survivor centred, timely, accessible, and of high quality.

In an effort to ensure that no one is left behind, Spotlight Initiative programmes – including in **Zimbabwe**, **Honduras**, **Nigeria**, **Niger**, **Jamaica**, **Uganda** and **Grenada** - engaged and mobilized a wide range of stakeholders in dialogue and consultation to strengthen legislative and policy frameworks and enhance the capacity of women, civil society organizations and marginalized groups to advocate for and claim their rights. In Nigeria and Uganda, the capacity of 688 women's rights advocates were enhanced

to lobby for enacting pending bills, for improving safety and protection of women and increasing accountability from stakeholders especially during the COVID-19 lockdown.

The Spotlight Initiative supported improved capacity in legislative drafting, analysis, and policymaking across programmes, including in **Niger**, **Mali**, **Nigeria**, **Malawi**, **Mozambique**, **Uganda**, and **Zimbabwe**. **In 2020, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 6 347 parliamentarians, including more than 4,000 women, in nine countries received training and information on how to draft and review legislation related to violence against women and girls and other forms of discrimination**. As a result, with enhanced capacity, trained parliamentarians contributed to passing and strengthening more than 84 laws during the reporting period. In 2020, 2,392 key government officials were targeted and exit interviews demonstrated increased awareness of human rights standards and obligations and strengthened capacities to develop laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women's rights groups, civil society organizations and women human-rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda. A total of 1,733 of those key government officials reported that they later participated in the development of new laws and policies.

In **Nigeria**, the programme conducted training sessions for 470 women's rights defenders, enhancing their ability to influence laws and policies and to independently monitor Nigeria's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, including those related to sexual violence and violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. As a result, these partners have demanded government accountability, and contributed to the development of laws and policies that address violence against women. The Spotlight Initiative also supported ten inquiries conducted by human rights institutions on violence against women and gender equality. More generally, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 1,525 staff from human rights institutions in national and regional programmes have received trainings on gender equality, non-discrimination and ending violence against women and girls.

CASE STUDY

Leave No One Behind in Zimbabwe

Aligned with the principle of leaving no one behind, the Spotlight Initiative in **Zimbabwe** supported more than 200 women and girls with disabilities to engage in law and policy making, enabling their participation (for the first time) in several public consultations, including hearings on the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.2 Bill. Women and girls with disabilities and organizations representing people with disabilities prepared and submitted a Position Paper to Parliament on the No.2. Bill in July 2020.

Diverse women's demands were heard, including on economic empowerment, access to loans and the need to ensure government budget allocations across ministries. Advocates also called for a budget that approaches disability as a human rights issue rather than a charity or medical one and also shared their views on the disability grant, income tax threshold, tax rebate, allocation of funds to ministries, and their disability and gender priority areas for funding through the national budget.

Throughout the efforts of Spotlight Initiative programmes to strengthen laws and policies on violence against women partnership building plays an important role in achieving substantive results.

5.2.2 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.

58%

of national multi-sectoral programmes included a proposed budget allocation to end violence against women and girls

Institutions at the national and subnational levels 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, involving actors across all levels and branches of government, as well as across ministries (health, social services, education, finance, justice, security, and culture). Such an approach ensures that efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls are coherently incorporated across plans, policies, budgets and activities, and that responses are efficient and effective.

The main results achieved include:

- More countries integrate ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices into sector development plans, and more national action plans on violence against women and girls are strengthened or developed

- Strengthened institutional mechanisms or bodies designed to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices

- More countries engage 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

More countries integrate ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices into sector development plans, and have developed or stregtehened national action plans on violence against women and girls

Although COVID-19 and the resultant mitigating measures, including lockdowns, made progress more difficult, Spotlight Initiative programmes created new possibilities through the COVID-19 response to mainstream the elimination of violence against women and girls in national and regional institutional development efforts. In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to the design of 88 strategies, plans,

or programmes - at national or sub-national levels - aimed at preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, in 19 countries.

Nearly 40 per cent of Spotlight Initiative countries have integrated the elimination of violence against women and girls and harmful practices into other sectors' development plans (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture), in line with globally agreed standards. In **Argentina**, **Honduras**, **Malawi**, **Mozambique**, **Nigeria** and **Zimbabwe**, this led to the design of 73 sector-specific strategies, plans and programmes. This is critical as it ensures that violence against women and girls is taken seriously in all areas of work of governments, and it provides more assurance that interventions will have a sustainable impact across all key sectors.

In addition to ensuring violence against women and girls is reflected in sectoral development plans, the Spotlight Initiative has emphasized the obligation of states to adopt and implement specific national action plans (NAPs) to address violence against women and girls, as well. National action plans are concrete tools to ensure an effective, comprehensive, and nationally relevant response to violence against women and girls. They demonstrate a government's accountability to rights holders, and to the international community, helping to facilitate reporting to international bodies and treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). In addition, a focus on addressing informal and religious policies and laws are critical to national uptake and cultural adoption.

19 National Action Plans to eliminate violence against women and girls were strengthened with the support of the Spotlight Initiative
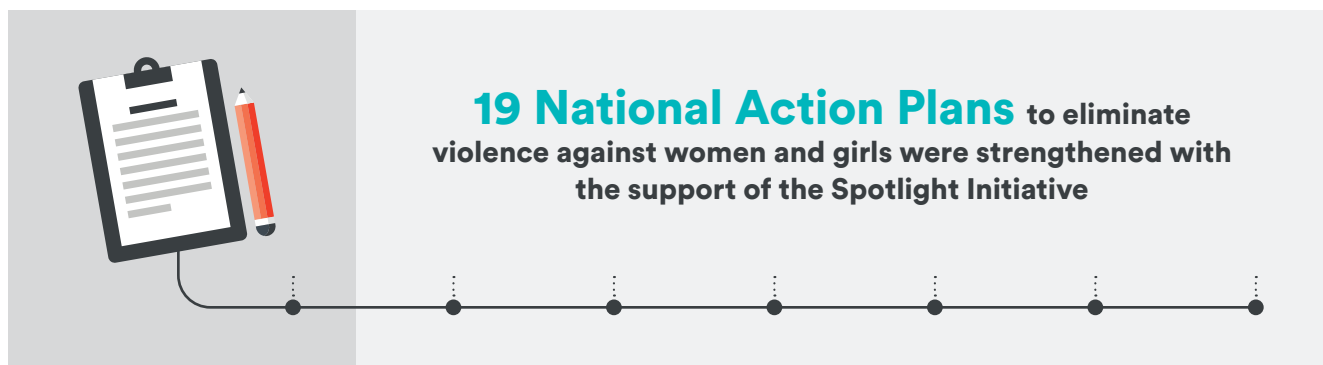
Through advocacy at the highest level, Spotlight Initiative and partners have supported more decision-makers in government to take violence against women and girls seriously and address the issue in national plans and across diverse government sectors. Multi-stakeholder collaboration led to successful national action planning across multiple country contexts including **Zimbabwe, Timor-Leste, Tajikistan**, and **Vanuatu**. In **Zimbabwe**, Spotlight Initiative supported the first costed National Action Plan on Ending Child Marriages. In collaboration with service providers and the Justice, Law and Order Service (JLOS) Secretariat, Spotlight Initiative supported the development of a roadmap toward implementing a constitutional provision that sets 18 years as the legal age of marriage. In **Vanuatu**, Spotlight Initiative supported the implementation of an action plan to support women and girls with disabilities, particularly in emergency settings, in cooperation with disabled people's organizations. The action plan increased access to and availability of survivor-centred and quality essential services for women and girls with

disabilities.In South East Asia, the Spotlight Initiative, through the **Safe and Fair programme**, provided technical support to 4 national action plans in 3 countries (Cambodia, Malaysia and Lao People's Democratic Republic) on violence against women and human trafficking, ensuring the integration of a survivor-centred approach, the inclusion of prevention of violence and of coordinated multi-sectoral service provision and a focus on the specific needs of women migrant workers, among all women.

CASE STUDY

Challenges and Possibilities Emerged During COVID-19: Safe and Fair's Adaptation Strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for political advocacy initiatives of the **Safe and Fair programme**. However, while it caused major delays to national action plans, and to the passing of laws and strategies that were in progress prior to the pandemic, it did open new windows for better political frameworks to protect women, including migrant worker survivors of violence. The importance of allocating resources for essential services for responding to violence and the inclusion of women migrant workers in national COVID-19 responses were among the key focuses of Safe and Fair advocacy interventions. Safe and Fair advocated for the importance of maintaining or strengthening the availability of coordinated quality essential services for women migrant workers, including survivors of violence in an emergency context like COVID-19, through the provision of technical inputs on national and regional COVID-19 strategies and action plans. In Indonesia, the programme supported the development of the "Protocol for Handling Cases for Gender-based Violence and Human Trafficking of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers during the 19 Pandemic", which successfully addressed the specific needs of women migrant worker survivors of violence. As a result of its dissemination, a formal request by the government in Viet Nam was issued for the programme to support a similar protocol in the Viet Nam context.

During the reporting period, a range of Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Belize**, **Haiti**, **Timor-Leste**, **El Salvador** and **the Africa Regional Programme**, worked on reviewing and updating existing national action plans on violence against women and girls. Based on the advocacy and technical support provided by the **Africa Regional Programme**, five countries (**Eritrea**, **Central African Republic**, **Kenya**, **Niger**, and **South Sudan**) have costed and launched their evidence-based national action plans with monitoring and evaluation frameworks to end child marriage, and five additional countries (**Angola**, **Gambia**, **Guinea-Bissau**, **Senegal** and **South Africa**) are currently developing national action plans to end child marriage. Given the increase in violence against women and girls driven by the global pandemic, several countries worked to ensure an effective response to violence against women within national action plans on COVID-19. In **Haiti,** for example, a Gender Response Plan for COVID-19 was developed with a focus on gender-based violence to strengthen planning, coordination, advocacy, resource mobilization, and women's leadership in the COVID-19 response.

In **Liberia,** the President declared rape to be a national emergency for 2020–2022, and outlined specific measures to address sexual and gender-based violence, including the appointment of a Special Prosecutor for rape and the establishment of a National Sex Offender Registry and a National Security Taskforce on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. An initial allocation of USD 2 million was made by the government to roll out the Anti-Gender-Based Violence Road Map. The Spotlight Initiative influenced

these processes, holding extensive consultations during the development of the Comprehensive Prevention Strategy, raising awareness and supporting advocacy efforts.

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 have focused on strengthening or creating new institutional mechanisms or bodies that address violence against women and girls across sectoral plans, supporting coherent multisectoral prevention and response, including through programmes in **Argentina**, **Mozambique**, **Tajikistan** and **the Latin American Regional Programme**. In **Mozambique,** Gender-Based Violence Response Units were established in the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Justice, the National Criminal Investigation Service, the National Human Rights Commission, and in the Ombudsman's Office, and Spotlight Initiative supported a Gender Unit in the Attorney General's Office. These bodies helped ensure coherence (and formalization) across sectors, and improved the ability of the justice sector and duty bearers more generally to respond to violence against women and girls. In **Tajikistan**, government and national-level partners (Committee on Women and Family Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Prosecutors' Office), with the participation of civil society members representing marginalized groups, drafted regulation to establish a well-functioning national and subnational coordination and oversight mechanism at the highest level of government to address violence against women and girls and harmful practices. Currently being reviewed by other government partners and civil society organizations, the final version will be submitted in 2021.

Other Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as those in **Grenada** and **Trinidad and Tobago,** established high-level political oversight mechanisms to focus attention on the elimination of violence against women and girls and service options.

In **Trinidad and Tobago,** for instance, together with government focal points and civil society, significant progress was made in the establishment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee, a national coordination and oversight mechanism at the highest level of government to address violence against women and girls. A Multi-Stakeholder Case Management Committee sub-committee was also approved and will be established in 2021 to ensure coordinated and targeted case management and referrals. The Inter-Ministerial Committee involves groups from multiple sectors, including marginalized groups, who provide technical support and advice to the Inter-Ministerial Committee in order to ensure that efforts to address violence against women and girls are inclusive and responsive to the needs of those who face multiple forms of discrimination and violence.

Spotlight Initiative programmes also worked to integrate the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emergencies into institutional bodies and mechanisms. In **Kyrgyzstan**, the Spotlight Initiative helped conduct a Rapid Gender Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on, inter alia, vulnerable groups. Recommendations were presented to the Vice Prime Minister and members of line ministries to enable a coordinated response by state institutions and crisis centres to violence against women and girls. An inter-agency working group inclusive of several ministries was established, addressing long-standing challenges in coordinating a national-level institutional response to violence against women and girls during states of emergency. In **Vanuatu**, Spotlight Initiative made advances in ensuring gender equality

and violence against women and girls were systematically addressed following natural disasters and emergencies. In partnership with the National Disaster Management Office, Spotlight Initiative began institutionalizing protection for women, girls, and those most vulnerable and marginalized in disaster and emergency settings through the national disaster management guidance, the development of standard operating procedures, and the use of training manuals.

56%

of targeted countries have a multi-stakeholder national level coordination mechanism – often at the highest level of government – on violence against women and girls

TABLE 2.2.1. STATUS OF COORDINATION MECHANISMS IN 2020

Status of multi-stakeholder national coordination mechanisms, in 2020				
Established at the highest level	Composed of relevant stakeholders	With a clear mandate and governance structure	With annual work plans	N/A there is no coordination mechanism
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	●	●	●		

As evidenced, Spotlight Initiative programmes have either newly established or strengthened existing multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms in the last year to coherently address violence against women and girls. These efforts have not only improved coordination across activities, but also helped to ensure that issues related to violence against women and girls are reflected in other sector plans. Experience now also shows that the representation of survivors of violence and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination, usually by civil society, makes a critical difference in terms of these mechanisms integrating a survivor centred and human-rights based approach, and responding to the needs of women and girls. To date, 56 per cent of targeted countries have coordination mechanisms that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.
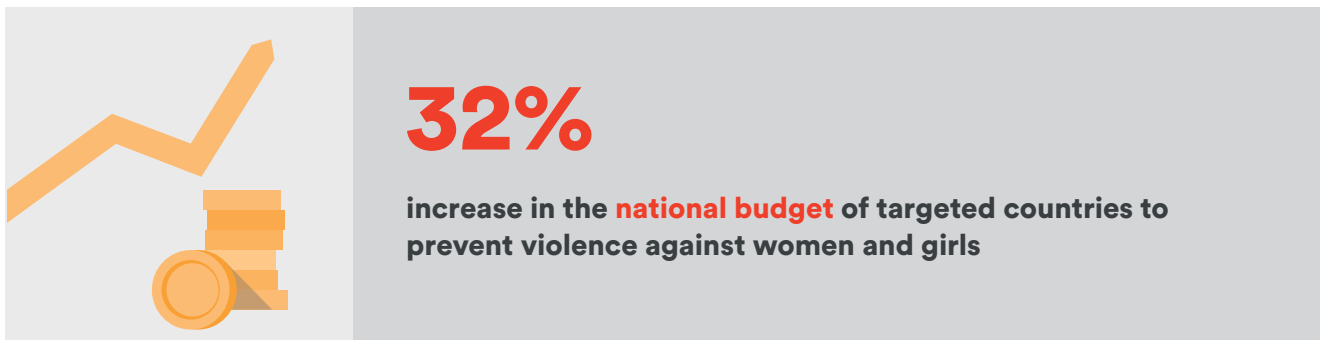
More countries engage in gender-responsive budgeting activities to eliminate violence against women and girls and increase budget lines for this work

Programmes and services dedicated to eliminating violence against women and girls are often insufficiently resourced. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) helps ensure that priorities and programmes addressing violence against women and girls are adequately financed and appropriately monitored for full implementation.

During the reporting period, in the ten countries that prioritized these activities, 180 parliamentarians, 995 government officials and 4,607 women's rights advocates were trained on gender-responsive budgeting and are now better equipped to advocate for the allocation of resources for eliminating violence against women and girls.

As a result, there was a 32 per cent increase in the proportion of national budgets allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls reported across ten countries targeted by the Spotlight Initiative, compared to last year. On average, 0.24 per cent of the national budgets of **Haiti**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Timor-Leste** (see below), **Liberia**, **Malawi**, **Mali**, **Mozambique**, **Niger**, **Nigeria**, and **Uganda** were dedicated to ending violence against women and girls.

Trained on gender-responsive budgeting:

180	**995**	**365**
parliamentarians	government officials	women's rights advocates

32%

increase in the national budget of targeted countries to prevent violence against women and girls

As a first step to ensuring dedicated budget lines, a range of Spotlight Initiative programmes supported governments in gender-responsive budgeting. Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Argentina**, **Mali**, **Mozambique**, **Niger**, and **Zimbabwe** focused on supporting awareness of gender-responsive budgeting through trainings. A diverse set of stakeholders, from government officials in ministries and parliamentarians to civil society organizations were engaged across programmes. In **Niger**, for example, progress was made to institutionalize gender-responsive budgeting through a multi-pronged partnership among government ministries (Gender, Planning and Finance) and the Spotlight Initiative. As a result, a national strategy was developed as well as two methodological guides to support the integration of gender equality into plans and budgets at the national and local levels.

Some countries, such as **Nigeria**, **Malawi**, and **Liberia** helped ensure dedicated budget lines to advance gender equality, translating improved awareness on gender-responsive budgeting into resourced action. Through trainings with 4,607 women's rights advocates on gender-responsive budgeting and advocacy to integrate the elimination of violence against women into national budgets and plans, two Nigerian states (Adamawa and Ebonyi) have committed to the inclusion of budget lines for sexual and gender-based violence in 2021. In **Liberia**, gender-responsive budgeting was implemented in three additional ministries, for a total of six ministries. In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative developed a Gender and Disability Analysis Tool to ensure the integration of the analysis of ability status and sexual and gender-based violence in district and local development plans. Using the tool helped to ensure the inclusion of gender and disability in three district development plans in Nsanje, Ntchisi, and Mzimba, and substantially increased budgetary allocations, between 35-45 per cent depending on the district, supporting efforts to leave no one behind.

Other key achievements related to gender-responsive budgeting included assessments and research that detailed key gaps in attention to, and funding of initiatives to end violence against women and girls, carried out in **Uganda**, **Honduras**, and **the Pacific Regional Programme**. For example, in **Uganda**, an assessment by the Civil Society Budget Advocacy group found that 80 per cent of the ministries, departments and agencies and local governments did not have budgets specific to addressing violence against women and girls and harmful practices. This data was used for advocacy and resulted in integrating indicators on violence against women and girls and sexual and reproductive health and rights into local government performance assessments.

Spotlight Initiative teams built collaboration and partnership structures for ongoing support, collective research and mentoring and, through these strategies, common advocacy agendas to influence formal policies, procedures, actions and programmes. For example, through the **Pacific Regional Programme**, in **Solomon Islands** and **Fiji**, discussions with government and civil society partners on planning and preparation in order to cost policies linked to addressing violence gave a spur of momentum to a regional discussion on gender-responsive budgeting that has been lagging for several years. These discussions helped elevate the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat's regional gender-responsive budgeting priority area as well as add increased validation to plans in Fiji to develop a National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls with resourcing from the Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls. These innovative policy endeavours and string of high-level engagements set examples for the region and help to give credibility to a regional dialogue on what could work in the Pacific region based on national experiences.

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Not all countries, however, saw progress on gender-responsive budgeting in 2020, underscoring the continued relevance of advocating for its adoption. In **Timor-Leste**, for example, the Government decreased funding to gender-based violence from 0.6 per cent of the budget (USD 10.4 million) in 2019 to 0.1 per cent of the budget and (USD 1.4 million) in 2020, with the decrease expected to be maintained through 2021. To respond, the Spotlight Initiative engaged a gender expert to advocate in parliament for greater funding for women's human rights and ending violence against women and girls in 2021, and in particular to underscore the importance of maintaining lifesaving survivor-centred services.

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

Across programmes, Spotlight Initiative has worked to better equip decision-makers in targeted institutions to design and implement policies, programmes, and activities aimed at preventing and responding to all forms of violence against women and girls. Duty bearers, such as police, the justice sector, and other ministries have received trainings to increase their ability to address violence against women and girls in **Mali**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Timor-Leste**, and **Trinidad and Tobago**. In **Kyrgyzstan**, for example, a mandatory police training programme is under development to support gender-sensitive and survivor-centred justice processes and mechanisms. As part of the programme, an

inter-agency working group and the Police Academy are working in partnership to collate best practices on addressing violence against women and girls, and, as a result, several updates have been made to the mobile application "My community police officer", which facilitates improved communication between citizens and police officers and increases access to emergency hotlines for domestic violence. In **Timor-Leste**, the programme made advancements in strengthening the skills of national- and municipal-level community police officers to investigate, document, and report domestic violence cases, especially related to marginalized women living in rural areas.

To achieve this, the Spotlight Initiative specifically targeted training institutions involved in the education of decision-makers, civil servants, and other practitioners across all sectors involved in the elimination of violence, harmful practices and discrimination. These efforts included the design of specific curriculums, the integration of key case-studies in syllabuses as well as the inclusion of experts, activists and survivors of violence in training processes. In the seven countries where these efforts have been prioritized (**El Salvador**, **Honduras**, **Liberia**, **Mozambique**, **Uganda**, and **Zimbabwe**) 29 per cent of targeted national and subnational training institutions for public servants have now integrated gender equality and ending violence against women and girls in their curriculum, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative. More generally, a total of 6,291 key government officials, including 5,076 women, demonstrate increased knowledge and capacities on human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and 6,934 government officials (5,162 women) strengthened their capacities to develop and deliver programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls.

29% of targeted national and sub-national training institutions integrated gender equality and violence against women and girls in their curriculum
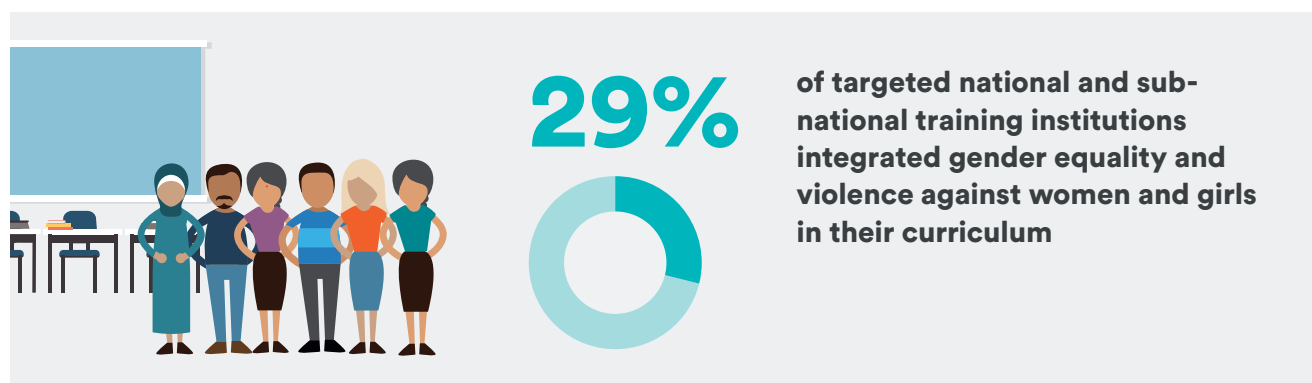
Across many Spotlight Initiative programmes, responsibility to address violence against women and girls has been decentralized to local governments or institutions, with subnational authorities or networks often the first point of contact for survivors. It is thus paramount that the roles and responsibilities among various levels of government are clearly delineated to ensure no overlap. A number of Spotlight Initiative countries have integrated a bottom-up approach to strengthening local government capacities to deliver, including **Malawi, Mali, Papua New Guinea** and **Uganda**. In **Malawi,** the Government deployed training on gender and disability at five community-based decision-making structures that were developing village action plans. Results from the trainings included sexual and gender-based violence, harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights indicators being integrated

into village action plans, supporting deeper attention and increased budgets for gender and disability issues at the village and district level.

In **Uganda**, in 2020 progress was made towards long-term sustainability through integrating gender-based violence response interventions into the Programme Implementation Action Plans in the Country Programme Joint Work Plans of the National Development Plan III and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021 – 2025) under the themes of Human Capital Development and Community Mobilization and Mindset Change. In 2021, this work will be deepened and there will be an assessment of the integration of gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health and rights, resulting in findings being integrated into district work plans. Further linking to provincial levels of government and deploying responsibility closer to people in communities related to social welfare services, Spotlight Initiativein **Papua New Guinea** continued providing provincial technical support to the Government to implement the Lukautim Pinkini Act (LPA) 2015. While technical assistance was provided in 2020, other concrete actions to decentralize social welfare services and responsibilities from the national to the provincial level were stalled due to COVID-19 and will continue in 2021.

5.2.3 Pillar 3: Prevention

Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices.
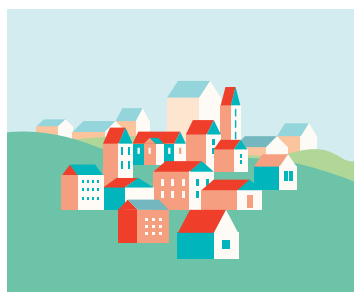
3,405 villages, districts and other communities have advocacy platforms for the prevention of violence

The drivers of violence against women and girls are socially constructed, with extensive evidence demonstrating that this violence can be prevented. Investing in prevention promotes protection and complements response efforts, ensures women's and girls' rights, and disrupts the cycles of violence that further result in the erosion of these rights and the loss of life. As such, this Pillar is central to the Spotlight Initiative's strategic approach and investments. It is also critical to sustain efforts to end violence against women and girls and attain Sustainable Development Goals 5.2 and 5.3.

Spotlight Initiative's prevention efforts aim to tackle systems of oppression and gender discrimination, driven by patriarchal social norms and practices, where violence against women is rooted. This includes addressing gender stereotypes, biases and abuses of power, as well as inequalities in resources and rights. Recognizing that social change requires a comprehensive approach, the Spotlight Initiative works on these issues across different levels (societal, community and individual), and supports and promotes movement-building to generate increased public support to end violence and promote gender equality, including by collaborating with civil society, particularly women's rights and feminist organizations.

With support from the Spotlight Initiative, 31 per cent of targeted countries have at least three evidence-based, transformative, comprehensive prevention strategies or programmes that are focused on uprooting the drivers of violence against women.

While changes in attitudes can be visible in a shorter time frame, impacting norms and behaviours is a long-term effort. These efforts take time to achieve and are often non-linear in their trajectory, as backlashes, though often a sign of progress, can intermittently hinder advances.

The main results achieved include:

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

- Strengthened evidence and knowledge production around violence against women and girls

- Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviour

- Shifted norms and attitudes of youth

More influential public campaigns and engaged media, including through radio and messaging, advanced efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls

Campaigns and messaging

Grounded by research in what works, Spotlight Initiative programmes include bespoke campaigns that reach a broad public through various platforms, including television, the internet, printed publications, billboards and radio. Over the course of 2020, 80 campaigns were launched across 19 countries, reaching more than 65 million people with locally designed messages and behaviour-change methodologies, in at least 15 different languages. Alongside the work to promote community mobilization, and in the efforts to challenge attitudes and behaviours that condone violence, these campaigns have contributed to raising awareness, promoting discussion and social-norm change, and increasing knowledge of services and laws. Spotlight Initiative campaigns in **Grenada**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Tajikistan**, **Argentina**, **El Salvador**, **Honduras**, **Liberia**, **Mali**, **Mozambique**, **Zimbabwe**, as well as through the **Latin America Regional Programme** (focusing on the crucial role of women human rights defenders), and the **Safe and Fair** programme, have contributed significantly to heightening awareness of violence against women and girls as a violation of human rights that affects society as a whole and have helped to rally support for and influence change in international and national legislative and policy frameworks. In **Samoa**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative designed a behaviour-change communication 16 Days of Healing campaign anchored in traditions, but amplified by social media and innovative communication. Designed by the programme's Civil Society Reference Group, the campaign used the codes and references of traditional Polynesian dance, storytelling and community conversations, disseminated through social media, TV, and radio. While it is too early to measure the impact of this campaign, the level of engagement, across generations as well as in communities all around the country including in very remote areas, shows very positive prospects.
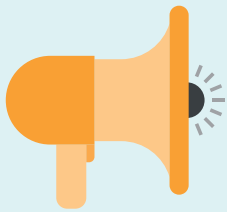
More than
65 million

people were reached through 80 locally tailored behaviour change multimedia campaigns in more than 15 languages

Aside from social norms and behaviour-change efforts, these campaigns also conveyed specific messages targeting women and girls to inform them of their rights, raise awareness on various forms of violence and inform them about accessing services and holding perpetrators accountable. In 2020, it is estimated that up to 30 million women and girls (21,165,509 women and 7,195,967 girls) were better informed on their rights and access to services.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, recognizing a major increase in violence, Spotlight Initiative programmes redoubled efforts in advocating for the prevention of violence against women and girls to be integrated into communication plans related to the pandemic. Among others, programmes in **Honduras**, **Grenada**, **Mali,** and **Zimbabwe** created impactful messages informing women and girls of their rights, warning men of the consequences of acts of violence and providing information about services. In **Jamaica,** the Spotlight Initiative was tasked by the National COVID-19 Response Team to design communication messages on gender-based violence and organized a consultation with civil society and survivors' groups to ensure that the materials were survivor-centered and reflected an intersectional approach. The materials below were used throughout the country, and on social media, generating 74,454,000 impressions on traditional and social media platforms.

In **Liberia,** the Spotlight Initiative responded to challenges with reporting sexual and gender-based violence cases due to lockdown measures by broadcasting mobile and radio messages to raise awareness among approximately 100,000 people in 13 districts and 104 communities. After a two-week awareness campaign, 245 calls were made reporting rape in the districts covered. **Uganda**, **Timor-Leste** and **Niger** all launched high-scale multi-media campaigns, aimed at reaching a large part of each country's population (almost half of the population in Uganda and Niger, and more than a quarter in Timor-Leste).

The campaigns are expected to contribute to positioning violence against women and girls as a public (health) issue, elevating this rights violation onto national political agendas.

In **Trinidad and Tobago** and **Haiti,** the Spotlight Initiative launched radio campaigns and messaging challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, and in **Haiti**, this reached 13,480 people as part of the *'mwen kanpe ave'* (I am With Her) campaign that also established a coalition of 13 civil society organizations. In **Zimbabwe**, Spotlight Initiative developed a new weekly radio programme, 'Let's Talk Gender-Based Violence' that aired on a popular radio station with a reach of 4.2 million people. In **Mozambique**, 9 mini radio dramas were produced on mitigating the secondary impact of COVID-19 on violence against women and girls and were broadcast twice per week by 115 government and community radio stations. In **Mali,** Spotlight Initiative developed a TV series called *"Dance inlassable"* ("Tireless Dance"), comprising 54 episodes, aimed at addressing deep-rooted stereotypes and gender norms related to child marriage, girls' education, female genital mutilation, rape, and sexual violence. The TV series, which will be released next year, will contribute to creating a dynamic exchange around these sensitive topics at both the national and the local level. Spotlight Initiative in **Mozambique** also creatively engaged in socially-distanced community mobilization - megaphones and cars were used to disseminate messages for the prevention of violence against women and girls throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as on available services for survivors, which covered approximately 183,168 households.

Engaging the media: Responsible reporting
The media plays a crucial role in either reinforcing or challenging community attitudes and norms that condone violence against women and girls, as they often portray or promote the existing gender inequalities within society. As such, the media - particularly media that has the potential to reach and impact large populations - can be a powerful tool to move beyond awareness raising to influencing substantial transformation in norms and attitudes on violence against women.

This entails, for example, amplifying positive representations of women, reversing narratives around victim blaming, and portraying survivors as agents of change. In **Argentina**, **Mali**, **Uganda** and **Liberia,** the Spotlight Initiative partnered with media associations and training institutions and organized workshops with journalists to promote more gender-sensitive and survivor-centred approaches to reporting cases of violence against women and girls and to engage journalists, radio hosts, and news anchors as allies and advocates. In **El Salvador**, Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Salvadoran Media Network (RSM) to design the first professional diploma for "research and journalistic reports with a gender approach aimed at communicators". Materials were co-designed with civil society and the course included conversations with survivors and interventions from prominent activists. The first cohort of more than 100 journalists were awarded the diploma in 2020. In the six countries that prioritized these activities, 398 news outlets developed standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting. Additionally, more than 2000 journalists, including 1000 women, were trained on concepts related to gender and to report on violence against women and girls or, more broadly, gender equality with greater sensitivity.

398 **news outlets**

**adopted standards on ethical and
gender-sensitive reporting**

2,020 journalists are better equipped to
sensitively report on concepts related to gender, gender
equality more broadly and violence against women and girls.

CASE STUDY

"Enough"! A Campaign Co-Designed with the Clarin Media Group in Argentina

In **Argentina,** Spotlight Initiative partnered with one of the largest national media and news companies, Clarin Group, to design a media campaign called "Obituarios" (obituaries). The effort gathered the obituaries of more than 300 victims of femicides, including trans women, murdered during the previous year in Argentina. These obituaries were published and covered in all the media of the Clarin Group, including in the Clarín newspaper (the most-widely circulated newspaper in Latin America) on Wednesday 3 June (fifth anniversary of the first mobilization of "Ni una menos"). Related ads were also broadcasted on TV (channel 13 and TN) and covered by news anchors throughout the day. The campaign won two awards for its impact: The Obrar Prize, from the Argentinian Publicity Council, and the Eikon Prize for excellence in institutional communication. The campaign aimed to position gender violence on the national political agenda, giving the data a human face.

Increased community mobilization to promote gender equitable norms, attitudes, and behaviours

Behaviours result from individual experiences, attitudes, and beliefs. Attitudes and actions of neighbours, friends, co-workers, religious leaders, police, health care providers, etc. further influence an individual's behaviour choices and create a collective climate in the community. In its interventions under this Pillar, and as a complement to the media campaigns presented above, Spotlight Initiative focused its prevention efforts on community mobilization, promoting the 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
- Be grounded in a well conceptualized theory of change, informed by evidence on the root causes and drivers 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 (periodicity depends on the context), with participant engagement - particularly by those facing intersecting forms of discrimination - expected throughout the programme.

Grounded by the principle of community engagement, and **with Spotlight Initiative support, 3405 villages, districts and communities across 11 programmes have now set up advocacy platforms to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours. Community mobilization efforts by the Spotlight Initiative reached nearly 2,000,000 community members (men, women, boys and girls) through community dialogues and interpersonal as well as collective engagement aimed at transforming collective norms and stereotypes and promoting behaviour change**.

Community mobilization efforts directly reached nearly

2,000,000

community members through dialogues and interpersonal conversations

In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative programme continues to support the organization Raising Voices in implementing SASA!, one of the most comprehensive and successful models of community mobilization across sub-Saharan Africa and other parts of the world. Designed to share new ideas and behaviours to community members through mass media, dramas performed in public spaces and interpersonal communication with change agents, community mobilization activities encourage the whole community — individuals, leaders and institutions — to question and change what is considered normal or acceptable. In 2020, 918 community activists supported by Spotlight Initiative reached more than 140,000 people

(95,000 women and girls and 45,000 men and boys) in communities across Uganda, that now better understand the nexus between power, violence and gender equality, joining a multi-stakeholder effort that is drastically changing mentalities and approaches to gender roles in Uganda. Spotlight Initiative is implementing similar methodologies in **El Salvador**, **Haiti**, **Liberia**, **Malawi**, **Niger**, and **Samoa**.

In **Vanuatu**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the development of a national strategy for the structure and scale-up of community dialogues on ending violence, supporting a "whole of community" approach to prevention. Informed by a recent Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice Survey on family violence that the Spotlight Initiative completed on five of Vanuatu's islands, these dialogues will be led by trained community facilitators to advance a social movement of non-violence among community leaders and youth.

Community-based messaging has adapted to the COVID-19 context as well. In Myanmar, **the Safe and Fair programme** partnered with the Women's Organizations Network on community-based initiatives to disseminate information on pandemic-related risks, including the risks of violence against women and girls and trafficking, among returnee women migrants. Information packages were distributed to a total of 92,777 returnee migrants, including both women and men, recognizing the key role that men can play in preventing violence against women within their communities. Information shared with returnee migrants enhanced their agency by equipping them with increased knowledge on their rights, opportunities, and contacts to allow them to pursue support during the migration cycle.

CASE STUDY

Local-Level Planning in Two of the Most Violent Cities in the World

In **Honduras**, alarmed by the increase of violence due to COVID-19 restrictions, Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Government and civil society to develop the "Cure violence" programme in the municipalities of San Pedro Sula and Choloma, two communities that are heavily affected by drug-trafficking gangs and are amongst the most violent places in the world (both are in the top ten cities with highest rates of murders globally).

Through consultations with local leaders, survivors' groups, religious institutions and civil society, the programme trained local mediators from these communities, who were supported to organize community conversations in order to engage with young men and women on issues of gender roles and the mobilization of influential individuals in the municipalities. **Their mediation efforts contributed to interrupting 724 violent incidents against women and girls, ranging from sexual violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking, to death threats, group harassment and kidnapping. The Government indicated that the programme prevented the deaths of 501 women and adolescents.**

While some of the interventions presented above make extensive use of new technologies and innovations, Spotlight Initiative programmes also use more traditional ways of mobilizing communities and discussing issues. In **Malawi, Mali, Mozambique** and **Samoa,** among others, Spotlight Initiative teams co-designed community conversation strategies with traditional and religious leaders. As custodians of culture, customs and traditions, village chiefs play a critical role in the sustenance and evolution of socio-cultural norms in communities. Involving them in these processes allows programmes

to shift the paradigm, positioning traditional leaders as catalysts of social change and transformation. Through these activities, 6,169 influential decision makers, ranging from parliamentarians to religious leaders, academics, activists and community leaders, were trained and supported to advocate for the implementation of legislation and policies on ending violence against women and girls and on women and girls' rights, gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, with support from Spotlight Initiative. **As a result, in Malawi, up to 200 chiefs are now engaged as champions of the Spotlight Initiative and in 2020 alone, their involvement directly contributed to withdrawing 209 young girls from child marriages and facilitated access for thousands of survivors of violence to services and to the justice system.**

Finally, Spotlight Initiative programmes complemented their community interventions with specific activities targeting women and girls from marginalized groups. In **Zimbabwe**, for example, the programme developed recruitment and monitoring strategies aimed at people with disabilities, partnering with local disabled people's organizations, training staff in disability inclusion, and raising awareness of disability rights. In 2020, these dedicated prevention interventions reached 70,000 people living with disabilities, and addressed key barriers to their full participation in programming.

Shifted norms and attitudes of young people: in- and out-of-school education

Extensive evidence shows that in order to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls, comprehensive sexuality education, both in-and out-of-school, is essential. Comprehensive sexuality education has the potential to promote the prevention of violence against women and girls through social norms change by engaging young people in critical reflection and dialogues that address sexual and reproductive health and violence, as well as gender and power dynamics more broadly.

During the reporting period, and despite school closures and delayed roll-out of new curriculums due to the COVID 19 pandemic, 978,165 young people were reached through in- and out-of-school programmes, supported by Spotlight Initiative.

Throughout 2020, Spotlight Initiative worked with ministries of education across all programmes to strengthen and expand sexuality or "family life" education. While respecting cultural specificities, Spotlight Initiative contributed to supporting the adoption of a rights-based and gender-focused approach to

1 million

young people joined in and out-of-school programmes

sexuality education, taught over several years, providing age-appropriate information consistent with the evolving capacities of young people. Spotlight Initiative programmes include scientifically accurate information about human development and help young people to nurture positive values regarding their sexual and reproductive health. Significant progress in this regard has been observed across programmes, including in **Argentina**, **El Salvador**, **Jamaica**, **Malawi**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Trinidad and Tobago**, **Uganda** and **Vanuatu**. In **Malawi**, for example, through the country's Safe School Programme, more than 200,000 adolescent learners from the six districts covered by Spotlight Initiative are now able to detect sexual and gender-based violence and report it to relevant authorities for action and redress. This led to the identification of 941 cases of child marriage and their immediate referral to the appropriate authorities. As a complement to the roll-out of comprehensive sexuality education, the Spotlight Initiative programmes, including in **Uganda** and **Malawi**, supported school clubs that contribute to disseminating messages on gender equality, gender-based violence and harmful practices, while providing an entry point for referrals and service delivery. **Nearly two thirds of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries drafted new or strengthened comprehensive sexuality education curricula in line with international standards.**

Spotlight Initiative also supported the design, roll-out and scale-up of education and sensitization programmes targeting out-of-school children. Spotlight Initiative uses a wide array of methodologies to reach young people not enrolled in schools, including through after-school programmes, youth centres in communities, and the inclusion of gender modules in programmes that advance women's economic rights and empowerment. In **Trinidad and Tobago**, Spotlight Initiative is using the Collaborative HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Programme (CHAMP) model, targeting approximately 150 out-of-school children. CHAMP increases communication among young people and older generations around sensitive issues and increases knowledge of family violence and sexual and reproductive health-related issues within families.

The most promising intervention targeting out-of-school young people, adopted in **Jamaica**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Mozambique**, **Niger** and **Vanuatu**, supports the creation of "safe spaces" for young and adolescent girls through mentoring programmes. Chapter 8 has more details.

> **"Educational sessions have changed many things in my life such as: the knowledge of my rights and duties and taught me to express myself in front of an audience without any fear. I learned the importance of discussion in my community and it allowed me to talk to the girls if there was a problem."**
>
> Halima Hassan, 16, Maradi Region, Niger.

In **Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative rolled out the Rise Up! Curriculum, a strategy that fosters the leadership potential of the most marginalized young women in the most disadvantaged communities in urban settlements and rural areas. Rise Up! includes a combination of participatory training, mentoring and practical leadership experiences for young women. Throughout 2020, the programme trained a

cohort of young women mentors to deliver training to adolescent girls in their community. In turn, girls accessing these "safe spaces" were supported to become girl leaders and engaged in learning around gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights. As a result, they formed an inter-provincial network of adolescent girl leaders. Overall, in line with the Spotlight Initiative's principle of leaving no one behind, programmes specifically targeted the most vulnerable adolescent girls through out-of-school interventions. A total of 228,668 girls were reached in 11 countries through these activities that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and the exercise of rights, including reproductive rights.

In line with its 'whole-of-community' approach, aimed at reinforcing social-norms change messages through complementary interventions, Spotlight Initiative also implemented specific interventions targeting parents. In **Papua New Guinea**, for example, Spotlight Initiative supported the dissemination of parenting tips in the context of COVID-19 to support parents and children and adolescents dealing with the stress associated with the closure of schools and other restrictions. Dedicated messages on gender roles and the consequences of violence against women and girls were also included.

In the **Pacific**, the **Regional Programme** continued to push the boundaries on sexual and reproductive health via the regional launch of the International Technical and Programmatic Guidance on Out-of-School Comprehensive Sexuality Education. This launch reached over 700 participants from 11 countries in the Pacific region. These guidelines brought to the fore the importance of young people and sexual and reproductive health and rights as a contribution to health, gender equality, power dynamics and an end to violence. The launch event was presided by the Prime Minister of Samoa, alongside the Cardinal of Tonga, and attended by senior Government Ministers, officials, members of Diplomatic corps and donors, regional and international agencies, and civil society organizations, including heads of religious institutions and youth representatives.

CASE STUDY

Designing a "Mobile" Game to Change Social Norms on Gender-Based Violence in Kyrgyzstan and Beyond

In **Kyrgyzstan**, Spotlight Initiative supported the design and dissemination of a mobile phone game, called "Spring in Bishkek," in collaboration with the Sigrid Rausing Trust and Soros Foundation. The game was developed by local activists, with input from psychologists and lawyers. This game uses Communication for Development strategies to demonstrate alternative behaviour models for girls, boys, and adults. Inspired by real cases and designed as an interactive comic strip, the phone app puts users in the shoes of a university freshman who becomes her friend's sole lifeline in the face of gender-based violence and after the girl's family refuses to defend her rights fearing social repercussions. Players are asked to name the heroine, choose a pet, and personalize other features, while visuals of widely known public spaces in Kyrgyzstan are depicted, building a personal connection, self-identification, and empathy with the game characters, whose fates are ultimately decided by the players. These characters gradually change their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards gender equality as the game progresses.

The game is designed to empower users to learn more about the practice of kidnapping for forced marriage and intimate partner violence in general, how to prevent it, and how to help others who may be targeted. Critically, young women have been engaged to inform the process - 120 young women tested the prototype, and within the first two weeks of the game's launch, it was downloaded over 28,000 times. In 2020, the game received 4,685,609 views, positive feedback from 2,606 users, and has been downloaded 117,000 times. "Spring in Bishkek" attracted some media attention as an extreme case of 'Ala Kachuu' (kidnapping for forced marriage) was reported by a player who approached the game's Instagram account for support. It is now played beyond Kyrgyzstan, including in Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine. Looking ahead, Spotlight Initiative is working both to assess the extent to which the game has an impact on the gendered beliefs and attitudes of players with the hope that it has an impact on the practice itself, and to ensure it generates meaningful transformation in the lives of women and girls.

Engaged men and boys to end violence: the use of special strategies to support normative shifts

The normalization of violence against women and girls in society is strongly connected with constructions of negative masculinities, which are formed by gendered social norms, roles, expectations and identities associated with the notion of "masculinity" as a social construct. For prevention efforts to truly succeed, engaging men and boys is critical. Men and boys have an important role to play in preventing violence against women and girls, and helping support the promotion of non-violent and egalitarian interpersonal relationships. Aligned with the evidence that working with men and boys alone is not as effective at challenging gendered power relationships, Spotlight Initiative promotes an integrated approach to prevention that combines work with *both* men and women.

Spotlight Initiative engages with men and boys as allies in the effort to end violence against women and girls across its programmes. Interventions often fall under two broad categories: health behaviour-change approaches that focus on changing attitudes and negative behaviours, and participatory group education that promotes discussion around constructs of negative masculinities and inequitable gender norms, attitudes and behaviours. Overall, across Spotlight Initiative's target countries, **880,000 men and boys regularly attended gender transformative programmes that analyse gender roles, promote respectful family relationships, non-violent forms of conflict resolution and parenting, and healthy and safe home environments**.

880,000

men and boys were educated on positive masculinity, respectful family relationships, non-violent conflict resolution and parenting
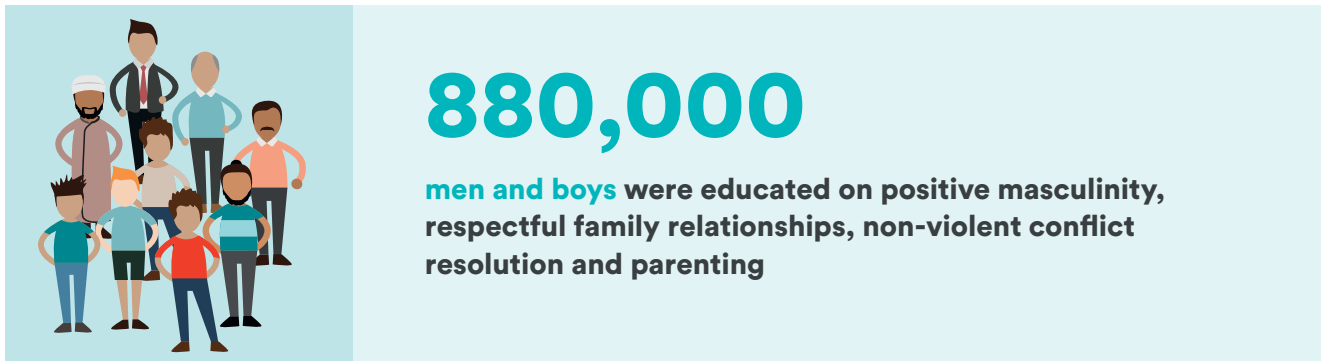
In seven Spotlight Initiative programmes alone, 180 networks of men and boys, including networks of religious and traditional leaders, were established to challenge harmful practices that perpetuate violence against women and girls and to promote positive attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls. Spotlight Initiative programmes, including those in **El Salvador**, **Mali**, **Mozambique**, and **Papua New Guinea**, worked with men as change agents to address gender stereotypes in their own lives and help mobilize and sensitize their peers to address violent behaviour, promote peace and mitigate conflicts. In **El Salvador** and **Mozambique**, for example, Spotlight Initiative worked with young men and adolescent boys on preventing sexual violence and adolescent pregnancy. Using group education and advocacy that promotes respect for women and girls and non-violent behaviour, young men and boys are prompted to reflect on who defines what it means to be "a man" and why these definitions exist. These reflections have been observed to have an immediate impact on participants' behaviours (including more peaceful resolution of conflicts, and reported use of contraception).

> "As men, we must change our minds and our actions. I tell my friends that they shouldn't get involved with girls under 18 years. They know it is wrong, but what they did not know is that they could go to jail,"
>
> Guidion Gulamo, 25, Mozambique.

Sport, through people's participation, events, marketing and advertising, and the high visibility of professional athletes, has a significant influence on societies, and particularly on men and boys. Spotlight Initiative programmes have found that through sport, the values and practices of demonstrating respect for diversity, equality and non-violence can be promoted, as well as positive forms of masculinity. This includes not only the outward facing aspects of the sports world, but also the way in which sports organizations themselves are structured internally to promote gender equality and prevent abuse.

Assessments conducted by the Spotlight Initiative across programmes confirm that sport offers an opportunity to address negative masculinities within a peer culture of hypermasculinity, where sexism, sexual entitlement, aggression, strength and domination among other attributes (for example, celebrity status and entitlement) create a conducive environment for violence perpetration both within and outside the sport environment.

CASE STUDY

#AmigoDateCuenta: Promoting Healthy Masculinities

In **Argentina,** the Spotlight Initiative co-designed a campaign focused on masculinity, called #AmigoDateCuenta. The campaign targeted young and adolescent men to encourage reflection on promoting healthy masculinities, free from prejudice. Designed in consultation with 11 civil society organizations, as well as members of the civil society reference group, #AmigoDateCuenta includes two videos and five animated tutorials that offer concrete tools to promote behaviour change on issues such as complicity among groups of friends, harassment and consensus in sexual relationships, and the participation of men in tasks in the home, including equal care.

The campaign had the support of the Argentine Football Association, which broadcasted it on its own channels and on those of associated clubs. Disney and FOX also donated space for broadcasting on different channels. A total of 50 male influencers shared the publications on their social networks, generating a following on Instagram of 15 million people. The name of the campaign set a trend on Twitter on launch day. Pieces from the campaign were used in El Salvador.

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In **Argentina,** for example, the Spotlight Initiative linked up with the National Sports Department to develop a toolkit of materials to support community dialogue. Engaging athletes, coaches and club managers, the materials prompt dialogue and conversation within sports communities and society more broadly to encourage prevention actions at community level.

5.2.4 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.
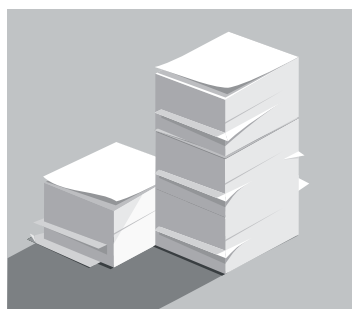
Over the course of 2020, we've seen a **83%** increase (compared to 2019) in the number of cases of violence against women and girls reported to various institutions, and a **64%** increase in the number of cases reported to the police

Improving service provision is essential to mitigating the consequences of violence against women and girls. Providing quality and timely access to comprehensive multisectoral services can significantly contribute to breaking cycles of violence. Yet, despite extensive commitments by governments, women's and civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders, many women and girls still lack access to essential services, and, where basic support services do exist, they are typically underfunded, understaffed, not of sufficient quality, uncoordinated, or limited in scope or coverage.
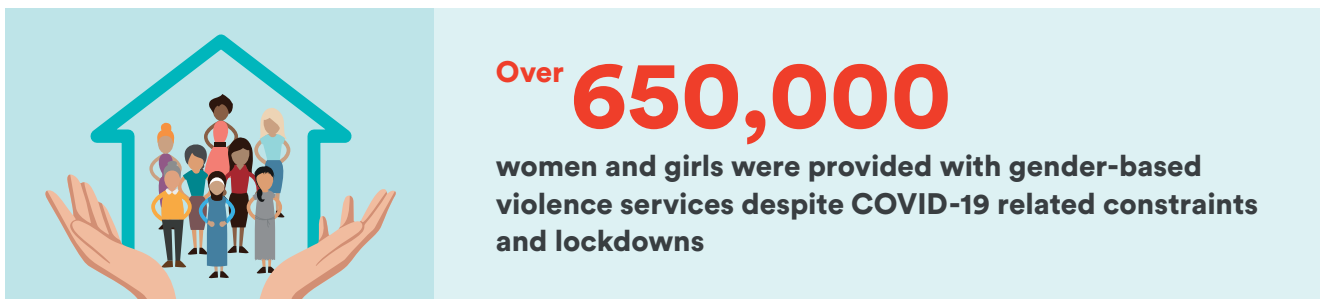
In most Spotlight Initiative countries, national studies on the extent of violence against women and girls indicate that the majority of victims and survivors do not report their experiences to formal services. These findings underscore the importance of better connecting victims and survivors with appropriate care. In keeping with these findings, throughout 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes invested in strengthening the capacity of service providers and ensuring that these services were available, accessible, and of high quality for all women and girls, including those traditionally left behind. Across all programmes, the Spotlight Initiative successfully pivoted programming to ensure service availability and accessibility in the context of COVID-19.

The main results achieved include:

- Greater access to services in order to address violence against women and girls

- Strengthened institutional framework for improved service provision, including by ensuring a rights-based approach

- Strengthened research and knowledge production on improved services to end violence against women and girls

- Strengthened capacity for improved essential services among government, duty bearers and service providers

- Increased number of one-stop centres to improve care, safety and support of survivors of violence against women and girls

- Strengthened referral pathways

Greater access to services to eliminate violence against women and girls

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly increased all forms of violence against women and girls, particularly intimate partner violence and domestic violence. As early as the beginning of April 2020, the United Nations issued an alert on the increasing incidence of violence against women worldwide. Spotlight Initiative's teams reported an 83 per cent increase in survivors seeking assistance from support services compared to 2019. This represents an additional 77,069 women and 20,209 girl survivors seeking assistance across different sectors in 12 countries. While this mostly reflects the increased incidence of violence in these countries, programme teams also identify this as a sign that the efforts undertaken, with Spotlight Initiative support, to streamline the accompaniment of survivors, to improve quality and access to services ; and to increase the accountability of perpetrators are all showing results. Increased trust by survivors in national and private-sector institutions to deliver quality services, protect them from retaliation and deliver reparations contributed to this high number of cases reported. This is illustrated by the higher number of women and girls accessing services in Spotlight Initiative countries, as well as the increased number of cases brought to court that then led to convictions in 2020. Furthermore, the Spotlight Initiative worked hard to ensure that women and girls at greater risk of violence would be informed and aware of the existence of service delivery and specific modes of access, even while COVID-19 constraints were in place.

Over 650,000 women and girls were provided with gender-based violence services despite COVID-19 related constraints and lockdowns

The foundational tool for interventions under this Pillar was the "Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence", developed by the United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, a partnership among UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO, and UNODC. The Spotlight Initiatives defines essential services as including both immediate and long-term health care, psychological support, police and justice responses, and safe accommodation.

Implemented a rights-based approach to ensure no one is left behind, strengthening service provision

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported government, civil society and other stakeholders in delivering human rights-based, multisectoral, survivor-centred services. By utilizing this approach, the Initiative encouraged:

- Coordination among services across sectors

- Alignment of services with ethical guidelines

- Privacy and confidentiality

- Non-discrimination (including on the basis of gender, age, race or ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, HIV status or any other characteristic)

- Providing comprehensive information for individuals to make their own decisions.

In **Timor-Leste**, the Spotlight Initiative worked jointly with the Government to ensure that safe spaces for survivors of violence against women and girls were inclusive and accessible to women with disabilities, integrating the rights-based principle of non-discrimination and leaving no one behind. Reaching women who have been traditionally left behind in service provision has required Spotlight Initiative programmes to address the challenges of restricted access to essential services and public life at large. Spotlight Initiative teams supported the design and approval of gender-responsive policies on service delivery that included efforts to reduce social and operational barriers faced disproportionately by women facing multiple and intersecting structural barriers to access. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, in 2020, five countries developed strategies for increasing knowledge of, and access to, services for women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The Spotlight Initiative in **Malawi**, for example, provided motorcycles and bicycles to protection officers, case managers and essential community workers, improving reach. In **Belize**, in close collaboration with national authorities, the Spotlight Initiative supported the development of multisectoral protocols on sexual violence, with Standard Operating Procedures for the police and justice sectors, the health sector, the social services sector, and for coordination and governance. This is expected to improve the multisectoral response, and standardize the quality of prevention and mitigation services for sexual and gender-based violence, including for those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Adapting to COVID-19 in service provision
In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative pivoted its model of service provision to rapidly adapt to the challenges posed by COVID-19 (including the closure, or reduction in hours, of shelters and health centres) while maintaining a rights-based approach aligned with leaving no one behind. These efforts were complemented with an extensive information campaign to ensure that women and girls exposed to violence were informed of their rights and about services available to them, even as COVID-19 related constraints were in place.

1,865,476 women and girl survivors of violence have increased knowledge of quality essential services

During the 12 months of 2020, the Spotlight Initiative adjusted its activities to reach 1,865,476 women and girl survivors of violence (more than ten times the number that had been originally planned for that year) with specific information about services.

To ensure marginalized or hard-to-reach communities had access to services, innovative approaches were used, including by supporting remote service provision. In many programmes, including in **Papua New Guinea**, **Nigeria**, **Argentina**, **El Salvador**, **Honduras**, **Belize**, **Uganda**, **Tajikistan**, **Malawi** and **Haiti,** the Spotlight Initiative substantively invested in remote provision and remote case management, facilitated by enhanced access to information and communications technology of service providers and dedicated capacity building efforts. Direct support to returnee women migrant workers who had to repatriate due to loss of jobs, incomes and travel restrictions was ensured through support to quarantine facilities and shelters. In Myanmar and Indonesia, quarantine centre staff received training by the **Safe and Fair programme** on violence against women. In Indonesia and Viet Nam, shelters for survivors of violence were provided technical guidance to ensure they could remain operational during the pandemic and could safely provide services to women, including women migrant workers.

Hotlines were supported across programmes as well. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative pivoted to invest more heavily in dedicated telephone lines and digital service provision for survivors of violence against women and girls, including by supporting the public 144 hotline to ensure an intersectoral and intersectional perspective in their response.

In **Haiti,** the Spotlight Initiative supported the technical and operational capacity of two hotlines in partnership with the *Institut de Bien-être Social et de Recherches*, and supported civil society organizations to establish hotlines dedicated to reaching LGBTQI+ communities and those struggling with mental health. In countries of destination, the **Safe and Fair programme** prioritized support to helpline services addressing violence against women, including women migrant workers. In Malaysia and Thailand, major helpline services were supported to provide interpretation services in the major languages used by migrants.

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The Spotlight Initiative also continued to provide support through mobile clinics, offering coordinated sexual and reproductive health services, psychosocial counselling, information and referrals, and longer-term recovery services to vulnerable populations living in remote areas, including to persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV and AIDS in **Mozambique, Niger, Haiti** and **Belize**. In **Belize**, the Initiative, in coordination with civil society organizations, launched the "mobile women's centres" model. The success of the centres rested on the meaningful engagement of civil society organizations, which promoted local ownership and fostered trust with communities. In 2020 alone, the first six mobile women's centres provided holistic care and support to almost 400 women and girls in the southern and northern regions of the country. Building on this, in 2021 the programme will develop a sustainability strategy as a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for mobile service delivery.

By enhancing the focus on protective measures - including supporting access to personal protective equipment (PPE) for service providers and survivors of violence against women and girls - Spotlight Initiative teams have helped to ensure that women and girls are able to continue to access non-stigmatizing multisectoral violence against women and girls response services through "Safe Spaces", including in **Nigeria, Mozambique, Haiti, Niger, El Salvador** and **Timor-Leste**.

Strengthened institutional frameworks for improved service provision

Assessments conducted by Spotlight Initiative teams and partners indicate that, despite improvements to the legal frameworks and justice systems, the police and justice sector response remains inadequate, with justice often delayed or denied. In light of this, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported efforts to hold the police and justice sectors accountable as duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of survivors.

As mentioned under Pillar 1, Spotlight Initiative teams have supported the review and reform of legal systems and frameworks to ensure that prosecutorial processes and procedures are streamlined and include provisions guaranteeing survivors' rights. In **Honduras**, for example, the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Public Prosecutor's Office, developed a protocol to implement the recently approved Penal Code, with specific provisions now included to ensure effective access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls.

Access to effective remedies is often hampered by delays in the adjudicatory process, adjournments of proceedings, congestion in courts, and a widespread culture of impunity. Additionally, the capacity of law and security institutions to deliver restorative justice remains limited due to lack of trained law enforcement agents, especially trained female officers. In **Nigeria**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the establishment of a Presidential Special Investigation Panel on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, contributing to enhanced access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls. Together with other efforts of the programme over the past two years, the panel will aid in identifying perpetrators, help ensure adequate access to effective remedies, reparation measures, and restorative justice, and provide support to individuals to navigate the judicial process.

In **Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Zimbabwe, Liberia** and **Tajikistan**, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the provision of extensive legal aid services to survivors, with a focus on ensuring that women and girls not only knew their rights but also were supported in navigating complex processes and procedures.

CASE STUDY

Fostering the DNA Forensic Systems in Zimbabwe: A Ground-Breaking Step to Ensure Access to Justice for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls

Forensic evidence, such as DNA, is among the most important pieces of evidence in cases of survivors of violence against women and girls, and plays a crucial role in ensuring that survivors of violence against women and girls can substantiate their claim (which, in turn, can help motivate survivors to report).

In **Zimbabwe**, as in other Spotlight Initiative programmes, the Spotlight Initiative enhanced access to justice for survivors of violence against women and girls by strengthening the national DNA forensic systems, an unprecedented milestone in efforts to end impunity and ensure access to effective remedies. Following a detailed assessment of existing gaps and bottlenecks in the forensic evidence system in Zimbabwe, the Spotlight Initiative fostered the technical capacity of police, health and justice personnel to collect, analyse and present forensic evidence. This is expected to produce substantial impacts on the adjudication of cases of violence against women and girls, as it will support the standard use of DNA evidence in court cases of violence against women and girls for the first time in Zimbabwe's history.

Strengthened research and knowledge production around violence against women and girls services

In order to effectively implement activities under this Pillar, each Spotlight Initiative team conducted an assessment to establish existing knowledge and capacity, to identify gaps in available services, and to determine the factors that provide for an enabling environment. This assessment allowed Spotlight Initiative teams to establish objectives for meeting unmet needs and filling capacity gaps in service delivery.

In **Argentina**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Honduras**, and **Papua New Guinea**, Spotlight Initiative assessments were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders, including civil society actors, justice officials and service providers, and they brought to light the capacity, quantity, and quality of existing essential services. Based on the findings of the assessments, the teams designed tailored strategies to enhance response services and ensure access to effective remedies tackling emerging challenges, including in the context of COVID-19. In **Malawi** and **El Salvador**, specific investments were made to map and assess the need for services based on community demographics, with a focus on those traditionally marginalized, such as women with disabilities. The study identified the barriers faced by women and girls in accessing services, particularly in the health sector. Building on the results of the study, tailored capacity-building efforts have been undertaken to increase accessibility to quality services for women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

In the countries where the Spotlight Initiative supported the implementation and roll out of the Essential Services Package (ESP), a reference guide for providing services to survivors, the Spotlight Initiative acted as a "unifying agent", bringing multiple national partners together to meet on a regular basis. In **Mexico**, building on the Essential Service Package, the Spotlight Initiative team, in collaboration with government authorities, developed tailored training modules to respond to specific challenges faced by survivors while accessing coordinated quality services at the community level. These learning tools were aimed at fostering the ability of municipal authorities and front-line service providers to provide support and care to survivors of violence against women and girls. A specialized package, inclusive of a model protocol for investigation of femicide and a technical guidance for service providers working in shelters, was also

developed by the programme team. As of 2020, 75 per cent of target Spotlight Initiative countries have developed their national guidelines and protocols for essential services in line with UN guidance and tools.

CASE STUDY

The Essential Service Package: Setting Standards for Survivor-Centred Service Delivery in Malawi

In **Malawi**, the Spotlight Initiative succeeded in the institutionalization of the Essential Service Package at the national level. National authorities recognized the unique value of the Essential Service Package in guiding the delivery of a survivor-centred approach in service delivery. With a focus on health, social services, police and justice sectors, the Essential Service Package was adopted as a roadmap to reform the service delivery model in line with international standards.

This resulted in the inclusion of a dedicated training module on quality service delivery in the official learning curriculum of the police sector, which was endorsed by the High Command of the Police. Similarly, the Ministry of Health revised the One-Stop Centre Guidelines on Management of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in line with the Essential Service Package guidelines and protocols. The programme also explored the implications for the provision of essential services for women and girls who have experienced violence during the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting the standards set by the Essential Service Package to the emerging challenges.

Strengthened capacity for improved essential services among government, duty bearers and service providers

In 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes supported the dissemination, adaptation and roll-out of the Essential Services Package as a reference guide for training and coordinating stakeholders involved in service delivery. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 15 countries have developed or strengthened their national guidelines and protocols in line with the guidance and tools for essential services provided by the Spotlight Initiative's agencies. In **Samoa** and **Vanuatu,** for instance, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with the Ministry of Women Community & Social Development and Ministry of Health to develop national guidelines and protocols to respond to violence against women and girls, particularly in the health sector, and to strengthen the capacity of front-line responders to deliver quality services. In **El Salvador,** in partnership with the *Sistema Nacional de Atención para mujeres y niñas que enfrentan violencia (The National Care System for Women and Girls Facing Violence),* the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to the redesigning and fostering of the national coordination mechanism through the development of a joint coordination plan engaging all key service providers, in line with the Essential Service Package principles.

In addition to work on legal reform, the Spotlight Initiative undertook a wide range of capacity-building exercises in the justice and police sectors. These trainings focused on conducting investigations, prosecution and adjudication of violence against women and girls, as well as specific information on service delivery. In **Mozambique**, **Uganda**, **Malawi**, **Argentina**, **Uganda**, **Niger**, **Honduras**, and **El Salvador,** as well as throughout the countries covered by the **Safe and Fair programme,** the Spotlight Initiative facilitated the training of embassy officials, police officers, custom officers, security and border control personnel, prosecutors, lawyers and judges on gender equality and violence against women and girls.

CASE STUDY

Reshaping the System to Identify Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls in Guyana

In Guyana, the Spotlight Initiative built the capacity of owners of community shops and pharmacies to identify signs of abuse in women and timely refer survivors to the appropriate support services, including psychosocial support services. The target group increased its understanding on the 'do no harm' guiding principle and on how to adopt an intersectional approach while referring to vulnerable categories of survivors, such as migrants, teen mothers, and LGBTQI+. With the aim of adopting a holistic approach and fostering the early-identification system, the Spotlight Initiative also built the capacity of five community-based civil society organizations and local shelter personnel. Thanks to this innovative approach, the Spotlight Initiative achieved the following results:

- 192 consultations were conducted with survivors in the target communities
- 9 counselling sessions were completed for survivors of violence against women and girls
- 59 referrals of survivors of violence against women and girls were made to the appropriate service providers
- 50 at-risk teenage girls received psychosocial support
- 26 information sessions were conducted
- 195 teen mothers and at-risk teenage girls benefitted from care packages.

In adapting the Essential Services Package at country level, several Spotlight Initiative countries also developed standard operating procedures, protocols and training manuals to ensure that all actors have the capacity and tools to work within a coordinated structure of appropriate service response. The knowledge products created and disseminated by the Spotlight Initiative programme - more than 145 knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making in 2020 - clearly identified essential actions and existing gaps in each sector. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, nearly 2 million women and girl survivors of violence have increased knowledge of quality essential services. Furthermore, more than 650,000 women and girl survivors of violence gained greater access to services, with support from the Spotlight Initiative, through the opening of new service delivery points, longer opening hours and mobile services.

Spotlight Initiative programmes conducted capacity-building sessions on, among other things, the Essential Services Package and facilitated information-sharing among relevant stakeholders. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 20,655 key government service providers in 21 countries increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence.

20,655

key government service providers in 24 countries increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality, coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence.

In **Tajikistan**, **Haiti**, **Guyana**, **Timor-Leste**, and **Libera**, for instance, front-line service providers in the health sector have increased their capacity to provide respectful care to survivors of rape and other forms of violence against women and girls and have increased their understanding on how to safely adapt their practice to the new challenges that emerged with COVID-19. Thanks to these capacity-building activities, health professionals have increased their knowledge on international standards in service delivery as well as national protocols and legislations, increasing their ability to timely identify cases of violence, abuse and exploitation and provide quality medical and psychosocial services and referral to other relevant services. During the reporting period, the **Safe and Fair programme** enhanced the capacities of 18,892 persons, from front-line service providers to members of women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, to coordinate service provision and address violence against women migrant workers.

In addition to the Essential Services Package, Spotlight Initiative programmes invested significant resources in identifying structural and operational bottlenecks in service provision. In **Timor-Leste**, for example, the programme invested significant resources in building the capacity of health service providers to overcome bottlenecks that emerged as a consequence of COVID-19 and provide quality services and referrals to survivors of violence against women and girls.

Increased number of one-stop centres to improve care, safety and support of survivors of violence against women and girls

One-stop centres are a promising model for providing comprehensive care to survivors of violence against women and girls, including an integrated rule of law response, and are run according to survivor-centred principles, ensuring confidentiality, respect, safety and security.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative set up or supported both static and mobile One-stop centres across programmes, including in **Nigeria**, **Niger**, **Mali**, **Mozambique**, **Haiti**, **Belize** and **Argentina**. One-stop centres offer medical, police, legal and psychosocial services all within one location, usually a hospital or a stand-alone centre. The teams supported stand-alone one-stop centres, which the Spotlight initiative programmes found to be more private and flexible than the hospital setting, and located them in areas where other health centres or hospitals were not easily accessible. This allowed the Spotlight Initiative to better engage underserved populations, such as women and girls in rural areas. In 2020, one-stop centres had to adapt their operations to the challenges that emerged with COVID-19. In **Nigeria** and **Zimbabwe**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative supported one-stop centres and shelters to remain open during the health crisis through the provision of personal protective equipment and an enhanced focus on protective measures and information sharing. In **Mali**, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to fostering the one-stop centre model by setting up ten one-stop centres in the target regions. The centres will be accessible to survivors of violence in 2021.[34]

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[34] While completing the renovation of the ten one-stop centres, the Spotlight Initiative ensured that survivors of violence against women and girls had access to essential services in public hospitals in target regions.

In several countries, the Spotlight Initiative invested substantively in creating mobile one-stop centres to reach women and girls living in remote and hard-to-reach areas. This model has been proven to be effective within the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought additional mobility challenges due to the protracted national lockdowns and reduced availability of transportation. In **Zimbabwe**, for example, mobile one-stop centres enhanced service uptake among the most vulnerable survivors of violence against women and girls in remote and hard-to-reach communities. Thanks to mobile one-stop centres, the programme reached 5,862 survivors with services for survivors of violence against women and girls through mobile one-stop centres in 12 target districts. The introduction of a mobile one-stop centre model enhanced service uptake among the most vulnerable people, proving its efficiency during a period of protracted and intersecting crisis. In **Mozambique**, the programme provided holistic support through six mobile clinics, which provided basic health services for survivors as well as information and referrals to vulnerable populations living in remote areas, including persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV and AIDS. As a result, 136 mobile community brigades outreach interventions were held, reaching a total of 19,840 people (11,566 women and girls and 8,274 men and boys) and resulting in a total of 354 cases of violence against women and girls registered.

CASE STUDY

A Holistic Approach to Service Provision: The Multi-Service Centres for Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls in Niger

In order to ensure comprehensive and holistic support to survivors of violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative in **Niger** enhanced the technical and operational capacity of four multi-service centres for survivors of violence against women and girls and harmful practices in the target regions of the programme. During the reporting period, the programme undertook the rehabilitation of existing facilities, fostering their ability to effectively deliver comprehensive support to survivors and meet the specific needs of the most marginalized groups of women. During the reporting period, the multi-service centre of Tillabéri became fully operational while the rehabilitation process is almost concluded in the multi-service centre of Maradi, Tahoua and Zinder.

To complement the services offered by multi-service centres and effectively reach survivors living in rural or remote areas, the Spotlight Initiative also established multidisciplinary mobile teams, composed of a psychologist, a caseworker, a legal advisor and a midwife. In order to effectively integrate the principle of 'leaving no one behind', the mobile team was trained on the specific needs of marginalized women and girls.

To ensure effective access to the existing multi-service centres, the Spotlight Initiative ensured ownership and meaningful engagement of local populations and key community leaders. For instance, the engagement of traditional and religious leaders has been crucial to ensure an effective referral mechanism toward multi-service centres and mobile services and avoid stigmatization of survivors of violence against women and girls. Their successful engagement is demonstrated by the fact that among the 124 survivors who visited the clinics, a third were referred by the traditional chiefs and religious leaders.

Strengthened referral pathways

During the reporting period, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to establishing and enhancing referral mechanisms for survivors of violence against women and girls. In **Zimbabwe**, for instance, the Spotlight Initiative, thanks to a partnership with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, continued to timely identify and report violence against women and girls cases along the existing referral pathways through a Gender-Based Violence Community Surveillance System. In order to ensure continuation of operations during the outbreak of COVID-19, the Gender-Based Violence Community Surveillance's personnel were provided with personal protective equipment, targeted information education and communication materials and internet credit to partially migrate service provision on-line.

In **Jamaica**, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to developing referral pathways for survivors of violence facing multiple and intersecting forms of discriminations, such as persons with disabilities, the LGBTQI+ community and persons living with HIV and AIDS, among others.

During the reporting period the Spotlight Initiative contributed to expand referral pathways beyond traditional service providers, reaching women and girls who are often left behind. For instance, in **Papua New Guinea**, in partnership with the Business Coalition for Women, the Spotlight Initiative conducted an extensive mapping exercise identifying appropriate referral pathways and supported private-sector companies in making adequate referrals for survivors of violence against women and girls.

Recognizing the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration, multiple Spotlight programmes worked to engage and enhance the ability of traditional community leaders in their role in delivering justice and ending violence against women and girls from a policy perspective. In **Malawi**, Spotlight Initiative, in association with the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, worked together with traditional community leaders and formed the National Chief's Forum in 2020 to strengthen and harmonize the role of Chiefs in eliminating gender-based violence, particularly harmful culture practices, including by ensuring effective referral pathways and mechanisms for survivors of violence. As a result of the Forum, 47 sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices cases were referred to police and social welfare services through the chiefs, underscoring the success of this type of partnership and outreach strategy.

CASE STUDY

Service Directory for Women Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region

Effective coordination and referrals are crucial to ensuring a timely response to the needs of women migrant workers subject to violence. The **Safe and Fair programme**, covering the ASEAN region, has developed a Regional Service Directory for Women Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region for this purpose. The service directory enables referrals, including for women migrant workers who are survivors of violence, by sharing information on available essential service providers across the region. The list includes the leading entities providing assistance to survivors of violence against women migrant workers in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam, and a post-card version was disseminated to women migrant workers in nine different languages. Services featured in the directory include the health, police, justice, social, and labour sectors as well as hotlines and shelters.

5.2.5 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.
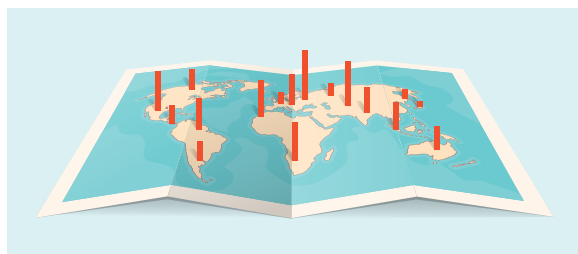
74% of countries where Spotlight is active now have publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on intimate partner violence

Quality data that is reliable, comparable, and disaggregated by gender, type of violence, and populations is essential. This supports a data-driven understanding of the landscape and trends in violence against women and girls and is key to developing policies and programmes with appropriate budgets.

Violence against women and girls increases in the context of crisis, and has done so dramatically in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns and service restrictions, according to national statistical offices across different countries and regions. The UN Secretary General, António Guterres, issued a global appeal for peace in the home - an end to all violence everywhere, from war zones to people's homes - in March 2020 when early warning indications pointed to an upsurge in violence against women and girls. However, data that offer a comprehensive picture of the scope of the increase, and the diverse types of violence faced, are not readily available across all countries over the COVID-19 pandemic period compared with the previous years.

Capacity problems, limited human resources, and a lack of technological investments, coupled with gender inequitable social norms and a lack of political will, often drive the dearth of reliable data on gender equality and violence against women and girls at the country level. Under Pillar 5, the Spotlight Initiative has focused on strengthening the collection and use of globally comparable data, in alignment with international standards, on different forms of violence against women and girls.

The main results achieved include:

- More countries have data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices and know how to use it strategically

- Strengthened information-management systems on violence against women and girls

- Improved data disaggregation on violence against women and girls

- Strengthened prevalence, attitude and norm research around violence against women and girls at the national level

More countries have data on violence against women and girls and harmful practices and know how to use it strategically

In order to adequately address violence against women and girls, high quality data on prevalence, incidence, and type of violence must be publicly available, reliable, and disaggregated.

Overall, the Spotlight Initiative's interventions have contributed to increasing the number of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries that have publicly available data on intimate partner violence - reported on a regular basis - from 63 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020. More specifically, with support from the Spotlight initiative, regularly reported public data on female genital mutilation was available in 57 per cent of targeted programmes and data on child marriage in 60 per cent of countries targeted. In 2020, 100 per cent of the Spotlight Initiative programmes measuring the availability of data on family violence reported on a regular basis. Trafficking data was publicly available and regularly reported in 25 per cent of targeted Spotlight Initiative countries.

At programme level, a number of Spotlight Initiative teams made advancements in collecting data, including **Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Zimbabwe,** and **Mozambique**. In **Mozambique,** national statistics officers received training on the collection of data on gender-based violence. The National Statistics Offices of **Samoa, Malawi, Mexico** and **Nigeria,** with support from the Spotlight Initiative, have developed, adapted and contextualized methods and standards to produce national-level prevalence and incidence data on violence against women and girls. In **Niger** and **Zimbabwe,** for example, programmes have been reviving national statistical bodies which had been latent, placing the collection of gender-related data at the centre stage once more. In **Niger,** the country is revitalizing the National Observatory for Gender Promotion and strengthening the ability of staff members to collect national level data on the perception and prevalence of violence against women and girls for service improvement and advocacy. The National Observatory for Gender Promotion encourages institutions to report on and use gender data for monitoring, and to assess the effectiveness of implementation of national, regional and international gender commitments.

In 2020, many Spotlight Initiative teams supported the capacity development of agencies and civil society groups to help them use the data they collected more effectively. This work fills an important gap in mobilizing support and action for ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices. With the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 91 per cent 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.

Across programmes, including in **Malawi, Mali, Uganda,** and **Honduras,** the Spotlight Initiative supported statistical offices, duty bearers and civil society organizations, among others, to analyse existing data sets, and to develop policy briefs and bulletins as well as profiles on violence against women and girls and harmful practices. In **Malawi,** after the police received training on how to collect and analyse data related to sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, reports of sexual violence cases increased by 22 per cent from quarter 1 to quarter 3. This data helps the government and police direct more resources to addressing these cases and setting up support mechanisms, in addition to providing

a more accurate snapshot of the diverse forms of violence that women and girls face. In the **Africa Regional Programme**, a cost and impact modelling exercise was conducted to determine the level of investment required to eliminate female genital mutilation by 2030. Based on the analysis, which used programme data, secondary data, and population-level costing methods, it was **estimated that it would take USD 3.3 billion to reach the high-coverage targets by 2030 and avert 25 million cases of female genital mutilation**. The report will appear in a peer-reviewed journal article. Data have already been used to advocate for increased investment in programmes preventing female genital mutilation.

Data dashboards and visualizations have also been developed for one-stop centres, to improve the ability of partners to track trends and adjust their responses in a timely fashion. In **Mali,** Spotlight Initiative has engaged in national research with the National Institute of Statistics to determine the gaps in data

TABLE 5.3. LEVEL OF DATA DISAGGREGATION BY PROGRAMME

	Argentina		El Salvador		Honduras		LARP		Malawi		Nigeria	
	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020
1) Income	○	○	●	✅	●	✅	○	○	●	○	○	○
2) Sex	●	🔴○	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
3) Age	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
4) Ethnicity	●	✅	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	🔴○	○	🔴
5) Disability	●	✅	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	🔴○	○	✅
6) Geographic Location	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
7) Forms of violence	○	🔴	○	🔴	○	🔴	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Uganda		Zimbabwe		Belize		Pacific Regional Programme		Papua New Guinea	
	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020	Milestone for 2020	2020
1) Income	*Some forms of SGBV/HP, some disaggregation*	✅	●	✅	○	○	●	✅	●	✅
2) Sex		✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
3) Age		✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
4) Ethnicity		✅	○	○	○	○	●	✅	●	✅
5) Disability		✅	●	✅	○	○	●	✅	○	○
6) Geographic Location		○	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅
7) Forms of violence		✅	○	○	●	✅	●	✅	●	✅

● Milestone for 2020
🟢 2020
🔴 2020 > Milestone
○ 2020 did not achieve Milestone

related to violence against women and girls and the needs in developing a national statistical database. These insights set pivotal groundwork for a national collection of statistics on violence against women and girls.

Many Spotlight Initiative countries engaged in baseline data collection on violence against women and girls in the country, setting standardized indicators around violence against women and girls that can be used to track progress over time and across agencies. This supports performance monitoring areas for programmatic improvement and learning. In **Mozambique**, in 2020 a baseline study was developed by the Justice Administration Directorate to understand how to best deliver justice-related services to the most vulnerable groups (1,264 households and 1,221 individuals were part of the sample). In **Belize**, capacity building of staff connected to a case management system of the judiciary used new technology to streamline data collection activities around violence against women and girls.

Indonesia

"I'm happy to be able to help others, especially fellow migrant workers."

- Dina Nuriyati,
Workers' rights advocate

©ILO: Carina Uchida

Strengthened information-management systems on violence against women and girls

Data on violence against women and girls is often fragmented, inconsistent, stored in different databases, and unreliably collected. A common data collection framework and system with clear operational definitions, taxonomies, and shared indicators helps ensure a standardized approach to the generation and use of data and strengthens data interoperability. As a result, institutional capacity to monitor violence against women and girls and provide targeted services often improves.

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative contributed to stronger and more integrated information management systems on violence against women and girls across programmes, including in **Argentina**, **Liberia**, **Malawi**, **Niger**, **Nigeria**, **Mozambique**, **Papua New Guinea**, **the Pacific Regional programme**, **Samoa**, and **Uganda.** Key achievements in 2020 included developing and scaling up use of Spotlight Initiative-

supported digital information management systems, such as in **Mozambique** and **Liberia**. Building on work in 2019, in **Mozambique**, the gender-based violence data management platform (InfoViolencia) was installed and is currently running through the Ministry of the Interior. InfoViolencia helps service providers and the police to more quickly process survivor cases and provide expedient access to the right services and access to justice. Pilot trainings were run for 66 users in three provinces in 2020 and will be scaled up in other provinces in 2021 through collaboration among the Ministry of Interior, UNDP, and UNFPA. In **Liberia**, tool standardization was enhanced in the information management systems and an information-sharing protocol established between data producers at different ministries, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. Enhanced data coordination among these agencies was a major achievement, as was the capacity building of staff that managed data and supported its use.

In **Samoa**, Spotlight Initiative leveraged global best practices and experiences across diverse UN agencies, scaling up lessons learned from the Pacific Partnership in Ending Violence Against Women, to improve tracking of incidents of violence against women and girls in the Pacific Islands. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative worked in partnership with the Ministry of Women, Gender and Diversity to strengthen the Integrated System for Cases of Gender-Based Violence in 2020. The system systemizes and consolidates data on cases, queries, and complaints across different agencies at the national, municipal, and provincial levels, as well as with national civil society organizations. The data system is a core component of the National Plan of Action against Violence and strengthens the country's ability to deliver reliable data and statistics for public policy making and to ensure survivors of violence against women and girls get timely access to services and care.

Improved data disaggregation on violence against women and girls

When specific forms of violence or specific populations are not accounted for during data collection, marginalized populations as well as the most prevalent types of violence often get obscured. Upholding the principle of leaving no one behind and non-discrimination, the Spotlight Initiative has contributed to improving disaggregation of data related to eliminating violence against women and girls in order to more readily reflect the full diversity of women's and girls' intersecting identities in many contexts including in **Liberia**, **Kyrgyzstan**, **Malawi**, **Samoa**, **Uganda**, and **Zimbabwe**.

In **Liberia**, the Spotlight Initiative supported the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Gender-based Violence Information Managament System (IMS) initiative to provide accurate data on gender-based violence disaggregated by gender, age, type of violence (rape, sexual assault, domestic violence, physical assault, denial of resources, and others) and region. The data allowed the government and service providers to track the impact of COVID-19 on existing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities in the country over time. In **Uganda**, the Spotlight Initiative supported a baseline assessment and dashboard to track peoples' displacement and cross-border movements, which could be used to inform policies and actions for trafficking in persons at five points on the Uganda border with Kenya. A dashboard was developed to track gender based violence in the four sub-counties of Amudat district on a monthly basis and cross-border movements during the months of September-December 2020; about 4275 cross-border movements were tracked, 32 per cent women and 68 per cent men.

The Spotlight Initiative made progress in 2020 raising awareness on the usefulness of gender data and supporting the development of indicators on gender based violence. It also contributed to strengthened capacity of national actors and structures to produce disaggregated statistics by age, sex, location, socio-economic status, and disability. For example, the Spotlight Initiative **Pacific Regional Programme** is prioritizing making data collection tools easier to use and with useful analysis, especially addressing issues for those left furthest behind. In 2020, **Samoa** and other countries made progress on building capacity-building tools that are inclusive of people with disabilities through the kNowVAWdata initiative.

Having disaggregated data led to better results in ending violence against women and girls, for example by supporting better understanding of the profiles of people who require support. For example, in **Kyrgyzstan**, an inter-agency working group, consisting of Spotlight Initiative staff, the National Statistic Committee and the General Prosecutor's Office developed gender-disaggregated data reporting forms on gender-related crimes and misdemeanors which were to be included in the Unified Registry of Crimes and Misdemeanors. Additionally, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Ukuk State Enterprise (SE "Ukuk") - mandated by the General Prosecutor's Office to modernize the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanors (ERPP) - are developing a victim-card that documents sexual and gender-based violence survivor data disaggregated by sex, age, education, marital status, and other social characteristics, which will be required for submitting an entry to the Unified Register of Crimes and Misdemeanors, creating a more consistent and comparable dataset across agencies.

Strengthened prevalence, attitude and norm research around violence against women and girls data at the national level

Spotlight initiative programmes engaged in diverse efforts to build the body of knowledge and evidence on violence against women and girls and to strengthen data and national statistics offices. Having reliable data on the prevalence of different forms of violence against women and girls and on social norms related to the acceptance of violence is critical for policymaking and programming, including monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (in **Uganda**, for example, Spotlight Initiative supported research on gender-based violence, and sexual and reproductive health and rights for reporting on SDG 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6).

Through the Spotlight Initiative's support, a total of 251 national statistics officers, 124 women and 127 men, have strengthened capacities to produce data on the prevalence of violence against women and girls, harmful practices, and incidence where appropriate. A total of 4,141 participants, including government personnel and women's rights advocates, supported by Spotlight Initiative programmes, have enhanced capacities to collect, analyse and disseminate prevalence and incidence data on violence against women and girls.

Government Personnel and Women's Rights Advocates with enhanced capacities to...

■ analyse and disseminate prevalence and/or incidence data on violence against women and girls

■ collect prevalence and/or incidence data, including qualitative data, on violence against women and girls in line with international and regional standards

547 / 905	555 / 1,036	743 / 355
Government Personnel (Women)	**Government Personnel (Men)**	**Women's Rights Advocates**
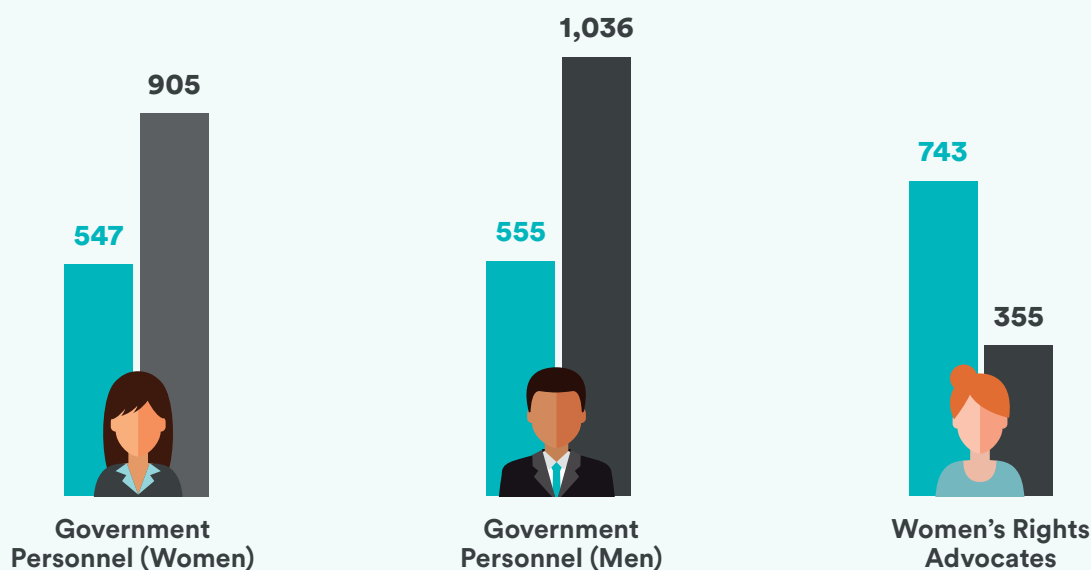
Collecting data and evidence to better understand perceptions and normative issues that maintain or reproduce violence against women and girls or harmful traditional practices was a focus in 2020. For example, in **Timor-Leste,** the Spotlight Initiative is supporting the General Directorate of Statistics to strengthen nationally representative and globally comparable data on violence against women and girls through Demographic and Health Surveys program (DHS) modules. This work has further deepened an understanding of what drives violence against women, including community awareness and understanding of what constitutes sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices. In **Argentina**, the Spotlight Initiative modified the National Survey of Prevalence and Incidence of Gender-Based Violence, the first survey with a representative sample from different regions of the country, to allow for reliable and valid data even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and to ensure that the survey captures the specifics of gender-based violence, including its underlying drivers, in the context of the pandemic.

Reliable, nationally representative and comparable data on prevalence rates and social and cultural norms related to violence against women and girls are often carried out through surveys. In many countries, the Spotlight Initiative made advancements in developing or strengthening this data. In **Malawi,** Spotlight Initiative leveraged the U-Report survey to identify areas that need deeper attention in programming and service delivery, from the perspective of rights-holders. For example, three national polls were held in 2020 on sexual and reproductive health rights that showed that 72 per cent of all respondents felt early pregnancy was the most important health issue facing girls. A poll focused on women in

Spotlight Initiative districts found that over half of women (52 per cent) shared that discrimination against women and girls needed to be urgently addressed; however, only a quarter of men considered this topic a serious issue (26 per cent).

The **Latin American Regional Programme** advanced the Latin American Protocol Model for Investigating Violent Deaths of Women for Gender Reasons (Femicides) in 2020. The Spotlight Initiative engaged in tool development to document and investigate violent deaths of women using a gender lens and leveraged diverse government partnerships through the Ibero-America Association of Public Ministries. Spotlight Initiative support led to the following outcomes:

- Documenting the adaption of the protocol to track femicides and identify lessons learned in Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador and Guatemala to support other countries and local governments in the region to adopt this work

- Creating a follow-up mechanism for the application of the Latin American Protocol of Investigation of Femicides and analysing femicide in the context of organized crime

- Recommendations to members of public ministries on how to address femicide and violence against women and girls in the context of COVID-19.

To ensure that Spotlight Initiative support is aligned with and responsive to local and national contexts, in 2020, consultations were held and groundwork laid across Spotlight Initiative countries with a range of partners, including government ministries, statistical offices, academic institutions, national institutes of statistics, and women's rights organizations. As a result, progress in available knowledge and data of violence against women and girls occurred in **Belize**, **El Salvador**, **Haiti**, **Honduras**, **Tajikistan**, and **Uganda**. In **Honduras,** with diverse inputs from civil society and government, Spotlight Initiative supported the National Women's Institute (INAM) to construct an index on violence against women and girls, which will be launched in 2021 as a permanent tool of the INAM National Gender Observatory. In **Haiti,** the Spotlight Initiative worked with CARE International and UN Women to ensure that violence against women and girls was integrated into a Rapid Gender Assessment in the context of COVID-19. The research resulted in a report that assessed women's and their families' priority needs in connection with national response plans for COVID-19; the Initiative helped to ensure that national data on violence against women were integrated into the analysis. The results showed an increase in requests for support and services, which was critical given the absence of national official data on the situation as well as lack of awareness about service availability and options.

In general, the COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant challenge to work on data, as lockdowns and limitations on in-person gatherings resulted in delayed or scaled-back data collection. The **Zimbabwe** team noted that interventions under this Outcome were the most impacted by COVID-19, and in **Grenada,** the programme reallocated approximately 14 per cent of the funds originally allocated to Outcome 5 for the procurement of personal protective equipment. Even so, several Spotlight Initiative programmes were able to pivot programming under this Pillar not only to achieve originally intended Outcomes but also to reach unexpected results. By factoring COVID-19 into Outcome 5 interventions, programmes ultimately enabled more comprehensive data collection that will provide important insights moving forward.

5.2.6 Pillar 6: Women's Movement 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.

1,254 **local and grassroots women's organizations** **were supported to structure and expand their activities to end 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 Theory of Change in 2017 and the inclusion of Outcome 6. In addition to weaving civil society support, partnership, and collaboration through all Outcome Areas, Spotlight Initiative prioritized direct support to women's rights and feminist organizations and movements, and in particular grassroots organizations. This addition was paramount as 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, are a driving force of transformational change on gender equality and in the elimination of violence against women and girls.

All Spotlight Initiative programmes commit to investing 10-15 per cent of total activity funding to Outcome 6. Across all five regions, the Spotlight Initiative has exceeded this target, with 14 per cent[35] of total activity costs (approximately USD 33 million) currently planned for Outcome 6.

The main results achieved include:

- More women's rights organizations and civil society organizations have influence and agency to work on ending violence against women and girls

- Strengthened research, knowledge, and mappings regarding women's movements and civil society actions

- Strengthened women's rights, feminist, local and grassroots organizations and movements

- Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women's rights organizations

- Civil society organizations, including women's rights organizations, have greater 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

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[35] All Pillar 6 funding is from current programme budgets. United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women and Safe and Fair are not reflected.

189

**official dialogues were held
in nineteen countries**

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 2020, 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.

Overall, in 2020, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative, 189 official dialogues were held in 19 countries, with the meaningful participation of women's rights groups and relevant civil society organizations among the relevant government authorities, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. As a result, 79 jointly agreed recommendations on policies to end violence against women and girls and increase the accountability of perpetrators were developed, with the support of the Spotlight Initiative programmes, in **Papua New Guinea**, **Samoa**, **Tajikistan**, **Argentina**, **El Salvador**, **Honduras**, **Liberia**, **Mozambique**, **Nigeria** and **Uganda**. Altogether 341 women's right groups and relevant civil society organizations, with support from Spotlight Initiative programmes, increased their use of citizen audits, shadow reporting, or other accountability mechanisms to advocate for ending violence against women and girls.

79 jointly agreed recommendations were developed (on gender equality or violence against women and girls) as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues

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. In **Liberia**, for example, 100 civil society organizations were trained on social accountability mechanisms and government monitoring tools, including shadow reporting and community scorecards. This enabled civil society to contribute to the shadow reports on the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The Spotlight Initiative supported civil society across programmes in advocating for and advancing gender equitable legislation, policies on women human rights defenders, and the development and monitoring of national action plans. Overall, through the Spotlight Initiative's support, 1,111 women's rights organizations, autonomous social movements and relevant civil society organizations reported

having greater influence and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls in **the Pacific Regional Programme, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Liberia, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Samoa, Timor-Leste**, and **Zimbabwe**.

The COVID-19 pandemic allowed for new possibilities to meaningfully engage civil society in some contexts. In several Spotlight Initiative programmes, such as **Honduras, Guyana, El Salvador,** and **Pacific Regional Programme**, civil society organizations and Civil Society Reference Group members actively and meaningfully contributed to the design of emergency response and recovery plans in the COVID-19 pandemic context. Their advocacy contributed to ensuring that gender-based violence prevention measures and survivor-centric services were fully integrated into these plans and that they were budgeted. For instance, in **Tajikistan,** civil society organizations' recommendations from virtual consultations were fed into the political process, and a joint letter with their recommendations was shared to the Government and relevant ministries. This letter called for "hotlines" and services for all survivors of domestic abuse or violence to be considered as "essential services" and kept open even under the lockdown.

Strengthened mappings of women's movements and civil society actions, supporting deeper connections and improved knowledge sharing across networks

Mappings of relevant organizations and networks - a common good practice for most programmes during the inception phase of new programmes - were conducted jointly with civil society to build upon and strengthen existing initiatives, amplify critical grassroots knowledge, and ensure cross-learning and dialogue. For instance, in **Timor-Leste**, the civil society mapping exercise contributed to identifying new feminist partnerships and prioritizing partnerships with groups from marginalized communities, including a consortium of two LGBTQI+ groups and a consortium of four organizations of persons with disabilities, to implement the principles of leaving no one behind.

©UN Women/Helio Miguel

In addition, the mapping of capacities of local civil society organizations enabled Spotlight Initiative teams to identify specific gaps to be addressed to ensure adequate strengthening and contribute to the establishment of more robust civil society platforms across countries. For instance, in **Argentina,** the capacity mapping of local civil society organizations led to innovative projects such as a new partnership with a network of universities specialized in gender equality and ending violence against women and girls, which aims to further enhance the technical work of civil society organizations.

During the reporting period, substantial progress was made in connecting diverse networks across constituencies, deepening coordination and knowledge sharing among groups and encouraging cross-movement collaboration. The Spotlight Initiative contributed to the development of knowledge hubs and advocacy platforms across programmes, including in **Liberia, Honduras**, and **Niger**. These platforms improved the sharing of reliable information and real-time data, such as in **Niger** through the e-platform on gender-based violence[36] of the Women Leaders Of Niger platform, the national branch of the African Women's Leaders Network. Linked holistically to other Spotlight Initiative Pillars, the information and knowledge shared in the hubs directly contributed to and strengthened interventions in other Spotlight Initiative Outcome Areas.

Platforms also served as spaces for cross-regional cooperation and learning exchange, including in **Liberia**, among other programmes. In **Liberia**, networking among civil society actors proved to be beneficial for collective bargaining positions, successful advocacy and increased capacities. In fact, a cross-regional virtual learning exchange, in which 40 participants from three countries in the region (**Liberia**, **Nigeria** and **Senegal**), was organized by the national Spotlight Initiative programme. This was an opportunity for civil society members to share good practices, such as the use of multi-stakeholder civil society platforms to implement and advocate for interventions related to multiple and intersecting forms of violence and discrimination in their respective countries.

Network strengthening and coordination of women's movements posed significant challenges given severe restrictions in movement due to COVID-19. Nonetheless, Spotlight Initiative programmes were quick to adapt. For example, in **El Salvador,** the Initiative supported the organization *CEMUJER* with the promotion of a virtual network at the community level. In **Zimbabwe**, the "Innovators Against Gender-Based Violence"[37] and the Initiative's Implementing Partners combined the use of information and communication technology and community meetings (in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines) to strengthen movement-building for ending violence against women and girls at the community level, while **Malawi** created and strengthened networks of women sex workers and women living with HIV and AIDS, addressing intersecting forms of discrimination. Through the networks, 278 women received training on safe practices in COVID-19 in addition to training on sexual and gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, developing community-based advocacy campaigns and establishing alliances with other women facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Strengthened women's rights organizations and movements at local levels

Facilitating collaboration and networking, knowledge exchange, and organizational capacity building, the Spotlight Initiative worked across programmes to strengthen movement-building and lay the groundwork for cross-movement collaboration. In 2020, progress was made in multiple programmes

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[36] VBG Niger Platform.

[37] The Innovators Against Gender-Based Violence are graduate students who are tasked with bringing new innovations to addressing violence against women and girls in the localities where they are deployed through the Initiative's implementing partners (under Pillar 6). They provide programme, administrative, monitoring and evaluation knowledge management and communications support, partnership strengthening within consortiums, and advocacy support to the community groups. IAGs refer cases, offer psychosocial support to women and girls and ensure that they receive the comprehensive package of services for violence against women and girls.

including in **Argentina, Honduras, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, the Pacific Regional Programme, Grenada, Samoa, Tajikistan,** and the **Africa Regional Programme**. In these programmes, the Spotlight Initiative reinforced 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, 1,025 women's rights groups, networks and relevant civil society organizations engaged in capacity strengthening support, and in 13 of the Spotlight Initiative programmes,[38] a total of 1,254 women's organizations were supported to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on eliminating violence against women and girls. In the **Africa Regional Programme**, the African Union Commission and African Union Youth Envoy launched the Saleema Youth Victorious Ambassadors (SYVA) programme and communication campaign for young women activists and female genital mutilation survivors, aged between 18 and 35 to advocate on the elimination of female genital mutilation. The communication campaign offered a platform for SYVA to foster intergenerational co-leadership and dialogue, amplifying the voices of female genital mutilation survivors and ensuring the regional representation and outreach of the Saleema Initiative.

The Spotlight Initiative also provided support to local women's rights organizations to bolster community-based movement-building. For instance, in **Malawi**, the Initiative created six Women's Assemblies in each Spotlight Initiative district, which led to the cooperation and networking of 180 activists, each representing a different women's group. These assemblies are a sustainable mechanism to coordinate, galvanize and support women's movement-building at the community level. The Spotlight Initiative also supported the collaboration between women's rights organizations, youth groups and entities that represent women and girls facing intersecting forms of discriminations. A total of 556 civil society organizations, 356 representing youth and 200 representing other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, with support from Spotlight Initiative programmes in six countries - **Argentina, Grenada, Honduras, Liberia, Nigeria**, and **Zimbabwe** - were able to integrate with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society to work on ending violence against women and girls.

Interestingly, the recently conducted Spotlight Initiative mid-term assessment identified (organizational) capacity issues among civil society partners as well, but indicated that **the most significant obstacles to their participation were related to structural and administrative barriers that exist within United Nations procedures. This analysis also identified a "cultural barrier", highlighting a certain reluctance by UN Country Teams to entrust major interventions to grassroots or national civil society organizations, even when they demonstrate expertise and experience in the sector**. In **Liberia**, for example, as a response to concerns raised by civil society organizations that the United Nations call for proposal processes were time-consuming, complicated, and cumbersome, the Initiative launched a joint call for proposals and a massive open training day for potential civil society organizations to apply through a joint Expression of Interest using a single partnership platform. As noted in the report, this resulted in the use of one standard process by all civil society organizations through one platform, a more sustainable and practical way to engage and fund smaller local civil society organizations going forward.

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[38] Argentina, El Salvador, Honduras, Liberia, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Grenada, Haiti, and Samoa as well as Trinidad and Tobago.

Increased funding for civil society, including specifically feminist and women's rights organizations

Progressive civil society organizations and diverse women's and feminist movements are collectively leading transformative work to advance gender equality and end violence against women and girls. Yet, resources and funding that fuel feminist social change are largely insufficient. Crucial for sustained activism and movement-building, the Spotlight Initiative aimed to scale up core funding to organizations at the forefront of eliminating violence against women and girls, particularly women's rights organizations, and grassroots community-based organizations. The Spotlight Initiative programmes portfolio allocated 48 per cent, about USD 146 million, of its Phase I activity funds across all five regions directly to civil society organizations as of December 2020 (more information on Spotlight Initiative's civil society organization funding can be found in Chapter 4 and Annex C).

USD 146 million

**allocated to civil society organizations so far
(48% of activity funding)**

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic and its disastrous economic consequences exacerbated the pressure on small grassroots organizations, to the extent of jeopardizing their existence. Programmes were able to swiftly pivot and adapt their efforts to meaningfully engage civil society organizations, reallocating funding to support local, grassroots organizations to continue the essential work they do, and provided support for network strengthening and movement-building. In 2019 and 2020, **82 per cent of civil society funding was invested in women's rights and women-led organizations**. To further support women's organizations and address the increasing funding needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, Spotlight Initiative, through its partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, reallocated USD 9.1 million for institutional funding of 44 grantees in sub-Saharan Africa. This underscores the Initiative's dedication to resourcing and supporting women's organizations at the local and national levels.

82% **of civil society funding invested in women's organizations**

A small-grants mechanism was established in numerous Spotlight Initiative programmes to ensure civil society organization sustainability and respond to the increased need for flexible funding, including in **Jamaica**, **Grenada**, **Trinidad and Tobago**, **Papua New Guinea**, **Central Asia**, **the Pacific Regional Programme** and **Vanuatu**. In **Grenada**, the small-grants application process was simplified to streamline flexible support to grassroots organizations in times of increased pressure due to the pandemic. In the **Pacific Regional Programme,** the Initiative re-programmed USD 100,000 for COVID-19 small grants to 'non-traditional' grassroots and frontline civil society organizations, especially those addressing the social and economic impact of COVID-19 and not yet connected with regional feminist movement spaces. The call was circulated to countries often left out of mainstream funding opportunities and aimed to reduce barriers to accessing funding due to bureaucratic requirements and access to technology for applying online by ensuring languages were accessible, and through other means.

The Spotlight Initiative has also channelled funding and provided direct grants to grassroots civil society organizations and local women's rights groups to continue operating effectively and respond rapidly and safely while delivering frontline services to women and girls across programmes, including in **Liberia**, **Mexico**, **Belize,** and **Uganda**. In **Liberia,** the Initiative provided seed grants to 25 grassroots civil society organizations and local women's rights organizations to respond to increased cases of violence against women and girls and meet the needs of communities in the context of COVID-19. With these grants, grassroots civil society organizations reached 385 communities through massive community engagement, reaching a total of 56,021 people with information on violence against women and girls prevention in the COVID-19 context. In **Mexico,** the Spotlight Initiative transferred urgent resources to organizations on the front line of response to violence against women and girls, including for women in shelters, and supported the provision of essential services and prevention programming during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Trinidad and Tobago,** the Spotlight Initiative team consulted with members of the Civil Society Reference Group on an activity to allocate grants to strengthen peer networks amongst community-based organizations and civil society organizations in order to better advocate for improvements to, and to better monitor, service delivery for survivors of family violence with key government stakeholders and the public. Civil society organizations receiving these funds will develop a strong civil society organization peer network within the women's movement at all levels, to deliver quality and coordinated services, advocacy and prevention and to hold state actors accountable.

5.3 The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

The Initiative has committed to channelling 10 per cent of the overall regional envelope of each of the five regions for Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes. Spotlight Initiative's partnership with the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UNTF EVAW) and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) helps to mobilize resources to reach smaller and grassroots feminist organizations and to support women's movements in Africa and Latin America, and specifically in **Haiti, Afghanistan** and **Papua New Guinea**.[39] Overall these have allocated USD 36.7 million to civil society

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[39] The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes in the Caribbean, Central Asia and the Pacific are integrated as a Pillar 6 in their respective Regional Programmes.

grants to address violence against women and girls. The Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes for Latin America and Africa have jointly delivered about USD 28 million out of USD 31.2 million allocated to civil society organizations as of December 2020, of which 78 per cent went to support national and grassroots organizations and 94 per cent to the support of women's organizations. For more details on investment allocations, see Chapter 4 or Annex C.

Dedicated Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes

USD 36.7 million

allocated through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and Girls and the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

5.3.1 United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

As of December 2020, the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women had awarded about USD 24 million in direct grants to 55 civil society organizations in 25 countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa (more information on funding through this mechanism under Chapter 4 and Annex C). The COVID-19 pandemic created significant challenges for grantees during 2020 and severely limited transportation, access to communities and direct service provision. Despite the challenges, the grantees see COVID-19 as giving the women's movements a momentum to advocate for women's rights. For instance, in **Honduras**, Centro de Estudios de Mujeres, in partnership with a network of 22 women's organizations, reoriented its work to raise awareness about increases in violence associated with lockdown measures. As a result of their consistent advocacy for an emergency law on violence against women and girls, the Honduras Parliament approved a new piece of legislation on emergency measures.

Grantees reached 56,915 rights holders with food, hygiene supplies, sanitation and with other emergency need parcels, as well as economic support to ensure the stability of the project and to mitigate the financial impacts that contributed to escalated violence against women and girls. In **Liberia**, United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers supported 1,230 women and girls including women and girls with disabilities, women survivors and their families to access food and non-food items to cope and respond to challenges emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. In **South Sudan**, 21 women and girls were enabled to recover financially through the Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa. The grantee provided training on producing face masks and reusable sanitary pads, thereby meeting local demand for both products and generating income.

The COVID-19 pandemic also posed challenges in terms of organizational sustainability and burnout among staff, which grantees utilized the influx of Spotlight Initiative's COVID-19 funding[40] in 2020 to address. At least 19 grantees and co-implementing partners reported being able to exceed or fully maintain service delivery and 515 staff and partners worked from home effectively through home-working policies and modalities supported through this funding. In **Nigeria**, a project implemented by the Society for Life Changers and Good Parental Care (SOLIFE), enrolled all project staff in health insurance plans to ensure their access to medical treatment during the implementation of project activities. Due to the provision of such services and tools, 100 per cent of project interventions that were previously on hold because of COVID-19 were able to resume by the end of 2020.

Many grantees were agile in turning to virtual programming. For instance, 28 grantees developed and published COVID-19 and violence against women and girls integrated response messages, including media stories and radio shows. Grantees continued and intensified efforts to form alliances with civil society and community-based organizations as a strategy to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on service and programmatic delivery. For instance, a project implemented by the Rural Women Centre for Education and Development in **Cameroon** is working to foster partnerships with local civil society organizations to advocate against violence against women and girls and for women's leadership in decision-making. The project has so far achieved the inclusion of four women on a traditionally all-male 16-member council and reached women and girls in all their diversity through their training and learning exchange activities on human rights, including reaching 225 survivors of violence. It also reached 339 traditional and religious leaders, as well as law enforcement and community-level actors to communicate with them about the root causes of violence against women and girls. After delivering training, the Rural Women Centre for Education and Development received 753 reports of violence through its hotline.

5.3.2 Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund

Through its partnership with the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund** (WPHF), the Initiative has awarded about USD 4.4 million to 48 grantees in Africa (more information on funding through this mechanism under Chapter 4 and Annex C), addressing the "humanitarian-development-peace nexus" attempting to appropriately tackle women and girls' exposure to violence before, during and after crises. Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund partners have set up and strengthened reporting structures for violence against women and girls and generated community support for reporting, which led to increased qualitative reporting of cases on violence against women and girls and caretaking of survivors. In **the Democratic Republic of the Congo**, 60 psychosocial workers and paralegals were trained to document cases of sexual and gender-based violence. As a result, they have supported the identification of 395 sexual and gender-based violence, and effectively contributed to the protection and promotion of women's rights, peace and social cohesion through awareness sessions organized in their villages, within women's groups and through radio broadcasts.

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[40] As COVID-19 revealed the need to support the institutional capacity of organizations to survive the challenges posed by the pandemic, USD 9.1 million was repurposed to institutional funding of existing Spotlight Initiative and United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women grantees in sub-Saharan Africa.

Partners have also developed innovative tools and mechanisms to address violence against women and girls. In **Uganda**, Slum Aid Project wrote a song called "Wise Up", with South African-based artist Mthetho Tshemese. Together they are mobilizing fellow Ugandan artists to use music to change individual social behaviours that fuel violence against women and girls. The song "Wise Up" challenges men to participate in domestic responsibilities and community welfare activities, and to stop perpetrating violence on their female family members. The song will be used as a social mobilization tool to raise awareness of violence against women and girls. In **Liberia**, the Foundation for Community Initiatives developed the SAVApp for the collection of data and reporting on sexual and gender-based violence. The app particularly targets girls attending school who face multiple forms of abuse at home, in the communities and at school. Not only is the app's use beneficial at community level, but it will also be linked to the national data collection system. A similar app is also being developed by the partner for those who are blind and visually impaired.

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

While all Spotlight Initiative programmes have advanced sexual and reproductive health and rights, a specific allocation of USD 100 million from the European Union was dedicated specifically for Spotlight Initiative investments in Africa. The goal for this targeted funding is to address the slow progress on enhancing sexual and reproductive health and rights, and ending violence against women and girls and harmful practices in sub-Saharan Africa. Transforming attitudes and norms around sexual health, women's sexuality and reproduction is central to advancing efforts to end sexual and gender based violence and harmful practices and improve women's health and rights.

The Spotlight Initiative committed to allocate USD 100 million to sexual and reproductive health and rights activities across its Africa programmes. During the first phase of programming alone, Africa's Spotlight Initiative programmes have so far planned a total allocation of about USD 83 million toward sexual and reproductive health and rights activities. This signals the Spotlight Initiative's commitment to integrating and centring sexual and reproductive health and rights into broader programming to eliminate violence against women and girls. It is expected that with the second phase of programming commencing in 2021, the USD 100 million target will be met.

Of the USD 83 million allocated to sexual and reproductive health and rights in Africa so far, Spotlight Initiative programmes in their second year of implementation delivered 28 per cent,[41] or approximately USD 34 million as of December 2020. The Spotlight Initiative programmes in **Uganda**, **Niger** and **Malawi** reported the highest rates of progress in terms of delivering planned funding to sexual and reproductive health and rights activities, with **Uganda** leading at 53 per cent delivery.

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[41] Data on sexual and reproductive health and rights expenditures does not include data from ILO and UNESCO.

ON TARGET: Funding for **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights** in Africa

Target **USD 100 million**

Allocated **USD 83 million**

Spotlight Initiative engages in multiple entry points and across Pillar areas to make more holistic change, and women's knowledge and power over their sexual health and sexuality is critical. As feminists, women's rights activists and progressive movements have consistently underscored and, as empirical studies have shown, gender equality and the elimination of violence against women and girls cannot be achieved without the full realization of women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is why the Spotlight Initiative has focused on comprehensive advancements in sexual and reproductive health and rights to help prevent violence against women and girls and ensure a more effective response.

Many diverse achievements have been attained through the dedicated sexual and reproductive health and rights funding. During 2020, Spotlight Initiative programmes in Africa worked to ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights were embedded into national plans and policies, institutionalizing sexual and reproductive health and rights within broader development policy. In **Zimbabwe,** the programme partnered with the Federation of Disabled Persons Organizations to support 57 women and girls with disabilities to actively engage in provincial consultations on the National Disability Policy and the Persons with Disabilities Bill. Collectively they demanded improved access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for those living with disabilities, including the right to start families, thereby strengthening the Bill's responsiveness. In **Uganda,** the Spotlight Initiative initiated high-level policy dialogue with the Ministry of Health on the integration of the Essential Services Package incorporating sexual and reproductive health, HIV and services for the elimination of violence against women and girls within the country's universal health coverage under the National Development Plan III. This is a significant intervention, which will ensure that sexual and reproductive health and rights are fully integrated in the Joint Work Plan and Programme Implementation Action Plans, supporting their sustainability within national structures.

The initiative has also increased awareness on sexual and reproductive health and rights, empowering adolescents and youth and supporting uptake of services. In **Uganda**, community awareness initiatives were expanded to include sexual and reproductive health and rights with services reaching the most vulnerable and expanding their access to information. In **Malawi,** the programme used community advocacy platforms and adolescent empowerment interventions to raise meaningful awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights and the relevant services, leading to an increased uptake of sexual

and reproductive health and rights services amongst young women and men. In **Nigeria,** post-literacy classes for around 4000 individuals on Second Chance Education curriculums have been designed to incorporate sexual and reproductive health and rights aspects including teenage pregnancy and contraception among others.

The Spotlight Initiative also contributed to integrated access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services and commodities and supplies, using the entry point of healthcare to ensure a comprehensive approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including addressing violence against women and girls. In **Liberia,** the Initiative contributed to safe and timely delivery of sexual and reproductive health and rights services by supporting access to medical equipment for assisted deliveries and expanding service delivery points. This has played a key role in reducing maternal mortality and improving access to family planning services in Liberia, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. In **Malawi,** the programme contributed to improving access to quality essential services in the fields of sexual and reproductive health and rights and sexual and gender-based violence by enhancing capacities of service providers to deliver integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights services and establishing an integrated referral pathway, including for women and girls with disabilities. In **Mozambique,** the programme supplied sexual and reproductive health and rights commodities, including contraceptives and condoms - both through this initiative and by leveraging other major initiatives nationally, thereby strengthening service delivery through comprehensive access to commodities, including for people living with disabilities and people living with HIV. The barriers for victims during sexual offence trials were contributing to absenteeism at court proceedings by survivors of sexual violence against women and girls in **Uganda**. Among other factors, one of the barriers include a lack of access to personal effects and sanitary supplies for the long stay during investigations and trial periods. This was addressed by the Spotlight Initiative's provision of these supplies, which contributed to lowered absenteeism. The lowered absenteeism in turn contributed to an increase in convictions for sexual and gender based violence offences from 60.1 per cent in 2019 to 74 per cent in 2020.

As part of a holistic Spotlight Initiative strategy for prevention and behaviour change, programmes in Africa also contributed to sexual and reproductive health and rights services through campaigns and improved access to education and information (including in- and out-of-school settings, and through safe spaces for young people and adolescents). In **Niger,** for example, a curriculum was designed by the Spotlight Initiative to incorporate different sexual and reproductive health and rights aspects into post-literacy education. The curriculum featured modules on teenage pregnancy, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and AIDS, violence against girls and women and harmful traditional practices, as well as on the legal instruments available to advance the rights of girls and women. Implemented in several states, the information reached 4,051 learners, expanding access to sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services to young people, including those living with disabilities, among others. Education was also provided through hotlines. To adapt to lockdown measures during COVID-19, Youth Advocate Zimbabwe, together with Spotlight Initiative, launched a helpline to share comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights information to key populations in **Zimbabwe**. Facing high levels of stigma and discrimination, including within health care settings, when requesting information on sexual and reproductive health and rights, the helpline offered critical information

through a trusted platform to key populations, including on high impact sexual reproductive health and HIV services across the country.

Campaigns were also launched across programmes in Africa to raise awareness, disseminate information, and support prevention efforts. The **Africa Regional Programme** contributed to "Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future", a multigenerational campaign that provides a platform to educate about, and advocate and innovate for, sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality more broadly. The demands of the campaign include: equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, appropriate and responsive health-care services, including those related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, and equal participation in political life and decision-making in all areas of life. A global conversation was organized in July 2020 on "bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights", with critical dialogue on adolescent girls' bodily autonomy and decision making, contributing to the implementation of the Cairo and Beijing agendas.[42]

Finally various programmes contributed to ensuring that sexual and reproductive health and rights data were more readily available. Through the development of tailored data collection tools and advances in harmonizing data collection across sectors, sexual and reproductive health and rights data are more readily available to inform policy and advocacy. In **Malawi,** for example, following a comprehensive assessment of the sexual and gender-based violence information management, a data collection tool was designed to ensure coherence across the data collection of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, and sexual and reproductive health and rights in three sectors: health, social welfare, and justice. Developed in close consultation with key stakeholders - who validated the need for such an instrument, ensuring its relevance – recent testing demonstrated the ease with which sexual and gender-based violence incidence data will be collected and shared with the Sexual Gender-Based Violence District Data Observatory Hubs, thereby strengthening multisectoral service delivery and coordination. The programme also strengthened Information Management Systems pertaining to the police and judiciary specifically, leading to enhanced data capacity and availability for evidence-based programming and policy development.

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[42] The Cairo agenda refers to the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, while the Beijing agenda refers to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, produced at the Fourth World Conference on Women in September 1995.