Annex I f.

Central and South Asia Regional Investment Plan
2 country programme profiles Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

2019-2023

December 2019

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:
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### KEY ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIS</td>
<td>Commonwealth of Independent States</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the rights of children</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>Demographic and Health Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>DV/IPV</td>
<td>Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESPs</td>
<td>Essential Services Package Standard Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>EVAWG</td>
<td>Ending violence against women and girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGM</td>
<td>Female Genital Mutilation</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDI</td>
<td>Gender Development Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>GII</td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRB</td>
<td>Gender responsive budgeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>HP</td>
<td>Harmful Practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>KPI</td>
<td>Key Primary Indicator</td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQI</td>
<td>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex</td>
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<tr>
<td>MICS</td>
<td>Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAPGE</td>
<td>National Action Plan for Gender Equality</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-government organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUNO</td>
<td>Regional United Nations Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAARC</td>
<td>South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SANAM</td>
<td>South Asian Network to Address Masculinities</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGBV</td>
<td>Sexual and Gender Based Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>SI</td>
<td>Spotlight Initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIGI</td>
<td>Social Institutions and Gender Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOGI</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRHR</td>
<td>Sexual and reproductive health and rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>ToC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>UN Development Assistance Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United National Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDOC</td>
<td>United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAWG</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
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</table>
KEY DEFINITIONS

Sexual and Gender Based Violence is defined for this Investment Plan and in the context of the Spotlight Initiative to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), as any act that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, economic or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts (...) understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following:

(a) Physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;

(b) Physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution;

(c) Physical, sexual, economic and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs. 1

Acid attacks and burning is the premeditated throwing of acid on a victim, usually on her face. In addition to causing psychological trauma, acid attacks result in severe pain, permanent disfigurement, subsequent infections, and often blindness in one or both eyes. Survivors also face long term impacts such as social ostracization and loss of access to income generating opportunities. Perpetrators commit acid attacks for a number of reasons, including revenge for refusal of a marriage proposal or other romantic or sexual advances; land disputes; perceived dishonour; and jealousy.2

Bride kidnapping involves taking a female without her consent for the purpose of forcing her to marry one of her captors. Perpetrators may use psychological coercion or physical force, including rape, to force the woman or girl into marriage.3

Chhaupadi or menstrual exile is a tradition of “untouchability” in some specific contexts in South Asia. Forbidden from touching other people and objects, women and girls are required to live away from the community, typically in a livestock shed, during menstruation.4

Child marriage, or early marriage, is any marriage or civil union where at least one of the parties is under 18 years of age. It is considered a harmful practice by the United Nations. Forced marriages are marriages in which one and/or both parties have not personally expressed their full and free consent to the union. A child marriage is considered to be a form of forced marriage, given that children cannot give consent and thus one and/or both parties have not expressed full, free and informed consent.5 Currently, there is a rising incidence of self-initiated

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or peer unions and marriages and a need to balance protection with the rights of adolescents of similar ages who may be engaging in ‘factually consensual and non-exploitative sexual activity.’

**Domestic Violence** is violence perpetrated by intimate partners and other family members, and manifested through physical abuse; sexual abuse; psychological abuse; and economic abuse.

**Dowry-related violence** is perpetrated by a woman or girls’ spouse or marital family in retaliation for her family’s inability to meet the dowry demands (a dowry is a transfer of parental property, gifts, or money at the marriage of a daughter) or when the husband wishes to remarry to obtain another dowry. Dowry-related violence can include physical violence as well as harassment that leads to death, known as “dowry death.” The violence and deaths associated with dowry demands constitute domestic violence.

**Gender-biased sex selection** is a harmful practice which ensures the birth of male children and/or results in the neglect or killing of female children. Gender inequality and the low status of women result in sex-selective abortions or the practice of killing girl babies after they are born. In countries where son preference, female infanticide, and sex-selective abortions are common, the gender ratio of the population is significantly skewed.

So-called **‘Honour crimes’** are acts of vengeance committed by family members against female family members, who are seen to have brought dishonour upon the family. Dishonour killings have been practiced for decades, usually by the victims' families to protect family honour if a woman is assumed to have had premarital or extramarital sex, married of her own will or refused a marriage arranged by her family. LGBTQ people are also targeted by ‘honour crimes.’

**Sexual harassment** is a form of sexual violence that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment can happen in workplaces and public spaces.

In the workplace, sexual harassment is categorised into:

- “Quid pro quo” sexual harassment which involves:
  - Any physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature and other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men, which is unwelcome, unreasonable, and offensive to the recipient; and
  - A person’s rejection of, or submission to, such conduct is used explicitly or implicitly as a basis for a decision which affects that person’s job.

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• “Hostile working environment” harassment which involves conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or humiliating working environment for the recipient.

While women and men may experience sexual harassment, women are the overwhelming majority of reported victims.

**Trafficking in persons** is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. **Exploitation** shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

**Virginity testing** is a gynecological examination conducted under the belief that it determines whether a woman or girl has had vaginal intercourse. Women and girls are subjected, and often forced, to undergo virginity testing for various reasons. These include requests from parents or potential partners to establish marriage eligibility or from employers for employment eligibility. It is mostly performed by doctors, police officers, or community leaders on women and girls in order to assess their virtue, honour or social value. The WHO states that there is no evidence that either method can prove whether a woman or girl has had vaginal intercourse or not.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**The Spotlight Initiative (SI)** is a partnership between the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN) to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), including harmful practices (HP). The Spotlight Initiative is backed by an unprecedented EUR 500M investment from the EU and aims at achieving transformational change. Based on evidence, the Initiative will focus on particular forms of VAWG that are prevalent or prominently emerge in specific regions: femicide in Latin America; sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including sexual exploitation and trafficking against women and girls in Asia; SGBV, including HPs, and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Sub-Saharan Africa; domestic violence/intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) in the Pacific; and domestic and family violence in the Caribbean. Other donors and partners are being approached to broaden the Initiative’s regional, thematic and geographical coverage.

**Six pillars of work comprise the Initiative, which is premised on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.** The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 5.2 calls for the elimination of all forms of VAWG. The Spotlight Initiative also aligns with the European Consensus on Development which identifies gender equality and women’s empowerment as a critical cross-cutting issue of EU development cooperation and the EU Gender Action Plan II (2016-2020), a practical tool guiding all EU cooperation with partner countries on how to take gender equality on-board. The EU Gender Action Plan centres physical and psychological integrity of women and girls as core to its three main thematic priorities. The Spotlight Initiative strongly reaffirms the EU’s commitment to effective multilateralism and will enable the EU and UN to showcase their strong partnership in action, leading on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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13 “Exploitation” is not defined by the Palermo Protocol; rather, a non-exhaustive list of examples is provided. Within this list, the exploitation of the prostitution of others constitutes a form of exploitation under the crime of human trafficking. The Palermo Protocol addresses the exploitation of the prostitution of others only in the context of trafficking in persons. While there is no legal definition of the “exploitation of the prostitution of others”, UNODC Model Law proposes that it refer to “the unlawful obtaining of financial or other material benefit from the prostitution of another person.” For further information see: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2015. The Concept of ‘Exploitation’ in the Trafficking In Persons Protocol, available at: https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2015/UNODC_IP_Exploitation_2015.pdf


This document outlines the programmatic framework of the Spotlight Initiative’s investments for Central and South Asia, starting in 2019. For the purposes of the Investment Plan:

- **Central Asia** includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- **South Asia** includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

This Investment Plan guides the Country Programme design, which is based on the global and regional results framework and theory of change derived from years of evidence and experience. Regional context, progress, opportunities, and gaps will inform priority areas of focus, while forthcoming CPs will outline specific actions, with clearly defined budget allocations, that will be undertaken at the country-level.

The Spotlight Initiative thematic focus for Central and South Asia is sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls.

The development of Country and Regional Programmes in Asia will be directly coordinated with the regional Thematic Spotlight Programme focusing on South East-Asia, “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region”. The programme is being implemented jointly by International Labour Organisation and UN Women, in collaboration with United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and in close collaboration with the EU Delegation in Bangkok.

Through a comprehensive approach, the Spotlight Initiative will focus its work on sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls through six key pillars: strengthening, developing and implementing relevant legislation and policies; strengthening national and sub-national institutions; preventing violence through evidence-based programmes and campaigns; ensuring the collection and use of prevalence and incidence data; strengthening or establishing essential services for victims / survivors; and partnering directly with women’s movements and civil society.

Initially, the Spotlight Initiative in Central and South Asia will focus on sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, in 3 countries: These countries were selected based on agreed primary criteria, including the prevalence of SGBV (including data from women’s experience of violence in their lifetime and in the past 12 months and indicators making up the Gender Inequality Index); and secondary criteria that assessed current investments in ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG) at a national level and overall absorption capacity; political will and an overall enabling environment, including for civil society, national and partner capacities, to significantly progress interventions to prevent and respond to DV/IPV. The six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative’s theory of change as outlined above, will be implemented at a country-level and with selected pillars at a regional level which will add value in maximizing the investment, and contributing to the scale, sustainability, visibility, lessons learnt and adaptation of approaches throughout the region.

The overall needs identified by 3 priority countries (Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) and a regional component focused on Central Asia and Afghanistan outlined under this Regional Investment Plan are estimated at USD 40.9 million. The EU has announced an earmarked allocation of € 40 million (approximately USD 47.1 million) to the Spotlight Initiative, with the UN also contributing to the Initiative.

### 1. CONTEXT

#### 1.1 SECTOR AND REGIONAL CONTEXTS AND THEMATIC AREAS

**1.1.1 Thematic and Geographic Priorities on Eliminating Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)**

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is one of the most widespread, persistent, and devastating human rights violations in the world today and a serious public health issue. It is a major obstacle to the fulfilment of women’s and girls’ human rights and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. VAWG occurs worldwide, cutting across all generations, nationalities, communities, and spheres of society, irrespective of age, ethnicity, disability, or background. However, some women are more likely to experience violence relating
to their status in society as a result of their age, marital status, reproductive status, location (for example rural women), health, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or experience of poverty.

The Spotlight Initiative focuses on specific forms of VAWG, in particular regions, as entry points to address all forms of VAWG and their structural causes. In the case of Central and South Asia, the focus is on SGBV against women and girls. Despite significant gains in addressing SGBV against women and girls, progress remains slow and uneven. The elimination of all forms of SGBV against women and girls hinges on the introduction and enforcement of strong policies and laws in line with international human rights standards, strong and inclusive institutions and coordinated response services, transformation in the practice of harmful gendered social norms within individual, families, and communities; strengthening of rights-based, survivor-centred service providers, which includes transformation of individual attitudes and beliefs, and an end to impunity when SGBV against women and girls is committed. This aligns with the six key pillars of the Spotlight Initiative.

Diagram 1: Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change

The Spotlight Initiative will put women and girls at the centre of all of its work; recognising women and girls as knowledge holders, change agents and critical partners to eliminate SGBV. The Spotlight Initiative’s comprehensive Theory of Change (ToC) ensures that women and girls lead solutions and all women and girls benefit from adequate legislation and policies, gender-responsive institutions, violence prevention programmes, essential services, comparable and reliable data, and strong women’s movements and civil society organizations. The ToC is premised on years of evidence, programming, and practice, but also aims to integrate elements of innovation to improve approaches and catalyse further change.

Limitations

This document is not intended to provide in-depth analysis of each country in South and Central Asia. Rather it draws on examples and regional trends, to provide an overview of the general situation in each sub-region. The limitations of adopting common outcomes, outputs and indicators is acknowledged but further context specific analysis will inform the programme development once the focus countries are identified.

In addition, a lack of data limits analysis in some thematic and issue areas. For example, there is less information available on economic violence and emotional violence in the two sub-regions.

1.1.2 Public Policy Assessment and EU Policy Framework

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development builds on existing international frameworks for achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment and the elimination of VAWG/HP. These include the Convention on the
Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action.

The global commitment to eliminate VAWG/HP and promote sexual and reproductive health and rights under the 2030 Agenda is further endorsed by the EU, which strongly condemns all forms of VAWG/HP and has identified its elimination as a priority supporting women’s full realisation of their human rights. Furthermore, the second EU Gender Action Plan (2016-2020) identifies the elimination of VAWG, including sexual violence, trafficking, and harmful practices, among other forms of VAWG, as its first pillar. In June 2017, the EU endorsed the new EU Consensus for Development, in which gender equality and women's empowerment are mentioned among the core values and key drivers of development. In their new Consensus, the EU and its Member States confirm their commitment to work together with partners to eliminate all forms of SGBV and discrimination, including harmful practices, particularly forced, early, and child marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGM).

In addition, the EU remains committed to the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the ICPD Programme of Action, as well as the outcomes of their review conferences. In this context, the EU reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of the right of every individual to have full control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion, and violence. The EU further stresses the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information and education, including comprehensive sexuality education and health-care services.

At the regional level, there is a strong landscape of binding agreements, numerous measures as well as recommendations and reports, addressing the human rights of women.

All States in Central and South Asia have ratified or acceded to CEDAW. All countries have submitted at least one progress reporting towards full compliance with CEDAW. In Autumn 2019, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan will be examined by the CEDAW Committee. Uzbekistan will report in 2020 and is now starting development of its national report for submission to the CEDAW Committee.

Despite engagement with the CEDAW reporting processes, there remain gaps in CEDAW compliant legislation in relation to women and girl’s access to justice; access and control over land, resources, and finance; family life; and citizenship as well as to protect women and girls against physical violence, sexual violence, harassment, economic violence, emotional violence and non-discrimination. As evidence demonstrates, adequately preventing and responding to VAWG requires partnering directly with women and girls, particularly women exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, to develop women-led responses and solutions. This will also involve engaging a range of stakeholder across all levels and sectors and partnering with women’s organisations and civil society.

1.1.3 Stakeholder Analysis

All stakeholders will play a significant role in the Spotlight Initiative in Central and South Asia across all pillars. Key sectors, such as Ministries of Women’s Affairs; Education; Health; Justice and Security; Finance, the Parliament; National Statistics Offices; National Human Rights Institutions; and social services, will be engaged in interventions to address SGBV across departments and institutions. This will include the adoption and implementation of

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legislative and policy frameworks, national action plans on VAWG, enhancing multi-sectoral coordination, integration of VAWG across portfolios, budgeting on VAWG, collecting and analysing data to support evidence-based policy and action to enhance the capacity of public service providers.

The Spotlight Initiative will also work with community associations and networks; women’s organisations and movements; school communities; media outlets; women and girls; men and boys; and traditional and religious leaders in community-based mobilisation efforts. These partnerships will be aimed at transforming social norms, attitudes and behaviours and addressing the root causes of VAWG. The Spotlight Initiative will also draw together civil society and government service providers (health, police, justice, social services, including shelter providers) to work in partnership to execute their critical roles to enable accessible, acceptable, available and quality services for all women and girls across all intersections of SGBV. See key stakeholders and potential roles and responsibilities in Diagram 2.

Diagram 2: Snapshot of Key Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key institutions and government departments across sectors</th>
<th>• Legislative and policy frameworks, resource mobilisation, and investment in transformative data, cross-sector/portfolio coordination, and capacity development of public service providers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community associations and networks including (women’s organisations &amp; movements), schools, media outlets, community leaders &amp; individuals</td>
<td>• Community-based mobilisation efforts, aimed at transforming social norms, attitudes and behaviours and addressing the root causes of VAWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society &amp; government service providers</td>
<td>• Partnerships to deliver accessible, acceptable, available and quality SGBV services for all women and girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and girls who have experienced SGBV</td>
<td>• Interventions and service delivery is led by the needs and priorities of survivors of SGBV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional stakeholders including CSO networks, security sector, research institutions &amp; inter-governmental bodies</td>
<td>• Regional legal &amp; policy frameworks, advocacy initiatives, movement strengthening efforts &amp; data analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using a human rights-based approach and implementing principles of participation and accountability, the Spotlight Initiative will initiate or build upon existing feedback mechanisms and advocacy initiatives to ensure programme interventions are led by and continually reflect inputs from survivors on the quality and accessibility of service provision. Similarly, stakeholders at the regional level including networks of Civil Society Organisations, security sector and research institutions; as well as regional intergovernmental bodies (such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); and the Eurasian Economic Union) and regional programmes, such as The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, will be engaged to undertake advocacy on the elimination of VAWG, inform regional policy/regional frameworks, support data analysis and to support women’s movement strengthening.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of regional and national stakeholders that will participate in the Spotlight Initiative in Central and South Asia:

- Women led VAWG service providers, Government and non-government service providers (legal aid, justice, health, social services), SHRH services
- EVAW activists and advocates and representatives of victims / survivors of VAWG
- Women’s organisations, networks and movements at local, national and regional levels.
• Faith-based leaders and organisations
• Traditional and customary leaders
• Disabled people’s organisations
• Youth organisations
• Civil society groups and networks working with diverse groups (girls, young women; adolescent girls, young unmarried mothers, women with disabilities; women in the sex industry; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI); rural women; older women; street women; women living with HIV, and their families; women heads of households; and women from ethnic and linguistic minorities)
• Sporting organisations
• National women’s machineries (Ministries of Women/Departments of Women).
• Government ministries and/or departments (Police, Justice, Health, Education, Finance, Planning, Youth, Children, Community, Religion, Disability, Statistics, Social Services)
• Education and research institutions
• Private sector
• Media organisations.

More specifically, the initiative will engage civil society according to various modalities, ensuring full engagement of civil society organizations and the women’s movement in design of programmes as well as in governance mechanisms (through civil society reference groups and participation in steering committee). Civil society organizations will also be involved in the implementation of all pillars as implementing partners of the programme. Finally, as described in the above sections, the Programme will specifically target CSOs as “agents of change”, providing support to develop their capacity (not only on technical matters but also through operational and financial support), as well as protecting the civic space to allow them to continue to be leaders in the effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

1.1.4 Priority Areas for Support and Problem Analysis

**Gender Inequality in Central and South Asia**

Discrimination against women and girls and gender inequality continues to be prevalent in Central and South Asia. While the manifestations of gender inequality vary between and within countries, harmful attitudes, norms and stereotypes continue to perpetuate gender inequality, restricting the full participation of women and girls in public and private life and the right of women and girls to live free from violence and the threat of violence.

While there is evidence of some advancement, particularly through legislative reform, harmful social norms and practices continue to perpetuate gender inequality. Across both subregions, women and girls face barriers to accessing sexual and reproductive health and rights, education, economic opportunities and advancement, and are under-represented in decision making. Women’s rights organisations and movements also continue to face intimidation, harassment and backlash.

**Central Asia**

Based on the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and the Gender Development Index (GDI), the Central Asian subregion is characterised by moderate levels of gender inequality. 21 However, the changing political and economic

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landscape of the region threatens the gains made in gender equality and women’s empowerment over the past decades.

Countries in Central Asia, for which a Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) is available, are categorised as low to medium, indicating lower levels of inequality in comparison to South Asia. Tajikistan is the only Low-Income Country in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>SIGI 2019 Category</th>
<th>SIGI Value 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmenistan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Governments have introduced legislative and policy frameworks on gender equality, the human, technical and financial resources (including resourced gender machineries) required for implementation are lacking. There are also persisting discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society and in the family, noted across all focus countries which impact on the realisation of women’s rights.

a) Sexual and reproductive health and rights

High maternal mortality rates are noted in some countries such as Kyrgyzstan (especially in rural areas), and in Tajikistan, (24.3 deaths per 100,000 live births), owing to inadequate prenatal care and the high number of early pregnancies. Where recent data is available, it shows that between 4 percent and 7 percent of women ages 15-19 have had children or are currently pregnant.

Challenges are noted, particularly for rural and young women to access SRH services, including contraceptives. For example, in Turkmenistan, parental consent is required for girls under 18 years of age to seek such services.

Note: Higher values indicate higher inequality. Percentages range from 0 to 100, while legal variables are categorised as 0%, 25%, 50%, 75% or 100%. - OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database.

Such as the National Action Plan on Gender Equality 2015-20 (Turkmenistan) and the Long-Term National Strategy to Achieve Gender Parity by 2020 (Kyrgyzstan).


The World Bank Data, 2019. Teenage Mothers (% of women ages 15-19 who have had children or are currently pregnant), [ONLINE] Available at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.MTR.1519.ZS?view=chart [Accessed on 23 May 2019].


Persistent discrimination against some groups of women, including lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women, women involved in the sex industry and migrant women is also noted. For instance, Kyrgyz women migrant workers in Kazakhstan face restricted access to medical care, including prenatal, childbirth and postnatal care.

**Demand for contraception remains unmet**, particularly in Tajikistan where only half of married women have their demand satisfied. SIGI 2019 notes an unmet need for family planning among the female population of 23% (Tajikistan), 12% (Turkmenistan), 12% (Kazakhstan), 18% (Kyrgyzstan), and 14% (Uzbekistan). In Uzbekistan, a stark increase in the use of sterilization as a method of contraception, owing to the unavailability and/or inaccessibility of non-reversible methods of contraception, and allegations of forced sterilization is reported. The non-inclusion of comprehensive education on SRHR in school curricula, is also identified in focus countries.

There is also a growing incidence of HIV/AIDS among women, and an increase in the number of HIV-positive pregnant women is noted in Tajikistan35 and Kyrgyzstan. In Kyrgyzstan, the proportion of women among people with HIV increased between 2011 and 2013, from 30% to 42%.

b) **Women’s participation and leadership in decision making**

**The gender gap at decision-making level remains significant with women occupying between 16% and 27% of seats in national parliaments.** Women continue to encounter a wide range of obstacles to accessing and influencing decision-making stemming from gender stereotypes, discrimination and cultural traditions.

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have enacted legislated candidate quotas. In Uzbekistan, a minimum quota of 30 per cent for women candidates on the electoral lists of political parties for parliamentary elections was established. However, this has not resulted in increased representation of women in elected positions with a decline of...
women’s representation in the Oliy Majlis (from 22 to 16 %). The representation in the civil service (19 per cent), the judiciary (13 %) and the diplomatic service (only 3 per cent of ambassadors are women) is also low.42 In Kyrgyzstan, a quota system for elections at the local level was established in 2011.43 However, women remain under-represented in municipal governance bodies (13.4 %), in the diplomatic service, and in rural self-governing local bodies (4.7 %).44

In Tajikistan, modest quotas have been introduced for the civil services. However, there is a low level of participation of women in the Majlisi Oli (6.3 %), ministerial positions (8 %) and positions in the judiciary, foreign service and local administration.45 In Turkmenistan, the Parliament is led by a woman chairperson, and women account for 24.8 % of the 125 deputies in the Parliament.46 However, the representation of women in decision-making positions, including within the public sector, the diplomatic service and provincial, district and municipal councils remains low. The CEDAW Committee also noted reports that women are prohibited from taking higher-level positions and running in presidential elections.47

In Kazakhstan, women also continue to be underrepresented in legislative bodies (parliament and local authorities), and in leadership positions in political parties, in the public service and in the diplomatic service.48 In the executive office, women comprise 55% of administrative civil servants, but only 8.4% of the political-level civil servants. In 2016, of the 13 ministerial posts and 17 seats in the Executive Cabinet, one was held by a female.49

c) Women’s economic empowerment

In most countries, the labour force participation of women is 10 to 20% less than that of men. In Tajikistan, the employment rate is 40.5 % for women compared with 59.5 % for men.50 Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan also have a high rate of unemployment among women.51 In Turkmenistan, school completion rates have not translated into equal professional and economic opportunities.52

Structural barriers, such as social norms around gender roles and ‘women’s work,’ contribute to occupational segregation, women’s disproportionate burden of unpaid caring work and the de-valuing of women’s economic contributions impact across the region.53 In Kyrgyzstan, surveys from 2003 and 2007 of women’s time dedicated to unpaid activities indicate that they spent over 32 hours per week on various household chores and caring for

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46 Information provided by UN staff.
48 CEDAW Committee. 2014. Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-4, 10 March 2014, para 22.
family. In 2016, women in Kazakhstan earned on average 31.4% less than men. Women also remain concentrated in the informal sector and in low-paying jobs in the education, agriculture and health-care sectors across the region. In Kazakhstan, women represent 70% of all employees in sectors that are traditionally feminized. Countries in the region also prohibit women from occupying certain occupations and place restrictions on working hours and shift work. This list totalled 299 professions in Kazakhstan in 2015. There are also reports of government authorities prohibiting women from traveling abroad to seek employment opportunities.

Rural women are particularly disadvantaged in relation to access to economic opportunities and control over economic resources. In Uzbekistan, for example, rural women occupy only 4.2% of managerial positions in agriculture and earn 82% of men’s salaries. There is also an absence of data on the situation of rural women. Of substantial concern is the large number of women who undertake agricultural work without receiving any wages. For example, in Tajikistan, according to the 2012 Demographic Health Survey, out of those women who worked in agriculture at any time in the previous 12 months, 58.7% were not paid. Specific barriers to employment are also noted for women with disabilities, mothers, women heads of single-parent families, pregnant women and women who have been left behind by male migrants.

Women also lack access to land use and ownership. In Tajikistan, the prevalence of traditions and customs mean that land certificates are most often registered only in the name of the male head of household. 83.5% of rural women do not own land. In Kyrgyzstan, survey data from 2012 reveals that close to 60% of rural women report that they do not own any land.

**d) Education**

With the exception of Tajikistan, where girls are disadvantaged, there is gender parity in school attendance and completion across most countries in the region. In Tajikistan, there remains a low enrolment rate for girls, especially in remote areas and a high drop-out rate among girls in secondary and higher education. This is compounded by an absence of data as to whether such high drop-out rates are attributable to early marriage,

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57 UN Women Umbrella Programme, Kazakhstan, 2019, Program Summary, p.5.
59 CEDAW Committee. 2014. Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-4, 10 March 2014, para 28.
pregnancy or preference for the education of boys. However, measures are being taken such as a presidential quota for girls in higher education.69

**Progress in other countries does not continue across all levels of education.** In Turkmenistan, there is a low enrolment rate among women and girls in higher education, as well as persistent under-representation in non-traditional fields of study.70 There is also evidence of barriers faced by women and girls seeking to pursue higher education abroad including travel bans.71 In Kyrgyzstan, there is a high enrolment rate of women and girls in tertiary education. However, a significant gender gap remains in secondary and higher vocational education and horizontal segregation.72 Uzbekistan has achieved parity in primary and secondary education, but gender inequalities remain in the form of girls’ lower attendance and completion rates at secondary level and declining female enrolment rates in tertiary education.73

**Sexual harassment against girls in schools was noted.** For example, cases were reported in Kazakhstan of girls being sexually abused and harassed by boys in school.74 An increasing number of girls who drop out of school owing in part to child marriages is also reported.75 Data on the number of children with disabilities attending mainstream schools is limited, but data that is available, reveals children with disabilities are disproportionately marginalised from formal education.76

e) **Harmful social norms and cultural practices**

**Persistent discriminatory gender stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society persist in the region.** For example, in Tajikistan, women who give birth to girls are often abandoned by their spouses.77 In Turkmenistan, restrictions on dress, hair, nails and behaviour for women in certain professions is reported as well as travel restrictions which prohibit women from using taxis and from travelling outside the country to study or work.78 Women belonging to the Pamiri minority group in Tajikistan, who have more freedom to study and work, face prejudice from the Tajik majority since they do not comply with patriarchal attitudes and prescribed behaviour.79

f) **Child Marriage**

**Child marriage continues to be practiced in Central Asia.** This practice is suggested to have increased since the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, linked to increases in patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory practices.80

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71 Ibid.
75 CEDAW Committee. 2014. Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-44, 10 March 2014, para 26.
Compared to South Asia, rates are much lower with no marriage of children under the age of 15 reported except for Kyrgyzstan. However, there is evidence of marriages of children under the age of 18. A forthcoming report on gender equality in the region notes that in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan one in every eight girls are married before 18 years of age.

Prevalence rates also vary by region within countries. In Kyrgyzstan, the highest prevalence is recorded in Naryn (19.1% of women aged 20-49 married before the age of 18). Prevalence is also higher in rural areas (14.6%) than urban areas (9.2%). Child marriages occur across all ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan. However, prevalence rates as measured by the percentage of girls aged 15-19 married or living in union are different across the country’s three main ethnic groups, with 23.4% of Uzbek girls aged 15-19 married or in a union. In Turkmenistan, although official rates of child marriage are low; in some areas such as Lebap 10% of women between 20-49 were married before 18, and rates are also higher in rural areas.

Legislative protection differs between countries. In many cases, although formal legislation exists prohibiting marriage under 18 years, permission may be given in certain circumstances for marriage at an earlier age. For example, under the Family Code in Tajikistan, courts may lower the minimum age of marriage by one year, from 18 years. Even where marriage under the age of 18 years is prohibited by law, child and/or forced marriage is prevalent, with women in remote areas and women among certain ethnic groups particularly at risk. A continued practice of dowry payments is also observed in the region.

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83 National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, UNICEF, and UNFPA, ‘Kyrgyz Republic Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014’
84 Information provided by UN staff, Turkmenistan.
85 UNICEF, Child Marriage in Europe And Central Asia: UNICEF’s Response: Regional Overview.
86 CEDAW Committee. 2018. Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Tajikistan, CEDAW/C/TJK/CO/6, 14 November 2018, para 45. Also, currently in Uzbekistan – with the legal age of marriage 18 years for boys and 17 years for girls. However, as of 1 September 2019, the legal marriage age for girls will increase to 18 years.
A girl who is married before she is 18 is less likely to be in school than her peers, and a girl who drops out of school is more likely to be married or co-habiting. Child marriage can have a dramatic impact on the rights and freedoms of girls. More than seventy percent of married girls in Tajikistan and 40% in Kyrgyzstan do not have freedom of movement to visit family and friends. Once married, girls in Kyrgyzstan are at greater risk of domestic violence from in-laws as well as from husbands. Women married as adolescents interviewed by UNFPA, reported that they were expected to take on a large burden of what amounted to forced domestic labour.

Girls’ vulnerability to child marriage can also increase during humanitarian crises when family and social structures are disrupted. In times of conflict and natural disaster, parents may marry their daughters to bring the family some income, to reduce its size, or because they believe it will offer the girl some sort of protection. For example, there were anecdotal accounts of a rise in instances of child marriage in southern Kyrgyzstan following violence in 2010.

Bride kidnapping, where a woman is taken without her consent for the purpose of forcing her to marry one of her captors, and other forms of forced marriage are practiced in the region. Perpetrators of bride kidnapping may use psychological coercion or physical force, including rape, to force the woman or girl into marriage. In Kyrgyzstan, it is estimated that approximately one in five women are abducted for marriage with higher rates among ethnic Kyrgyz. This practice violates a woman’s right to freely choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent. Such marriages, can be physically and psychologically stressful and recent research has found that children born to kidnapped mothers are of substantially lower birth weight.

In September 2018, the CEDAW Committee found that the state of Kyrgyzstan Grave was in violation of rights under the Convention in failing to protect a significant number of women and girls from bride kidnapping and related sexual violence; failing to enforce legislation and failing to provide adequate access to justice, protection and support to enable women to escape forced marriage.

The troubling practice of so-called ‘virginity tests’ is also practiced in the region. In Turkmenistan, women and girls undergo forced gynaecological examinations by police and special service officers to determine their virginity. In Tajikistan, mandatory check-ups were introduced into the Family Code, in 2016, and reportedly used to perform so-called “virginity tests” for future brides, which contribute to an increase in suicide rates among young girls.

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women. UNFPA’s qualitative research on child marriage in Kyrgyzstan found that ensuring that a girl was a virgin on marriage was a strong driver for child marriage.

g) Gender-biased sex selection

Gender-biased sex selection is a central concern in Central Asia with the fertility preference for boys high in most countries. Women are missing due to sex-selective abortions, female infanticide or neglect of girls, as well as gender bias in the fertility preferences of families. The expected sex ratio is 1.05 (105 boys should be born for every 100 girls to account for excess male mortality). Data indicate that in some countries in the region more boys are born than girls than biologically expected. This is particularly so in Uzbekistan (1.08) and Tajikistan (1.07).

h) Civil Society

Women’s organisations and networks play an important role working for the rights of women in Central Asia. These organisations primarily fall into two groups – those that provide direct community assistance (including services for survivors of domestic violence), and those that work on advocacy and monitoring of gender equality commitments. For example, in Kyrgyzstan fourteen organisations submitted a complaint to the CEDAW Committee alleging that the Kyrgyz Republic has committed grave and systematic violations of rights under the Convention due to its failure to prevent, protect and assist victims, as well as prosecute and adequately punish perpetrators of bride kidnapping.

There are also active networks of women’s organisations, such as From de Jure Equality to de Facto Equality in Tajikistan which comprises 77 of the most active women’s NGOs in Tajikistan. This network has played a critical role in lobbying for legal change (such as the adoption of a law on domestic violence) and in presenting alternative views on the fulfillment of international CEDAW commitments. Regional networks also exist such as AMAL, which is a civil society network of organisations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan which focusses on strengthening the capacity of organisations to improve women and girls’ rights throughout central Asia, specifically in preventing early marriages and violence against women and girls. The representation of women in CSOs is typically greater than in other sectors. In Tajikistan, it is reported that CSOs offer women an avenue to lead national reforms and gain employment opportunities.

Cumbersome registration and operational requirements are impacting on CSOs. For example, in Tajikistan, following amendments in 2015 to the Law on Public Associations of 2007, non-government organisations have reported frequent inspections, cumbersome registration and authorisation requirements. Similar restrictions were noted in Turkmenistan. However, in Uzbekistan, positive changes including recent relaxing of legislation inhibiting NGO activity, and significant simplification of registration procedures, are reported.

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103 OECD, 2014.
110 Information provided by UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies in Uzbekistan.
In some countries, civil society space is dominated by Government-funded and established NGOs. This decreases the resourcing and space available for other civil society actors, such as women’s organisations. It is also reported that some government agencies are still reluctant to engage with NGOs who support women with HIV and women/children with disabilities.

Women’s organisations have limited capacity to conduct analysis and monitoring, particularly outside capital cities and face challenges in relation to financial sustainability. For example, it was noted that CSOs, including women’s organisations, in Tajikistan are completely dependent on external donors which impacts on organisational priorities and creates funding vulnerability.

There are also reports of constrained civil society space and risks to women human rights defenders and journalists. This has included those working on women’s rights, being subjected to harassment, intimidation, violence, unlawful detention and travel bans as reprisal for their work in promoting and advancing women’s rights.

South Asia

Despite gains in the status of women in South Asia, women continue to be in subordinate positions to men, socially, culturally and economically. Women are largely excluded from making decisions, have limited access to and control over resources, are restricted in their mobility and experience violence or the threat of violence in social, political and economic spaces. Giving preference to sons has economic, social and religious utility, while daughters are seen as an economic liability due to son preference, patriarchal family structures and the dowry system.

Countries in South Asia for which a SIGI is available, indicate high levels of inequality. In comparison, countries in Central Asia are categorised as low to medium, indicating lower levels of inequality.

Table 2: SIGI country level data for South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>SIGI 2019 Category</th>
<th>SIGI Value 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across the region, there have been some encouraging legislative developments. However, persisting discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in society, impact on implementation.

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111 Information provided by UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies in Uzbekistan.
112 Information reported by civil society in Uzbekistan, May 2019.
116 Note: Higher values indicate higher inequality. Percentages range from 0 to 100, while legal variables are categorised as 0%, 25%, 50%, 75% or 100% - OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database.
a) Sexual and reproductive health and rights

The sub-region has made significant progress in advancing SRHR. However, this progress has been undermined by inadequate investment in quality and responsive sexual and reproductive health services and persistent gender inequality. This is reflected in high maternal mortality, unintended pregnancy and unmet need for contraception, as well as challenges in accessing sexual and reproductive health services (including safe abortion and post-abortion care), particularly for adolescents, unmarried women and women in marginalised communities.117

Generally South Asia has seen a drop in maternal deaths. However, poverty and gender inequality have a significant impact on maternal health across the sub-region and maternity mortality rates remain unacceptably high.118 For example, while other Asian regions have seen significant improvement in the coverage of antenatal care for at least four visits, South Asia has lagged behind with an increase from 23 % (1990) to only 36 % (2014).119 There is a significant gap in coverage between rural areas (42 %) and urban (75 %) areas across South Asia.120 Obstetric fistula also continues to be a significant cause of morbidity, suffering and social isolation for girls and women, particularly in South Asian countries.121

In Bangladesh, high levels of maternal mortality are linked to child marriage and subsequent early pregnancy.122 In Afghanistan, a low number of trained women health-care workers and a high number of women giving birth without access to obstetric care is noted.123 While in Nepal, women and girls have insufficient access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health-care services and information, resulting in high maternal mortality rates and complications.124 In India, there are persistently high rates of maternal mortality in some states and high rate of deaths resulting from unsafe abortion and a lack of post-abortion care.125

Maternal health is also linked with age at marriage and pregnancy.126 South Asia has seen an increase in adolescent birth rates from 30.5 from 2000 to 2009 to 32.1 from 2010 to 2015.127 Where recent data is available, it shows that between 2 %, in the Maldives, and 31 % percent, in Bangladesh, of women aged 15-19 have had a children or are currently pregnant.128

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120 Ibid.
123 CEDAW Committee. 2013. Concluding observations on the combined initial and second periodic reports of Afghanistan, CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2, 30 July 2013, para 36.
126 Banu, 2016.
128 The World Bank Data, 2019. Teenage Mothers (% of women ages 15-19 who have had children or are currently pregnant), [ONLINE] Available at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.MTR.1519.ZS?view=chart [Accessed on 23 May 2019].
A lack of adequate access to family planning services, including contraceptives is prevalent in the region. Southern Asia is home to the largest absolute number of women in the world who have an unmet need for modern contraception (70 million). SIGI 2019 notes an unmet need for family planning among the female population of 39% (Afghanistan), 12% (Bangladesh), 12% (Bhutan), 13% (India), 24% (Nepal), 29% (Maldives), 20% (Pakistan) and 8% (Sri Lanka).

Adolescent girls and unmarried women face particular challenges accessing contraception, as well as a lack of information on sexual and reproductive health and rights. It is estimated that 6.3 million adolescent girls aged 15–19 in Asia and the Pacific have an unmet need for contraception. South Asia has particularly low contraceptive prevalence rates, especially among girls aged 15–19, and high unmet need in comparison with East and South-East Asia. There is also a noted disparity in relation to access to sexual and reproductive health care services, especially in rural remote areas across the region. There is also persistent discrimination by health-care providers against certain groups of women. In Nepal, women also face the practice of chhaupadi and are expelled from their homes during menstruation and after childbirth.

Deaths relating to unsafe abortions and a lack of access to post abortion care are also reported across the region. Restrictive laws limit access to safe abortions. In Sri Lanka, for example, there is the requirement of a judicial inquiry as to whether there should be a medical termination of the pregnancy and the need for a medical certificate authorizing an abortion. Until recently, in Nepal, abortion was criminalised, whereas estimations indicate that 62 per cent of unplanned pregnancies end in abortion. In the Maldives, unsafe and illegal abortions are reportedly increasing.

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129 Noting unmet need is significantly underestimated, as available data reflect unmet need among women who are married or in union only.

130 OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database.


134 For example, in Nepal, Dalit women, indigenous women, women with disabilities, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, intersex persons, women in prostitution and women from remote areas lack access to healthcare and sexual and reproductive services - CEDAW Committee. 2018. Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Nepal, CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/6, 14 November 2018, para 38.


137 CEDAW Committee. 2015. Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Maldives, CEDAW/C/MDV/CO/4-5, 11 March 2015, para 36.
b) Women’s participation and leadership in decision making

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan have introduced reserved seats for women in their national parliament. The countries where reserved seats for women have been introduced also have the highest percentage of women in their national parliament.

However, temporary special measures have not translated into increased women’s political representation in all countries and women remain under-represented particularly at local levels. In Pakistan, legislative measures are in place in relation to women’s political participation and there are also requirements for political parties. Measures are also in place at the local level, for instance in the province of Punjab. In Sri Lanka, a 25% quota has been allocated for women in local government bodies as well as a 30% quota for women on political parties’ nomination papers for each province. However, women’s representation at the local level remains low. There is little information available on the political participation of women representing different minorities, such as the Tamil and Muslim communities. Bangladesh has reserved seats at the four levels of national and sub-national government. However, despite these measures, women’s political participation in general is low.

Nepal has introduced constitutional provisions on the representation of women in all State bodies and in the Federal Parliament. However, there is insufficient enforcement of electoral quotas, such as for Dalit women.

Women also remain under-represented in the judiciary, law enforcement and the foreign service. In the Maldives, although there is a high representation of women in political parties, women remain under-represented in the parliament, in government positions, in local governance and in the judiciary.

In Bhutan, female representation at the local government level remains low – women occupy only 10% of elected positions in local government. In Afghanistan, over 35% of the parliament and 30% of the provincial council are designated to women. However, there are significant barriers to women’s political participation, including

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140 UNDP, 2016.

141 Of the 350 seats in the Parliament, 50 are reserved for women selected by the political parties proportionate to their seats. At the local level, seats are reserved for women in local government institutions and there is direct election in the reserved seats.

142 OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index – Summary: Pakistan.


144 Of the 350 seats in the Parliament, 50 are reserved for women selected by the political parties proportionate to their seats. At the local level, seats are reserved for women in local government institutions and there is direct election in the reserved seats.

145 OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index – Summary: Bangladesh.


insecurity, movement restrictions on women, and patriarchal traditions that women should not be participating in the public sphere.\textsuperscript{149} Women occupying prominent positions in the Government and women human face threats and targeted killings.\textsuperscript{150}

**Women’s under-representation in peace processes is also a pressing issue in South Asia.** A National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 was introduced in Afghanistan in 2015. However, women continued to be under-represented in the High Peace Council and there is inadequate means to ensure women’s participation’s meaningful and effective participation in the peace and reconciliation process.\textsuperscript{151} In Sri Lanka, women are under-represented in peacebuilding, reconstruction and reconciliation processes and a national action plan on UNSCR 1325 has not been developed.\textsuperscript{152} Nepal has committed to develop its second National Action Plan on 1325 by October 2020. Women were excluded from the 2006 peace agreement, but women’s organisations demanded inclusion in the post-conflict Constitution process, resulting in Constitutional guarantees for women’s rights.\textsuperscript{153}

There is also limited participation of women in decision-making and policymaking regarding disaster management, post-disaster reconstruction and recovery programmes. This is particularly important given the South Asian region is a hotspot for almost all types of climate-related disasters\textsuperscript{154}

c) Economic empowerment

Despite higher education levels, women in South Asia still lack access to decent work opportunities. In fact, the female labour force participation rate in the sub-region actually declined from 36.4% in 1994 to 30.6% in 2014.\textsuperscript{155} South Asia has the world’s most skewed gender wage gap and is among the few regions where the gender labour force participation gap is both large and growing.\textsuperscript{156} Only 28% of women in South Asia have a job or are looking for one, compared to 79% of men. This is the second lowest in the world, after the Middle East and North Africa region.\textsuperscript{157}

Women continues to face wage discrimination, double days, the glass ceiling, an overwhelming concentration of women in repetitive and stressful work in factories, such as the manual tasks performed by female workers in garment factories, and lack of access to training, credit or other facilities.\textsuperscript{158} The proportional gap between the time spent on unpaid care and domestic work by women and men is the highest for South Asia.\textsuperscript{159}

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\textsuperscript{149} OECD. 2019. Social Institutions and Gender Index – Summary: Afghanistan.
\textsuperscript{150} CEDAW Committee. 2013. Concluding observations on the combined initial and second periodic reports of Afghanistan, CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2, 30 July 2013, para 28.
\textsuperscript{151} CEDAW Committee. 2017. Concluding observations on the combined initial and second periodic reports of Afghanistan, CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2, 30 July 2013, para 8.
\textsuperscript{155} Dasgupta, S. and Sher Singh, V. (eds). 2016. Transformation of women at work in Asia: An unfinished development agenda, ILO.
\textsuperscript{157} https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/south-asia-s-prosperity-will-require-more-women-work-pay
\textsuperscript{158} Banu, 2016.
In Bhutan, the unemployment rate is higher among women than men and there are limited opportunities for employment outside the agricultural and domestic sectors, where wages are low. In India, there is a declining participation of women in the labour force, both in rural and urban areas, and women earn only 50 to 75% of the wages earned by men and only own 9% of land. In Sri Lanka there remains an historically low participation of women in the labour market and a high unemployment rate among women. There is also an absence of measures to facilitate re-entry into employment by former women combatants. Female headed households, comprising 24% of the female population, also face additional barriers.

There remains a concentration of women in low paid and low skilled jobs. A majority of women work in the informal sector and in the care economy. This leads to women not receiving protection or social security and other benefits under existing labour legislation. Sexual harassment in the workplace is also prevalent and is discussed in more detail below.

Women also lack access to formal financial institutions. For example, in Bangladesh, there is limited access by rural women to financial credit and loans from public banks, given that laws and policies do not recognise them as farmers. Only 6% of women reported having access to either an individual or joint bank account in Pakistan. Women also face challenges in relation to land ownership and inheritance rights. In South Asia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal and Maldives do not provide for equal inheritance rights for sons and daughters.

Rural women have limited access to education, health, social services, land ownership and/or inheritance and that they are not part of decision-making processes. In Sri Lanka, where 77% of the population lives in rural areas.

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areas, there is a low participation of rural women in the leadership of trade unions of rural industries, difficult working conditions and low wages.\textsuperscript{170}

\textbf{d) Education}

South Asia has recently shown decreases in the gender gap in primary education, particularly in India and Sri Lanka. However, this is not consistent across all groups and school attendance is not necessarily translating into outcomes with low literacy rates in most countries.\textsuperscript{171} Identified barriers to the attendance of girls at school include child marriage, sexual harassment and early pregnancy, poverty, the low value placed on girls’ education, poverty and the long travel distances to schools in rural areas.

Recent research on child marriage, adolescent pregnancy and school dropout in South Asia concluded that the relationships between child marriage, adolescent childbearing and educational attainment are complex. Factors such as poverty, culture and religion may influence both decisions about schooling and decisions about marriage. These underlying factors must therefore form part of strategies to accelerate progress in girls’ education.\textsuperscript{172}

In Bhutan, there remains a high dropout rate between the primary and secondary levels, a high illiteracy rate among women and girls and a low number of female teachers in schools.\textsuperscript{173} In Bangladesh, the number of girls in school drops by half between the primary and secondary levels of education.\textsuperscript{174} Recent research suggests that there is a need for a focus on girls’ completion of secondary school in Bangladesh, particularly for girls living in rural areas and from the lowest socio-economic groups including improving school accessibility and quality as well as strategies to address social norms regarding child marriage.\textsuperscript{175}

In India, girls with disabilities and minorities continue to register low enrolment rates and the dropout rate among adolescent girls is as high as 64 \%.\textsuperscript{176} Secondary school retention and completion is associated with child marriage.\textsuperscript{177} In Sri Lanka, there is near-universal enrolment of girls and boys at the primary level of education. However, a low education level continues among women from low-income families, in particular from ethnic minority groups, schools in poor urban and rural areas; girls from female headed households; victims of child and early marriage; and girls with disabilities.\textsuperscript{178}

In Afghanistan, there is a high illiteracy rate among women, low enrolment of girls, in particular at the secondary level, and a high dropout rate, especially in rural areas.\textsuperscript{179} An overwhelming majority of girls in Afghanistan have never been to school and research emphasises the need to address known barriers to school accessibility including cultural and geographical barriers as well as structural, institutional and governance related factors.\textsuperscript{180} In Nepal,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{170}CEDAW Committee. 2017. Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Sri Lanka, CEDAW/C/LKA/CO/8, 9 March 2017, para 40.
\item \textsuperscript{171}Banu, 2016.
\item \textsuperscript{173}CEDAW Committee. 2016. Concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Bhutan, CEDAW/C/BTN/CO/8-9, 25 November 2016, para 24.
\item \textsuperscript{174}CEDAW Committee. 2016. Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Bangladesh, CEDAW/C/BGD/CO/8, 25 November 2016, para 28.
\item \textsuperscript{176}CEDAW Committee. 2014. Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of India, CEDAW/C/IND/CO/4-5, 24 July 2014, para 26.
\item \textsuperscript{179}CEDAW Committee. 2013. Concluding observations on the combined initial and second periodic reports of Afghanistan, CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2, 30 July 2013, para 32.
\end{itemize}
there is a lower enrolment and higher drop-out rates among girls from poor households, girls living in remote areas, girls belonging to “lower castes”, indigenous groups and religious and linguistic minority groups and girls with disabilities. The 2015 earthquake also impacted on educational infrastructure, resulting in girls needed to travel longer distances to school.181

In the Maldives, progress has been achieved in increasing enrolment and completion rates of girls at the primary level, however girls continue to have limited access to higher levels of education, as well as vocational and technical training.182 In Pakistan, there is high illiteracy rate amongst women, low enrolment of girls and a high dropout rate, especially in the rural areas.183 Large proportions of Pakistani girls, particularly from the poorest segments of the population, never enrol in school.184

In countries across the region, girls are also subject to sexual harassment and violence at school and on the way to school, including in conflict-affected regions.185 This includes targeted attacks on girls’ schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan and threats and attacks on female students, teachers and professors.186

e) Harmful social norms and cultural practices

Deeply engrained patriarchal and religious norms in society, institutions, policies and services support gender discrimination, place a lower value on women and girls and drive SGBV. Gender hierarchies that favour men, controls over women’s bodies and their sexuality, restrictions on women’s mobility, harmful notions of masculinity, and rigid gender roles all encourage the perpetration of GBV.

Women are often disadvantaged and discriminated against by cultural practices, which in some cases are enshrined in law. For example, in Nepal, the country’s citizenship law is gender-biased with a woman’s identity derived from her father, and discriminatory legal provisions position women as the property of men. Women are also economically dependent, because men inherit and control most property.187 In Pakistan, there are cultural institutions, beliefs and practices that undermine women’s autonomy such as marriage practices that disadvantage women, especially when customs such as dowry and bride’s price, Watta Satta and marriage to the Quran (a custom in Sindh where girls remain unmarried like nuns to retain family property in the family) are practiced.188

Unequal gender roles and norms continue to encourage a notion in South Asia that women are dependent on their father, husband or son. Women and girls are mostly valued in terms of their reproductive rather than their productive roles. For example, in Bangladesh, girls learn domestic skills and take on domestic duties and reproductive work from a young age. In rural areas, there is a strong belief that a son should be educated because, unlike daughters, who after marriage serve another family, a son will remain to support his aged parents. Most families thus prepare girls for marriage, teaching them to be docile so they can take up the role of ‘good’ wife and mother. Dowry is another detrimental factor that further reduces household investment in girls.189

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182 CEDAW Committee. 2015. Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Maldives, CEDAW/C/MDV/CO/4-5, 11 March 2015, para 32.
189 Banu, 2016.
f) Gender-biased sex selection

Imbalanced sex ratios at birth are an increasing cause of concern in some South Asian countries. Persistent gender discrimination and the intense pressure to produce sons, impacts on the human and reproductive rights of women. The increasing availability of technologies such as amniocentesis and ultrasonography has facilitated increased sex selection, when not used in accordance with evidence-based professional guidelines. It is estimated that the number of missing women has steadily risen from 61 million in 1970 to 126 million in 2010, with China and India accounting for a large proportion of missing women. By 2010, the annual number of girls missing at birth reached 1·7 million worldwide with prenatal sex selection contributing as much as excess mortality to the number of missing women.

South Asia has the greatest difference between actual and expected Female-to-Male Under-5 Mortality Rate Ratios compared to other regions of the world. Four of the eight South Asian countries are among the ten countries globally with the highest excess female child mortality. India has the largest excess female child mortality with Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan also showing high levels. However, there have been reductions in excess female child mortality in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Son bias is prevalent across the region but particularly elevated in Nepal, whose percentage of boys as last child (61%) is among the highest in the world.

While illegal across the region, the most direct post-natal driver of excess female child mortality is female infanticide. Data on infanticide is difficult to obtain with existing data unreliable due to early infanticides being reported as stillbirths or not reported. In India, the practice of dowry leads to female feticide and female infanticide. Excess female child mortality is also achieved through non-physical forms of violence such as neglect and discrimination resulting in death. For example, boys are significantly more likely to be immunised than girls in Pakistan and India and daughters are less likely to be taken to a health service than sons when they are sick in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

g) Child marriage

South Asia has the highest rate of child marriage globally with 46 percent of girls married before the age of 18. Bangladesh has the highest prevalence of child marriage in the region followed by Nepal and India. Afghanistan and Pakistan have child and forced marriage practices that include the exchange of brides between two households, a girl being given to another family to settle a conflict and a girl being given to a family as compensation for a crime committed by her family. However, there is evidence that rates of child marriage in the region are reducing for girls under the age of 15 years. There is less improvement evident for girls aged 15 to 18 years. Child marriage also affects boys. In Nepal, 41% of girls and 11% of boys are married before the age of 18.

192 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
193 OECD, 2014.
194 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
196 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
197 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
Notably, there has also been a documented increase in so-called ‘love marriages,’ particularly in Nepal and India, where adolescent couples decide to be together, often eloping against their parents’ wishes. Research suggests this in an increasing trend in rural areas in Nepal.\textsuperscript{199}

![Percent of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before the age of 15 and 18 (South Asia)](image)

In Afghanistan, women are legally able to marry at 16 years, and men 18 years; however, women can be married at a younger age with the consent of her father or a court under the Civil Code.\textsuperscript{200} The practice of child marriage is widespread, in large due to poverty and cultural practices such as exchange marriages, bride price, engagement before birth, and as a method of solving community disputes.\textsuperscript{202} In Sri Lanka, there are reports that child marriages are rising in less developed districts in the dry and arid zones of the country and in war affected areas.\textsuperscript{203}

In India, there has been a decline in early marriages since legislation was enacted but the prevalence of child marriage remains high and reporting remains low.\textsuperscript{204} In Pakistan, the 1929 Child Marriage Restraint Act sets the legal minimum age of marriage at 16 years for girls, compared with 18 years for boys. This has been amended in Singh Province, but continues to apply in other provinces.\textsuperscript{205} Despite a legal framework prohibiting child marriage and Government commitments to end the practice, child marriage is a common practice in Nepal, particularly in the Dalit and Madhesi communities.\textsuperscript{206}

Measures are being implemented in Bhutan to take action on child marriage. However, it is reported that early and forced marriage persist in the eastern region of the country.\textsuperscript{207} The multiple legal systems in Bangladesh contain conflicting provisions in relation to the legal age of marriage. This, together with the under-reporting and parent consent to the practice, compounds the problem and early marriage continues to be a concern in the country.\textsuperscript{208} In the Maldives, the Family Act sets the legal age of marriage for both men and women at the age of 18. However,

\textsuperscript{200} UNICEF Data: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women, 2018; National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) [Pakistan] and ICF, 2019. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2017-18. NIPS and ICF; Islamabad, Pakistan, and Rockville, Maryland, USA.
\textsuperscript{201} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Afghanistan.
\textsuperscript{202} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Afghanistan.
\textsuperscript{203} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Sri Lanka.
\textsuperscript{204} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – India.
\textsuperscript{205} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Pakistan.
\textsuperscript{206} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Nepal.
\textsuperscript{208} OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Bangladesh.
there is registrar discretion to approve marriage of minors and it is reported that child marriage, particularly in conservative communities, continues to be prevalent.209

The practice of child marriage reinforces gender and age discrimination against girls including: a lack of commitment to girls’ schooling; the appropriation of girls’ unpaid labour in the household; the imposition of constraints on girls’ opportunities; the acceptance of girls’ lack of agency to make decisions about their own lives and health; the refusal to permit girls’ to control their sexuality and reproduction; and a tolerance of SBGV towards girls. When adolescents, especially girls, try to assert their choices around if, whom, and when to marry, they are often stigmatised by their families and communities and seen as standing against the authority of fathers and brothers. The practice of child marriage in South Asia also positions boys as highly valued and girls as burdens to their families, with dowry enhancing the “cost” of girls to their families.210 Married adolescents are particularly vulnerable to IPV and family violence and much of the marital abuse occurs in the first few years of marriage.

h) Chhaupadi

In Nepal, women also face the practice of chhaupadi, where their mobility is restricted and they are expelled from their homes during menstruation and after childbirth.211 This practice has been criminalised in Nepal but is widely practiced in Western Nepal. Women practicing chhaupadi face both physical and mental hardship staying in cattle sheds in often unhygienic and exposed condition. Deaths from chhaupadi occur from fire and smoke inhalation and from animal attacks. The stigma also discourages girls from attending school during menstruation.212

i) Civil society

While South Asia has a history of strong feminist women’s movement and several national and sub-regional networks, many face restrictions such as the threat of, and targeted violence, against human rights defenders and service providers. There are also regulatory restrictions on the operation of civil society, such as the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act, adopted in October 2016, in Bangladesh213 and the Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act (FCRA) in India. Limited consultation and engagement with civil society by governments is also noted across the region.214

Despite these restrictions, women’s organisations and networks continue to demand change and have been responsible for advances on women’s rights in the region. For example, the women’s movement in Bangladesh, is reported as being extremely influential in demanding fairer legislation and protesting violence against women.215 A range of women’s rights organisations are also engaged actively with CEDAW in South Asia.216

Regional networks such as SWAN bring together women leaders, parliamentarians, academicians, experts, activists and media representatives from nine countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar,
Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. SANGAT is a South Asian Feminist Network. The South Asian Women’s Fund (SAWF) is committed to supporting women’s organisations and activists working towards realising women’s human rights in the South Asian region. The South Asia Young Women’s Leadership and Mentoring initiative was formed in 2017 by Global Fund for Women, in collaboration with CREA to support and strengthen the leadership of 30 young women in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

**Sexual and Gender-based Violence in Central and South Asia**

SGBV remains a persistent issue for women and girls across Central and South Asia. However, as with other regions in the world, there is a lack of data and information on the incidence of various forms of VAWG across the region, as well as research on the extent of violence and its root causes. To the extent that information is available, the analysis below considers types and prevalence of SGBV, focussing on types of violence which are particularly prevalent in each region. The patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes of the perceived role of women in society are common across both subregions, and such attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are entrenched in deeply rooted social norms.

**Intimate partner violence is prevalent across both subregions.** Child marriage also continues to be practiced in both subregions for girls aged under 18 years; although marriage of girls under the age of 15 years is more predominant in South Asia. Trafficking of women and girls is also an issue across both South and Central Asia, with a failure to address the root causes of the issue.

In both subregions, gender inequality often intersects with other forms of inequality and discrimination faced by particular groups of women to affect the nature and prevalence of SGBV and women’s access to support services and justice. For example, women in the sex industry, older women, girls, rural women, LBT women and women with disabilities continue to face multiple forms of discrimination impacting on, the forms of violence they may experience, the likelihood that they will experience violence and their access to support services and justice.

**Polygamy is also noted across Central and South Asia.** This practice is compounded by limited measures to enforce the prohibition of polygamy and the lack of data on its prevalence. This practice has implications for the economic rights of women in polygamous including with regard to property.

**Central Asia**

**Type of violence by country**

Levels of SGBV in Central Asia remain high and takes several forms – including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence – and occurring in different contexts within the private and public spheres.

This analysis focuses on types of SGBV which are noted as particularly prevalent in the region. However, as with other regions in the world, there is a lack of data and information on the incidence of various forms of VAWG, disaggregated by age and urban and rural areas, as well as research on the extent of violence and its root causes.

a) **Intimate Partner Violence**

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217 https://www.swaninterface.net/
218 https://www.globalfundforwomen.org/young-women-leaders-in-south-asia/
Violence in a relationship – intimate partner violence – is the most common form of violence experienced by women.\textsuperscript{222} Available data from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan shows that between 17 percent and 25 percent of women have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hand of a spouse during their life time.\textsuperscript{223} Data that is available also revealed that prevalence varies by region within countries. For example, in Kazakhstan, lifetime experience of physical or sexual partner violence ranged from 7.6% in Kyzylorda to 31% in North Kazakhstan.\textsuperscript{224}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent of women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime (Central Asia)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajikistan</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kyrgyzstan, 14.1% of ever-married women reported experiencing emotional violence in their lifetime and 10 percent of women reported spousal emotional violence in the past 12 months.\textsuperscript{225} In Tajikistan, 11.3% of female respondents reported experiencing emotional violence from a spouse in their lifetime and 10% of women reported spousal emotional violence in the past 12 months, 8% sometimes, 3% often.\textsuperscript{226}

Across the region, information on violence against women disaggregated by age and relationship between the victim and the perpetrator is lacking. However, girls who are underage when married are thought to be especially vulnerable to intimate partner violence. In a UNFPA study, six of eight women married as children reported violence in the marriage.\textsuperscript{227} Partner violence against ever-married girls is also included in national representative surveys. 15% in Tajikistan and 3% in Kyrgyzstan of ever-married girls aged 15 to 19 years reported experiencing emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by a husband or partner in the last 12 months.\textsuperscript{228}

There is limited data available in relation to the prevalence of economic violence. Research in Tajikistan notes that economic violence by men against their wives and partners occurs, particularly through men depriving women of money to buy necessities, such as food and medication for themselves and their children.\textsuperscript{229} While the national survey did not include economic violence, an NGO-managed database revealed that women experience economic

\textsuperscript{222} UNFPA, 2015.


\textsuperscript{224} The economic impact of violence against women and girls in Kazakhstan: The cost to households and of service provision, 2018.

\textsuperscript{225} Kyrgyz Republic Demographic and Health Survey 2012. NSC, MOH, and ICF International: Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, and Calverton, Maryland, USA.

\textsuperscript{226} Tajikistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012. SA, MOH, and ICF International: Dushanbe, Tajikistan, and Calverton, Maryland, USA.


\textsuperscript{229} Centre for Gender & Refugee Studies. 2016. Breaking Barriers : Challenges to Implementing Laws on Violence Against Women in Afghanistan and Tajikistan with special consideration of displaced women, University of California Hastings College of the Law, available at: https://cgrs.uchastings.edu/sites/default/files/Tajikistan_Chapter_4-5-2016_FINALv2_0.pdf, p.54.
violence slightly more often than physical violence.\textsuperscript{230} In Kyrgyzstan, it is noted that economic violence often takes the form of restricting access to and use of financial resources, property, or other assets.\textsuperscript{231}

Across the region, cases of IPV are under-reported and there is limited protection and support services available for women who have experienced violence.\textsuperscript{232} Between 41\% and 61\% of women who reported experiencing intimate partner violence did not tell anyone about the violence. For example, in Kazakhstan, 51\% of women who had ever experienced physical or sexual partner violence said that they had never disclosed the violence to anyone. When women do choose to disclose, it was most commonly to a family member.\textsuperscript{233}

There is a focus on mediation and settlement with the perpetrator rather than recognising intimate partner violence as a criminal offence. In Kyrgyzstan, for example, SGBV is taken mainly to elders’ (aksakals) courts.\textsuperscript{234} In Uzbekistan, cases of intimate partner violence are taken mainly to local bodies known as the mahalla for reconciliation.\textsuperscript{235} In Kazakhstan, the Criminal Code also provides for a distinction regarding acts of violence against women that are amenable to settlement.\textsuperscript{236}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chart.png}
\caption{Percent of women who reported experiencing intimate partner violence and did not tell anyone (Central Asia)}
\end{figure}

In Tajikistan, 97\% of men and 72\% of women believe that a woman must tolerate violence to keep a family together.\textsuperscript{237} In the 2015 Kazakhstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 15\% of women agreed with one or more reason for a man to hit his wife.\textsuperscript{238} 26 percent of women in Turkmenistan feel that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife in at least one of the five situations.\textsuperscript{239} The proportion of the female population justifying domestic violence in each country is also reported under SIGI 2019 as 33\% (Kyrgyzstan), 60\% (Tajikistan), 26\% (Turkmenistan), 14\% (Kazakhstan), and 41\% (Uzbekistan).\textsuperscript{240}

b) Non-partner physical, sexual and psychological violence

Women also reported experiencing non-partner physical, sexual and psychological violence. Reported rates of non-partner physical and sexual violence were low in Kazakhstan. Reported rates of non-partner sexual violence were also low in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with rates of non-partner physical violence higher in both countries.

\textsuperscript{234} CEDAW Committee. 2015. Concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Kyrgyzstan, CEDAW/C/KGZ/CO/4, 11 March 2015, para 17.
\textsuperscript{235} CEDAW Committee. 2015. Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Uzbekistan, CEDAW/C/UZB/CO/5, 24 November 2015, para 17.
\textsuperscript{236} CEDAW Committee. 2014. Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-44, 10 March 2014, para 18.
\textsuperscript{237} CEDAW Committee. 2018. Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Tajikistan, CEDAW/C/TJK/CO/6, 14 November 2018, para 25.
\textsuperscript{238} Kazakhstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Final Report (2016).
\textsuperscript{239} MICS 2016, information reported by UN staff.
\textsuperscript{240} OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database.
Violence from in-laws in the form of physical and psychological abuse is reported as common in Tajikistan. Traditionally, women move in with the husband’s family, and, in the home, the man’s mother is placed in a higher position than his wife. Male labour migration has aggravated conditions for women who live with their in-laws. Women who leave abusive husbands and in-laws and return to live with their parents also often face continued psychological violence; accused of bringing shame on the family and being an economic burden on the household.241

Sexual violence typically escalates in times of conflict but there often is not adequate support and services available to victims / survivors during time of emergency and unrest.242 Sexual violence, as in other parts of the world, is used as a weapon of war in Central Asia. For example, in 2010 during violence against ethnic Uzbeks living around Osh and Jalal-Abad in the Ferghana Valley, many Uzbek women in Kyrgyzstan were humiliated, raped and murdered. The impacts of this violence on women continues after the conflict has ceased.243

Sexual harassment and SGBV against women also takes place in the workplaces. However, data collection and analysis is limited, and most legislation in the region fails to address this issue.244 A baseline and scoping study for the “Safe and Friendly Cities for All” program in Dushanbe city, Tajikistan, noted women were concerned about the scale of sexual harassment against women in working places, streets and public transport and high schools.245

Violence against Kyrgyz women migrant workers during their employment in Kazakhstan as well as exploitation by in-laws when they return home is also noted.246 There is also an increasing practice of Kyrgyz girls being hired out by their parents to work as nannies for other Kyrgyz citizens who have moved to Kazakhstan or Russia, leading to exploitation and exposure to violence.247 The lack of information on legislation prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace, on the number of prosecutions and convictions and on the sentences imposed on perpetrators is also a common issue across the region.248

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242 UNFPA, undated.
244 UNFPA, 2015.
245 UN Women, UN Habitat & UNICEF. 2012. The Five-Year Plan for the Safe and Friendly Cities for All Program in Dushanbe City, p.9
c) **Trafficking in women and girls**

Globally, women and girls together continue to represent more than 70% of detected trafficking victims.\(^{249}\) Accurate data of trafficking in persons is difficult to obtain because the practice is under-reported, under-detected, and thus under-prosecuted with victims often the ones who suffer prosecution for illegal migration, making them reluctant to seek help for fear of violence, intimidation and reprisals.\(^{250}\)

The trafficking of women and girls, mainly for sexual exploitation and forced labour, is identified as prevalent across Central Asia. For example, Kazakhstan is noted as a country of origin, transit and destination for trafficked women and girls by the CEDAW Committee.\(^{251}\) In Tajikistan, there is evidence that the trafficking of women and girls is often done under the guise of fraudulent or forced marriages.\(^{252}\) Multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination can make some groups of women more vulnerable to trafficking.

The root causes and underlying factors for the trafficking of women and girls include gender-specific factors such as the acceptance and normalisation of violence against women and girls, the vulnerability of women to poverty, the concentration of women in insecure and vulnerable work, and broader socioeconomic factors such as inequalities within and between countries and insecurity as a result of conflict.\(^{253}\) Measures for the prevention of and in response to trafficking must fully and explicitly address the gendered nature of the crime through taking a gender transformative approach.\(^{254}\)

There is a low incidence of reporting of trafficking crimes as well as a lack of statistical data on the prevalence of trafficking including complaints, investigations prosecutions and convictions.\(^{255}\) Regional data that is available from UNODC, shows that of 963 detected victims of trafficking in persons in three countries in Central Asia in 2016, 49% were women and 3% were girls. Regional data also shows that of detected cases of trafficking in persons the form of exploitation involved sexual exploitation in 48% of cases and forced labour in 45% of cases. However, this data is not age or sex-disaggregated.\(^{256}\)

While states have introduced laws and actions plans in relation to trafficking in persons,\(^{257}\) implementation is limited and there also a lack of protection and support services for trafficked women and children.\(^{258}\)

d) **Women exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence**

Women in the sex industry experience physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence in public, in their homes and in their community. Dominant norms and stereotypes regarding masculinities create an expectation

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\(^{251}\) CEDAW Committee. 2014. *Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Kazakhstan*, CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/3-4,10 March 2014, para 20.


\(^{254}\) See recommendations in The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), *Submission to CEDAW’s General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration*.


\(^{256}\) UNODC, 2018.

\(^{257}\) Such as the Law on combating Trafficking in Persons and Providing Assistance to Victims (Tajikistan); legislation and a national action plan on combating trafficking in persons for the period 2016–2018 (Turkmenistan)

of men to exert power to control and coerce women, in particular in relation to sex. In addition, norms and gender stereotypes around the expectation of submissiveness and gender roles of women also create a context conducive to violence against women in the sex industry.259

A study conducted in Central Asia, identified harassment of women in the sex industry by police as one of the most significant factors contributing to vulnerability to violence and health risks. Examples of harassment included physical violence, detentions based on lack of documents, coercion for sex and bribes and extortion.260 The study also found that overall 80 percent of women in the sex industry in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia reported experiencing physical violence from solicitors as well as barriers to accessing health and legal services. There is also evidence that girls under the age of 18 years are being sexually exploited in the sex industry in Central Asia.261

In Tajikistan, the CEDAW Committee noted that lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons are subjected to police abuse, such as blackmailing, extortion, forced testing for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, arbitrary detention and ill-treatment, including “corrective” rape.262

**Spotlight Initiatives Pillars – Central Asia**

This section contains an analysis of trends under each of the Spotlight pillars, emphasising areas of progress and remaining gaps and barriers to the elimination of SGBV in Central Asia.

**Pillar 1: Laws and policies**

Progress strengthening and implementing legal frameworks and policies to address SGBV against women and girls is uneven in the region.

- New laws and policies have been introduced in some countries while, in others, legislation is still required. Government commitment is high to progress legal and policy reform, VAW national data bases and administrative data.263
- Most countries in the region have passed legislation broadly aimed at preventing violence within a family and protecting victims / survivors. However, the majority of legislation does not address the various types of violence within family contexts. Several countries do not classify marital rape as a form of violence, and few recognise the psychological abuse of women and girls in the family context.264 For example, in Tajikistan, gender-based violence against women, including domestic violence, marital rape and sexual assault, are not criminalized.265 Turkmenistan is still in the process of developing a national law to address GBV that is expected to be adopted by the end of 2019. Harassment in schools and workplaces is also not addressed by legislation in most countries.266
- There is evidence of legislation recognising economic violence. For example, the Law on the Prevention and Protection against Family Violence in Kyrgyzstan recognizes not only physical and psychological abuse but also ‘economic violence’.
- Laws have not reduced the high rate of early and forced marriages. In some countries the family code still

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261 Ibid.


264 UNFPA, 2015.


266 UNFPA, 2015.
allows early marriage. While in others, permission can be given for early marriage in certain circumstances. Inadequate implementation, and a failure of the courts and other institutions to take decisions that are in the best interests of children, is noted as weakening the impact of legislation.

Political will and coordination and capacity to implement existing laws and policies is limited.

- A gap remains between legislative and policy reform and implementation in practice. This results in weak institutional capacities and low-quality, poorly coordinated services that further victimise survivors, leading to a low demand for services.
- Where concrete programmes or action plans on VAWG exist, their effective implementation is limited by a lack of coordination between different ministries and institutions at a national level; between national and local-level state bodies; and, between state organs and non-state actors such as NGOs and religious organisations.
- Many countries in the region lack appropriate training for developing the skills and capacities of their law enforcement sectors to address VAWG and in order to promote the understanding that the various forms of SGBV are criminal, unacceptable and harmful.

Human rights bodies have criticised the lack of due diligence in the investigation and prosecution of SGBV against women and girls in the region.

- There is a limited number of prosecutions, convictions and lenient sentences in cases of SGBV and trafficking in women and girls. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, of the 7,178 family violence cases registered in 2018, 369 serious criminal cases were initiated – approximately 5 percent. Another 4,963 cases – close to 70% – were initiated under the Administrative Code.
- A failure to act in relation to the harmful practice of bride kidnapping is also reported, particularly in Kyrgyzstan where it was found that the State has systematically failed to enforce existing laws criminalizing bride kidnapping and child marriage and to effectively investigate, prosecute and punish cases of bride kidnapping and related sexual violence.
- Police often refuse to record complaints and attempt to persuade the victims / survivors to mediate/conciliate with the perpetrator.
- Many justice systems in the region scrutinise the testimonies of victims / survivors rather than looking for other supporting evidence; blame them for the violence they have been subject to; and force them to mediate or rebuild relationships with perpetrators. The provision of compensation often requires the victims / survivors to go through a separate, time-intensive and expensive civil process to recover monetary compensation from the perpetrator himself, who may not have sufficient resources.

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267 OECD, 2014.
268 UNICEF, Child Marriage in Europe And Central Asia: UNICEF’s Response: Regional Overview, p.11
270 UNFPA, 2015. See also the various state reports of the CEDAW Committee referenced throughout this report.
274 UNFPA, 2015.
• The promoting by judges of mediation makes it difficult for victims / survivors to access protection orders, which are often delayed when they are issued. If a protection order is breached, the justice system often acts too late and ineffectively to ensure the safety of victims / survivors. For example, research has found that inadequate enforcement of protection orders in cases of domestic abuse limits their effectiveness in Kyrgyzstan.

• When perpetrators are punished, serious acts of violence often receive inappropriately light sentences.

Governments are making uneven progress in addressing trafficking in persons.

• The Trafficking in Persons Report produced by the US Department of State places countries onto one of four tiers as mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). The Tiers reflect not the size of the country’s problem but the extent of governments’ efforts to meet the TVPA’s minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking. In the 2018 report, one country – Kazakhstan – were placed as Tier 2, countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. Three countries – Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan – were placed as Tier 2 Watch List, countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA’s minimum standards, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. Turkmenistan was placed as Tier 3, countries whose governments do not fully meet the minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

• There is a need for responses to consistently recognise that the trafficking of women and girls is a form of violence against women, and as such, responses to trafficking must focus on the gendered norms, assumptions and stereotypes around male domination, sexual entitlement, coercion and control. This requires working on reversing the structural, social, economic factors that perpetuate gender inequality and make women and girls disproportionately affected by this crime.

Pillar 2: Institutions

At the institutional level, state officials are still not being held accountable for their failure to address VAWG and there is limited understanding of SGBV.

• There is a lack of understanding among policymakers and officials within national and sub-national institutions of the criminal nature of the various forms of VAWG and the impact on women and society.

• Not enough funding is allocated to training of institutions and key professionals, such as police, judges, and health and social workers, who often do not have the capacity to meet their obligations.

• Measures that are taken to address discriminatory gender stereotypes among duty bearers, including training for judges and lawyers, are not adequately monitored and assessed for impact.

275 UNFPA, 2015.
277 UNFPA, 2015.
278 Department of State, United States of America (USA), 2018. Trafficking in Persons Report June 2018. USA: Department of State.
279 Department of State, USA, 2018.
281 See recommendations in The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT), Submission to CEDAW’s General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the Context of Global Migration.
282 UNFPA, 2015.
• There is a reported lack of knowledge on women’s rights and gender equality among civil servants.²⁸⁴
• There is a lack of specific mechanisms in place to facilitate access for women to justice, in particular for rural women, and limited access for women to legal aid and information regarding available remedies.²⁸⁵
• Discussion with professionals and analysis of reports revealed a general lack of awareness on gender equality among professionals in the justice sector due to a lack of training and capacity building.²⁸⁶
• Among trafficking victims in Kazakhstan, 63.1% had contact with the police, and only 20.0% said they were very satisfied with the police response to their problems; whereas, 36.9% were somewhat satisfied and 43.1% said they were not satisfied with the police response to their problems.²⁸⁷

There is a lack of measures to support policy coherence and coordination and under-resourcing of institutional responses to SGBV

• There are limited formal co-ordination mechanisms on national and local levels to ensure that gender-related initiatives are consistent and well implemented across institutions and levels of governments.²⁸⁸
• Emerging examples of cross-government co-ordination are encouraging such as the Working Group under the Executive Office of the President in Tajikistan focussed on improving regulation in relation to the elimination of gender stereotypes and prevention of domestic violence. However, evaluation of impact is required. Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) and capacity-building in ministries to support GRB is an identified need, together with a specific budget for national ending violence against women programmes.²⁹⁰ For example, in Turkmenistan, the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (NAPGE) has no budget allocation.²⁹¹ In Kazakhstan, in 2017, for the first time there was specific allocation in the republican budget for the provision of special social services for the victims of domestic violence. However, in the new Republican Budget for 2019-2021 there is no specific budget line.²⁹²
• Resourcing, particularly for the health and justice sectors, is lacking. A 2018 study in Kazakhstan revealed the need for greater resources for the police and health sectors to respond to VAW.²⁹³
• Even when laws are introduced to support institutional response, there is a failure to implement these reforms. For example, in Tajikistan, the Police Act on Domestic Violence for police inspectors remains largely unimplemented due to a lack of resources and a failure to criminalise domestic violence.²⁹⁴
• Gender machineries, often tasked with coordination and monitoring cross-government action on SGBV, are often under-resourced and lack authority.²⁹⁵ For example, the CEDAW Committee noted that, despite government efforts to strengthen the Women’s Committee’s structural and financial capacity in Tajikistan only a “very low percentage of the national budget (0.7%) is allocated to it.”²⁹⁶ Encouragingly, the Government of Uzbekistan has recently taken action to strengthen the financial and human resource status

²⁸⁷ Haarr, R. 2012. A Rapid Assessment Of Children’s Vulnerabilities To Risky Behaviors, Sexual Exploitation, And Trafficking In Kazakhstan, p.15.
²⁸⁹ See, for example, the economic impact of violence against women and girls in Kazakhstan: The cost to households and of service provision.
²⁹⁰ Information provided by UN staff.
²⁹¹ The economic impact of violence against women and girls in Kazakhstan: The cost to households and of service provision
²⁹² The economic impact of violence against women and girls in Kazakhstan: The cost to households and of service provision
²⁹³ Information reported by UN staff.
²⁹⁴ This is a need identified by UN Women in Kazakhstan – see UN Women, Kazakhstan Umbrella Program, 2019-21, project document.
²⁹⁵ Information provided by UN staff.
of the Women’s Committee of Uzbekistan.  

- There is also a lack of mechanisms to connect national level institutions with local level policies and practice, particularly in rural areas. Some countries have established mobile courts in order to increase access to justice for rural women, but this is not consistent across the region. Uzbekistan has also introduced a model of regional and district level branches of the Women’s Committee as well as a Women’s Committee specialist at the local level.

### There is a lack of monitoring and oversight mechanisms in subnational and national institutions

- Women’s civil society organisations face challenges to engaging with government institutions and social accountability mechanisms are therefore limited. In Tajikistan, NGOs, including women’s organisations, are members of the Public Development Council under the President of Tajikistan which inputs on national development needs and perspectives. Assessing the effectiveness of this mechanism would be valuable.
- Kazakhstan currently has no parliamentary committee focusing on gender equality issues that could provide legislative oversight to this agenda.
- Use these accountability mechanisms to raise awareness of gender mainstreaming across the public sector and among the general public. (OECD report)

### There is little evidence of strategies to address operational culture and to transform institutional power dynamics

- Greater investment is needed in strategies to address institutional culture and to increase diversity of staff, particularly at senior levels.
- Women remain under-represented at all levels of government and in national and sub-national institutions. Although efforts have been made in some countries to increase representation, for example, in Tajikistan, modest quotas have been introduced for the civil services, across the focus countries, more strategies are needed to address the under-representation of women across government, justice, diplomatic and administrative sectors.
- Creating spaces for women to convene, network and work together is an important strategy. In Tajikistan, a women’s caucus was established in 2017 with women parliamentarians, including the Vice Speaker of the parliament, to work together towards further advancement of women in all spheres of public and political life.

### Pillar 3: Prevention

While there is greater awareness about gender and SGBV against women and girls in Central Asia, cultural acceptance of violence – especially in the family – remains unacceptably high.

- Patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes of the perceived role of women in society are common across the region, and such attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are entrenched in deeply rooted social norms.
- The socialization of strict masculine and feminine gender identities contributes to the reinforcement of
men’s entitlement to engage in aggressive behaviour and act as the power holder and the predominant decisionmaker.

- In addition, a re-emerging conservatism regarding stereotyped gender norms and roles of women and men has been observed to contribute to the reinforcement of strict gender roles.\(^{303}\)
- Within this context, women are required to be obedient and subservient to their husband and his family and deviations from this norm justify disciplinary measures and adverse consequences. \(^{304}\)
- Promoting positive gender norms within national institutions and addressing attitudes and practices which reinforce or condone VAWG is crucial for prevention and response which is sustainable and effective. There is a need for revision of school textbooks to remove discriminatory gender stereotypes, the integration of mandatory modules on gender education into school curricula and providing gender training to teachers. \(^{305}\)

**Strict gender roles correspond to violence being justified leading to impunity of perpetrators and low reporting rates.**

- Social acceptance of VAWG in the region is manifested in the responses to such violence such as victims / survivors being blamed when they report violence, the promotion of mediation, and state officials and institutions not being held accountable for their failure to prevent VAWG, nor to protect its victims / survivors. \(^{306}\)
- This leads, in turn, to perpetrators acting with impunity and these norms also make it more difficult for women to leave violent situations. For example, in a representative household survey on gender, 31.4\% of women and 36.1\% of men felt that the state should not take measures against parents who married off a daughter under the age of 18, even though this is against the law. This kind of social pressure means, for instance, that very few cases of bride kidnapping involving girls under the age of 18 are reported to the police. \(^{307}\)

**Encouragingly some programmes are taking a preventive approach, but more investment is needed.**

- Since 2011, UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office (UNFPA-EECARO) and their civil society partners across the region have engaged in a partnership to integrate gender-transformative approaches, including engaging men and boys, in order to address stereotypical gender norms, eliminate violence against women and girls and combat harmful practices. This includes Men Care Campaigns, boys’ clubs and curriculum-based interventions. \(^{308}\)
- The “Safe and Friendly Cities for All” program; a global and joint initiative among UNICEF, UN Women and UN Habitat includes Dushanbe city, Tajikistan, as a pilot city. This includes the establishment of women’s councils in markets, the introduction of codes of conduct and the use of a safety audit tool. \(^{309}\)
- Promising results are also reported by the *Zindagii Shoista* (Living with Dignity) project, implemented by five organisations – International Alert and Cesvi, together with local partners Farodis, Women of the Orient and Action, Development and Prosperity (ATO) and funded through the British government’s What

\(^{303}\) UNFPA, 2015.  
\(^{308}\) UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, *Gender Transformative and Male Involvement Programme in EECA Region*  
\(^{309}\) Dushanbe Safe and Friendly City for All, Tajikistan, Poster: Safe Cities for All.
Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls initiative. Zindagii Shoista has led to a reported 50% reduction in the number of women experiencing violence.

Pillar 4: Services

Limited social services for victims / survivors of SGBV is a major challenge in all countries in the region.

- Crisis centres and shelters generally only exist in urban areas and in some countries in the region there is minimal provision. For example, in Turkmenistan there are no voluntary organisations in place that have sufficient capacity to provide support through a hotline, face to face psychological support or a shelter. In Tajikistan, temporary “shelters” operate, but ‘a shelter’ is not legally defined and available services are reported as insufficient to meet the complex needs of survivors of violence and not reaching most rural areas.

- Most front-line services such as psychological counselling, shelters self-help groups, legal aid, and toll-free helplines are run by NGOs whose work is primarily funded by external donors and is project-based impacting their long-term sustainability.

- Several other factors hinder the provision of quality essential social services, including staff burnout and challenges coordinating with the health, police, and justice sectors.

- Limited access to legal aid, including free legal aid for women without sufficient financial means, and information regarding available remedies for women and girls is lacking across the region. For example, in Tajikistan, free legal aid is reported as only guaranteed to those suspected and convicted of domestic violence, but not to survivors.

- While keeping a focus on girls, greater attention is needed on improving child protection responses in the sub-region including clarification and elaboration of referral and intervention procedures and guidelines for frontline service providers of child protection, and law enforcement and justice officials as well as knowledge and capacity building trainings for professionals who often serve as frontline service providers of child protection.

Where services do exist, they are typically under-funded and under-resourced and not of an adequate quality.

- There remains a lack of access for women to coordinated, quality essential services for their safety, health and access to justice.

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311 Information provided by UN staff.

312 Information provided by UN staff, Tajikistan. See also FAO. 2016. National Gender Profile of Agricultural And Rural Livelihoods - Tajikistan Country Gender Assessment, Country Gender Assessment Series, available at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5766e.pdf

313 Unfpa, 2015.


315 Information provided by UN staff, Tajikistan.


• State-run or sponsored services are often under-funded, under-resourced, and under-capacitated.
• Many services, such as shelters and helplines, are run by NGOs and receive little or no state support. Tajikistan, NGOs throughout the country operate 18 women crisis centres for survivors of SGBV.\textsuperscript{318}
• Where measures have been introduced to increase service provision, challenges noted include that there are limited existing services to support the capacity development of new centres. For example, Uzbekistan opening more than 160 social rehabilitation centres and a 24-hour toll free nation-wide hotline, noted this gap.\textsuperscript{319}
• There is work progressing to introduce standards to support frontline services. In Kazakhstan, the UN Women programme is working towards a comprehensive, multisectoral, effective and responsive system of prevention and response, with the consideration of Global Essential Services Package (ESPs) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for frontline services.\textsuperscript{320} UNFPA is supporting the Women’s Committee in Uzbekistan with the introduction of Standard Operating Procedures on Multi-stakeholder Response to GBV.\textsuperscript{321} In Turkmenistan, UNFPA is working with the Government to assess existing services to be followed by the development and introduction into practice of SOPs.\textsuperscript{322}

Services are even more inaccessible for and unresponsive to the needs of women and girls who suffer intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination.

• Women from ethnic and religious minorities face higher levels of violence such as early and forced marriages, as well as difficulties in accessing justice and public services. Expanding welfare support to rural communities, translating information on rights and services into minority languages, increasing women’s legal literacy, and ensuring that they have national identification are identified gaps to improve the responsiveness of response services.

Pillar 5: Data

Despite an increased interest in studies on SGBV against women and girls, data gaps remain significant.

• Since the second half of the 1990s, there has been an increase in studies seeking to measure the scope of SGBV against women and girls. These studies provide an important evidence base for laws and policies to end GBV.\textsuperscript{323} For example, Turkmenistan is currently preparing for its first national domestic violence survey to be conducted in 2020.\textsuperscript{324} Tajikistan recently produced some national data as part of the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), related to VAW, and an Adolescence Baseline Study.\textsuperscript{325}
• At the same time, gaps in the knowledge base on all forms of SGBV persist. Many countries still lack reliable data on GBV and if studies exist, they are often not comparable, due to differences in methodologies used. A recent study noted that no country had complete data in relation to SGBV – data was most sparse for

\textsuperscript{318} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{319} Information provided by UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies in Uzbekistan.
\textsuperscript{320} UN Women, Kazakhstan Umbrella Program, 2019-21, project document.
\textsuperscript{321} Information provided by UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies in Uzbekistan.
\textsuperscript{322} Information provided by UN staff, Turkmenistan.
\textsuperscript{323} See, for example, in Kazakhstan, Statistical Committee of the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan Sample survey on violence against women in Kazakhstan (2017) & The economic impact of violence against women and girls in Kazakhstan: The cost to households and of service provision study conducted in 2017.
\textsuperscript{324} Information provided by UN staff.
\textsuperscript{325} Information provided by UN staff.
Uzbekistan.\textsuperscript{326}

- Additionally, disaggregated data (e.g. by age, urban and rural areas, and relationship between the perpetrator and victim / survivor) is currently not being collected consistently.\textsuperscript{327} Existing data collection and research efforts have so far mainly focused on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child abuse and FGM, while at the same time, many forms of GBV are under-documented. This includes femicide: sexual violence in conflict; economic violence, trafficking in women and girls; sexual harassment and violence in workplaces, schools and institutional settings, including health facilities, prisons and detention centres.\textsuperscript{328}

- Very limited information is available on vulnerable groups of women, including girls, elderly women, women with disabilities and women discriminated against on the basis of their sexuality. For instance, the lack of gender-disaggregated data on children who were involved in criminal proceedings as victims results in girls being largely invisible as a group, and their needs not taken into consideration.\textsuperscript{329}

- The SDGs provide an impetus to focus on data systems and collection. For example, Turkmenistan is one of the first countries in the world that started collecting data on SDG indicator 5.6.1 regarding women’s choices to make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health services within the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MIC). MICS also intends to collect the first-ever data on safety (Indicator 16.1.4) and crime reporting (16.3.1) among women of reproductive age (15-49) and update data on violence against girls and attitudes towards DV.\textsuperscript{330}

- The International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) has been undertaken in Kyrgyzstan but no other focus countries.\textsuperscript{331}

**Pillar 6: CSOs/Women’s Movement**

Despite the importance of CSOs for driving policy and social change, there is limited engagement with CSOs and women’s organisations and movements by institutions in Central Asia in relation to ending SGBV.

- There is frequently a failure by institutions to recognise women as knowledge holders and to engage with women, including women exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, to implement women-led responses and solutions.

- There is an absence of mechanisms for multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes to enable the participation and engagement of CSOs in SGBV initiatives.

- Coordination between national level policy and practice and local level networks and partnerships is lacking.

- Civil society space continues to be dominated by government established and funded NGOs, which limits the funding and resourcing available for other civil society actors.

- There is also evidence of reluctance to engage with NGOs which support women with HIV and with disabilities due to stigmatisation and discriminatory attitudes.\textsuperscript{332}

- Rather than creating a supportive environment for the important work of CSOs and women’s organisations, there is evidence that cumbersome legal and administrative requirements for the registration and

\textsuperscript{326} Burnet Institute. Forthcoming. Gender counts: sub-regional report for Central Asia, prepared for UNICEF East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, p.97.

\textsuperscript{327} UNFPA, 2015; UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.

\textsuperscript{328} UNFPA and WAVE, 2014. Strengthening Health System Responses to Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: A Resource Package. UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Istanbul, Turkey.


\textsuperscript{330} Feedback from UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies, in Turkmenistan.

\textsuperscript{331} UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Gender Transformative and Male Involvement Programme in EECA Region

\textsuperscript{332} Information reported by civil society in Uzbekistan, May 2019.
operation of civil society organisations, including women’s organisations, as well as restrictions on operating activities are occurring.\textsuperscript{333} Change is occurring in some countries. For example, Uzbekistan Government has recently relaxed legislation inhibiting NGO activity, and significant simplified registration procedures.\textsuperscript{334} Efforts to simplify procedures for CSOs to register donor funded projects, including projects related to GBV, was also reported in Turkmenistan.\textsuperscript{335}

- There is limited evidence of support and resourcing for women’s organisations and networks. There is support for a platform focussed on male engagement - EECA MenEngage Platform is an alliance comprising of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, government representatives, academics and UN partners across 17 countries in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, focused on engaging men and boys in gender equality and addressing masculinities as an approach to gender-transformative programming.\textsuperscript{336}
- In Tajikistan, a Coalition of CSOs “From Equality de Jure to Equality de Facto” plays a critical role in lobbying for real change in the law on domestic violence and presenting alternative views on the fulfillment of international CEDAW commitments.\textsuperscript{337}

Reports of closing civil society space and risks to women human rights defenders and CSOs

- In the Central Asian region, there have been reports of women human rights defenders, and civil society organisations, including those working on women’s rights, being subjected to harassment, intimidation, violence, unlawful detention and travel bans as reprisal for their work in promoting and advancing women’s rights.\textsuperscript{338}
- In Tajikistan, women’s CSOs and human rights defenders are facing a crackdown linked to new legislation on foreign funding. This law authorizes highly intrusive supervision and reporting requirements for CSOs.\textsuperscript{339}

The initiative will engage civil society according to various modalities, ensuring full engagement of civil society organizations and the women’s movement in design of programmes as well as in governance mechanisms (through civil society reference groups and participation in steering committee). Civil society organizations will also be involved in the implementation of all pillars as implementing partners of the programme. Finally, as described in the above sections, the Programme will specifically target CSOs as “agents of change”, providing support to develop their capacity (not only on technical matters but also through operational and financial support), as well as protecting the civic space to allow them to continue to be leaders in the effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

\textbf{South Asia}

\textit{Types of violence in South Asia}

Some forms of SGBV and harmful practices in South Asia occur around the world, such as intimate partner violence, child abuse, sexual harassment, child marriage, and trafficking in persons, while others are particularly

\textsuperscript{333} For example, CEDAW Committee. 2018. Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of Turkmenistan, CEDAW/C/TKM/CO/5, 25 July 2018, para 28.
\textsuperscript{334} Information provided by UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and 3 Core agencies in Uzbekistan.
\textsuperscript{335} Information provided by UN staff.
\textsuperscript{336} UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Gender Transformative and Male Involvement Programme in EECA Region
\textsuperscript{337} Information provided by UN staff.
\textsuperscript{339} Information provided by UN staff.
persistent in South Asia, including excess female child mortality, child marriage, and so-called honour crimes. There are also forms of SGBV that are unique to the region such as dowry-related violence.

Research on the prevalence of SGBV is improving in the sub-region with a number of South Asian countries undertaking prevalence studies including Demographic and Health Surveys incorporating the Domestic Violence module.

a) Intimate partner violence

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is the most widely known and well researched type of SGBV in South Asia. Where national prevalence data exists, it shows great variations in the prevalence of IPV between countries ranging from 16% of women who experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime in the Maldives to 54% of women in Bangladesh. Regional World Health Organisation estimates suggest that South Asia has the highest regional rate of IPV in the world, at 43%.

Data also shows that most IPV occurs in the first few years of marriage which implies highest prevalence among adolescent married women. A study in Afghanistan found that married girls aged 10–14 were particularly vulnerable to all forms of domestic violence and that one in three girls in this age group experienced sexual violence. Years of war and insecurity in a number of South Asian countries have spread a culture of violence, and the mental and physical violence experienced by many have contributed to violence in the family. Forced and early marriage, and extreme poverty also correlate to higher levels of domestic violence.

Partner violence against ever-married girls is also included in national representative surveys. 36% in Bangladesh, 35% in Afghanistan, 25% in Pakistan and 18% in Nepal of ever-married girls aged 15 to 19 years reported experiencing emotional, physical or sexual violence committed by a husband or partner in the last 12 months.

National data also shows high rates of women, who reported experiencing IPV, not telling anyone about the violence. Entrenched beliefs that IPV is a ‘private’ matter result in significant under-reporting. Most survivors do

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341 See https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/kNOwVAWdata%20regional%20VAW%20map%20April%202013%202019.pdf for details of surveys conducted.
342 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
345 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
347 See, for example, OECD. 2019. SIGI Summary – Afghanistan.
not seek help from formal services and institutions, such as police and health services out of fear of being treated with disrespect or hostility. In addition, there is limited awareness of services as well as financial barriers to seeking support from formal services.

**Most women do not seek help or report the violence they experience and rates of people seeking help remain extremely low.** In India, only 3% of women who experienced violence sought help from the police, and only 1% sought help from a doctor or medical personnel, a lawyer, or a social service organisation.\(^{349}\) In Pakistan, notably few women sought help from the police (0.8%), lawyers (0.4%), doctors or medical personnel (0.1%), or social service organizations (0.1%).\(^{350}\)

77% and 73% of women in India and Bangladesh respectively who reported experiencing IPV did not seek help or tell anyone about the violence. Help seeking behaviour was highest in Maldives and Bhutan respectively.

When they do seek help, survivors face many barriers. In South Asia, critical gaps remain in service provision for survivors of violence in terms of availability, quality and coordination. There are practices of survivor-blaming, bribes required to file a case and pressure to mediate. Most women who experienced violence do not receive the full range of services and many do not receive any services at all. When services are available, they are often underfunded, understaffed, and mostly available in populated urban areas.

There is data available for each country in the sub-region in relation to women's attitudes that accept or justify IPV. This data shows high percentages of women and men agreeing with one or more circumstance under which a husband is justified to physically abuse his wife. The proportion of the female population justifying domestic violence in each country is reported under SIGI 2019 as 80% (Afghanistan), 28% (Bangladesh), 68% (Bhutan), 22% (India), 31% (Maldives), 43% (Nepal), 42% (Pakistan) and 53% (Sri Lanka).\(^{351}\) Harmful social norms and practices contribute to high levels of acceptance of GBV by both men and women. In Pakistan, a third of women and more than half of the men agree that a woman needs to be beaten at times, and more than three quarters of married men and women agree that a woman should tolerate violence to keep the family together.\(^{352}\)

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\(^{349}\) International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and ICF, 2017. National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), India, 2015-16: India. Mumbai: IIPS

\(^{350}\) National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) [Pakistan] and ICF International. 2013. Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey 2012-13. Islamabad, Pakistan, and Calverton, Maryland, USA: NIPS and ICF International

\(^{351}\) OECD (2019), Gender, Institutions and Development Database.

Table 3: Attitudes toward wife beating in South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>% of men who think a husband is justified to beat his wife</th>
<th>% of women who think a husband is justified to beat his wife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) Non-partner physical, sexual and psychological violence

Women continue to experience sexual violence by non-partners including gang rape and other forms of sexual violence. This includes examples in India of women being gang raped as punishment for their family’s wrongdoing by order of the community’s senior members or the village committee. The Partners for Prevention Multi-Country Study in 2013 found that 1.6% of male respondents had committed gang rape of a non-partner, and 6.2% had raped a female who was not their partner in Sri Lanka and 4.4% and 4.1% of male respondents had committed non-partner rape in rural and urban Bangladesh respectively. Rape continues to be underreported with victims/survivors often not seeking legal redress, due to social stigma. There are also structural barriers to women’s access to justice. For example, Nepal’s criminal justice system limits the reporting time to 35 days from the date of the rape.

Women from particular castes and tribes, such as Dalit and Adivasi women in India, are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence due to their presence in conflict areas and caste-based discrimination. Female heads of households are also particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse perpetrated by public servants, law enforcement officials, health care workers and employers in Sri Lanka.

Small-scale studies from within South Asia show that women face frequent harassment in public places. Across South Asian countries, sexual harassment is also prevalent in the workplace. It is noted that in Afghanistan this...
impacts on the recruitment and retention of women in the security sector.\textsuperscript{360} In Bangladesh, this is compounded by the unsafe working conditions for women and the barriers to forming unions, particularly in the garment sector.\textsuperscript{361} There is also limited information regarding the specific measures taken to address sexual harassment,\textsuperscript{362} and limited protection for domestic workers,\textsuperscript{363} as well as a culture of silence surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace.\textsuperscript{364} Sexual harassment also takes place on public transport. A 2015 study found that 90\% of female respondents had been subjected to sexual harassment on public buses and trains in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{365}

c) Trafficking in women and girls

According to UNODC, 150,000 girls and women are trafficked within South Asia every year. Most South Asian countries are both destination and source countries for trafficking of women and girls, though Bhutan and Maldives are primarily destination countries.\textsuperscript{366} Based on the limited data available for Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan, women account for 59\% of the total detected victims.\textsuperscript{367} Of the countries who report on the forms of exploitation for trafficking cases detected in South Asia, trafficking for sexual exploitation and trafficking for forced labour are nearly equally detected.\textsuperscript{368} There is no available information on the sex of the people prosecuted or convicted of trafficking in South Asia. There is some data from Nepal and Sri Lanka that showed about 80\% of person arrested for trafficking in persons were men.\textsuperscript{369}

d) Women exposed to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence

Limited data also indicates forms of violence directed towards widows unique to South Asia. One example is the illegal practice of widow burning or Sati in India, where a Hindu widow sacrifices herself on her husband’s funeral. In Pakistan, familial belief that a young widow brings dishonor to the family can result in young women being imprisoned or killed by the family. Widows also face increased vulnerability to sexual violence by other men (within family as well as outside) in their marital households. Studies from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan show evidence of economic violence where the marital family withdraws economic support for a woman once her husband dies. In Afghanistan, widows may be forced to remarry within the marital family.\textsuperscript{370}

Girls experience violence in their home, at school, and in the community including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse at home and in school; violence on the streets for homeless girls; sexual and physical abuse in juvenile facilities; and commercial sexual exploitation. During times of conflict or natural disasters, the vulnerability of girls to some of these forms of violence may increase.\textsuperscript{371}

Domestic workers experience limited protection under the law in many South Asian countries and face sexual harassment and violence. In Bangladesh, women domestic workers are subject to violence, abuse, food

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{360} CEDAW Committee. 2013. Concluding observations on the combined initial and second periodic reports of Afghanistan, CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/1-2, 30 July 2013, para 34.


\textsuperscript{363} CEDAW Committee. 2017. Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of India, CEDAW/C/IND/CO/4-5, 24 July 2014, para 26; CEDAW Committee. 2015. Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Maldives, CEDAW/C/MWI/CO/4-5, 11 March 2015, para 34.

\textsuperscript{364} CEDAW Committee. 2018. Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of Nepal, CEDAW/C/NPL/CO/6, 14 November 2018, para 35.


\textsuperscript{366} Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.


\textsuperscript{370} Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.

\textsuperscript{371} Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
\end{flushright}
deprivation and murder. Such crimes often go unreported and that the victims have limited access to justice and redress. Nepal introduced legislation to provide for minimum remuneration and public holidays for domestic workers. However, there is limited resourcing for implementation and a lack of awareness of these legislative provisions.

Transwomen, as well as men who have sex with men, experience multiple forms of SOGIE (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression) -based violence across their life course including psychological, physical and sexual violence. This includes violence experienced in intimate partnership, legal and law-related institutions, education, religious spaces, health-care, and employment.

Women from particular castes and tribes experience discrimination and unique experiences of violence. For example, in Nepal, there is a practice which particularly affects Dalit women, rural women, widows, the elderly, and those of low economic status, where shamans or family members publicly abuse or beat women accused of so-called witchcraft.

Women in the sex industry experience extreme physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence at work, in health-care and custodial settings, in their neighbourhoods and in their homes, that directly relates to harmful gender norms and patriarchy. Women in the sex industry experienced specific types of violence because of the nature of the industry and the stigma attached to it, such as violence at the hands of their clients or police. Women in the sex industry also experiences specific forms of violence outside their work setting because of their engagement in the industry, such as violence and harassment by neighbours and the general public as well as discrimination and abuse in health settings. Women and girls in the sex industry report more frequent and severe incidents of IPV than the male and transgender colleagues.

e) Type of violence against women disproportionately experienced by South-Asian Women

Dowry-related violence

Dowry-related violence is perpetrated by women and girls’ spouse or marital family in retaliation for her family’s inability to meet the dowry demands or when the husband wishes to remarry to obtain another dowry. Dowry-related violence can include physical violence as well as harassment that leads to death, known as “dowry death”.

Data in Bangladesh shows that cases of dowry-related violence have declined significantly over the years falling from 822 in 2012 to 206 in 2016.

So-called ‘honour killings’

Within South Asia, honour crimes – acts of vengeance committed by family members against female family members, who are seen to have brought dishonour upon the family – have been reported in the media in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. Dishonour killings have been practiced for decades, usually by the victims / survivors’ families to protect family honour if a woman is assumed to have had premarital or extramarital sex, married of her own will or refused a marriage arranged by her family. There is often impunity for such acts

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377 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
379 Banu. 2016.
of violence. For example, Pakistan has a law against ‘honour killings’, but the police are often unwilling to enforce it, due to the overwhelming social acceptance of the act. Elder councils, in rural Pakistan, allow families to settle cases among themselves. Often there is not legal punishment and the victim's family is given monetary compensation instead.380

**Acid attacks and burning**

The premeditated throwing of acid on a victim, usually on her face – is most common in many South Asian countries. It is considered a hidden form of violence against women as many cases go unreported. In addition to causing psychological trauma, acid attacks result in severe pain, permanent disfigurement, subsequent infections, and often blindness in one or both eyes.381 Perpetrators commit acid attacks for a number of reasons, including revenge for refusal of a marriage proposal or other romantic or sexual advances; land disputes; perceived dishonour; dowry-related conflict and jealousy.382 Acid attacks and burning are an expression of men’s control over women’s and girls’ bodies.383 In South Asia, acid attacks are most prevalent in Bangladesh and Pakistan but they have also been reported in Afghanistan and Nepal.384 Research into the practice is limited to reported cases and there is under-reporting. In most other countries where acid violence occurs, campaigners say the violence is typically male on female.385

Survivors of acid violence frequently lack access to adequate medical care, legal assistance and psychosocial support. As a result of disfigurement, survivors are often ostracised by the community, impacting on employment opportunities and income generation to support themselves and their families. Survivors are also at an increased risk of suicide.386

**Spotlight Initiatives Pillars – South Asia**

This section contains an analysis of trends under each of the Spotlight pillars, emphasising areas of progress and remaining gaps and barriers to the elimination of SGBV and harmful practices in South Asia.

**Pillar 1: Laws and policies**

**Progress on specific legislation addressing VAW but implementation remains a challenge.**

- Despite all South-Asian countries having some legal protections against several forms of violence and harmful practices (female infanticide, child marriage, and intimate partner violence), legal frameworks contend with significant barriers that inhibit women’s access to justice.387 Laws also fail to address all the forms of violence against women including economic violence and psychological violence.
- Legislative and policy frameworks suffer from gaps in design and implementation, lack of accountability and lack of attention to social norms that drive IPV, as well as a failure to mainstream and coordinate

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380 Banu, 2016.
382 UN Women Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and Girls, 2011.
387 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
actions to tackle IPV across sectors (such as health, justice, and social services).

- In many countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, marital rape is not recognised as a crime or the penalties are low. 388
- An increasing number of countries have introduced legislation to increase the legal age of marriage to 18 years of age for girls as well as national action plans to address child marriage. The South Asian Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) adopted a regional action plan to end child marriage from 2015 – 2018 and representatives of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), asserted the Kathmandu Call to Action to End Child Marriage in Asia in 2014. 389
- However, exceptions remain. 390 For example, under the Civil Code of the Republic of Afghanistan 1977, when a girl is below the age of 16, a marriage can be concluded with the permission of her father or a judge and in Bangladesh under the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 a court can allow child marriage in “special cases”. 391 Further, even when a minimum legal age of 18 years exists, gender inequality, poverty, traditions, and insecurity continue to fuel the practice of child marriage
- Governments have implemented polices that contribute to preventing violence and that strengthen support services for those who experience violence but many need updating. The following South Asian countries have National Action Plans to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls: Afghanistan (2016, 2020) Nepal (2010), Sri Lanka (2005). 393
- Most South Asian countries introduced the specific offence of trafficking in persons in line with the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol definition after December 2003, when the Protocol entered into force. 394 In South Asia, these efforts have resulted in conventions such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking of Women and Children for Prostitution, 2002. 395 The following countries have National Plans of Action for Human Trafficking: Bangladesh (2012, 2014), India (1998), Nepal (2008). 396
- In the 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report, five countries – Afghanistan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – were placed as Tier 2, countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA’s minimum standard, but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. The remaining three countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives – were placed as Tier 2 Watch List, countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA’s minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards. 397

Barriers to accessing justice

- Under-reporting of SGBV to the police and formal justice system is a challenge. In the case of domestic violence, it is still perceived as a ‘private’ matter. As a result, women often do not access formal services until their life is at risk.
- Financial barriers also prevent some women, especially in rural areas, from accessing formal justice. There

388 OECD, 2014
390 https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/what-is-the-minimum-age-of-marriage-for-teenage-girls/what-is-the-minimum-age-of-marriage-for-girls
391 https://www.girlsnottobrides.org/where-does-it-happen/atlas/#/
392 Solotaroff and Rohini, 2014.
393 UN Women, Global Database on Violence Against Women
394 UNODC, 2018.
396 UN Women, Global Database on Violence Against Women
397 Department of State, USA, 2018.
is also a lack of awareness about services that are available for women and girls experiencing SGBV. There are on-going challenges with police response to SGBV across the region with poor treatment received by women at the police stations a reason why women hesitate to seek formal justice. For example, in Sri Lanka, lack of gender sensitivity and limited understanding of laws against sexual violence among police officers, as well as lengthy court procedures, discourage victims / survivors from pursuing legal action.

Conviction rates remain low

- Specialist courts have been established to hear GBV cases in a number of countries. However, the judiciary is male dominated and gender bias persists.
- Countries in Asia have extremely low SGBV conviction rates. For example, research from Sri Lanka shows that of the 15 percent of Sri Lankan men who had committed rape, nearly 65 percent had done so on more than one occasion and over 95 percent of Sri Lankan men who committed rape against women or girls faced no legal consequences.
- In the countries where information is available, generally few convictions for trafficking of persons are recorded. In Central and South Asia, the number of detected cases of trafficking has been increasing though numbers of prosecution and convictions remain low (see table below).

Table 4: Detection, Prosecution and Convictions in relation to trafficking offences, South Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Prosecutions</th>
<th>Convictions</th>
<th>Victims Identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>3,907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,043</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>4,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,904</td>
<td>974</td>
<td>7,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,839</td>
<td>958</td>
<td>4,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>6,930</td>
<td>1,468</td>
<td>24,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>6,297</td>
<td>2,193</td>
<td>14,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>8,105</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>40,857</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pillar 2: Institutions

Institutions are not being held accountable for their failure to address VAWG and there is a lack of coordination, policy coherence and commitment by state officials to gender equality.

- There is a need for measures to address discriminatory gender stereotypes held by duty bearers and increase recognition of the forms of SGBV and consequences for women and wider society.
- Training and measures to improve the responsiveness of state duty bearers to survivors of SGBV are not adequately monitored and assessed for impact.

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399 Samuels, Jones and Gupta, 2017.
400 The Asia Foundation, 2017.
403 The Asia Foundation, 2017.
405 Department of State, USA, 2018.
• VAWG needs to be incorporated into their plans, policies, budgets and activities across all sectors including social services, education, justice, health and security.

• Gender responsive budgeting should be utilized as a tool to ensure that SGBV is mainstreamed into all sectoral budgets and sufficient resources are available to address SGBV in all its forms and across all communities.

• Greater coordination is needed between national institutions and sub-national institutions and processes. VAWG prevention and response is frequently coordinated by national women’s machineries, which remain under-resourced and lack authority to enforce the implementation of plans and policies across Government.

• There is a lack of specific mechanisms in place to facilitate access for women to justice and multi-faceted response services (including limited access to health services, accommodation and social services), in particular for rural women and women from indigenous and minority ethnic groups, and limited access for women to legal aid and information regarding available remedies.

• Although the majority of South Asian countries have national action plans to address VAWG, these are not institutionally resourced which leads to a gap between policy and implementation.

There is a lack of monitoring and oversight mechanisms in subnational and national institutions.

• Women’s civil society organisations face challenges to engaging with government institutions and social accountability mechanisms are therefore limited.

• Monitoring/oversight mechanisms in subnational and national institutions are needed to apply pressure for reform and monitor the impact of legislation, resourcing and other EVAW measures introduced.

There is little evidence of strategies to address operational culture and to transform institutional power dynamics.

• There is a need for systemic change to address the discriminatory norms and practices which permeate institutions at all levels. Measures which focus on operational culture are required to transform institutional power dynamics and personal beliefs and behaviours in addition to policies, procedures and actions.

• Women remain under-represented at all levels of government and in national and sub-national institutions. Although efforts have been made in some countries to increase representation, such as the introduction of legislative quotas, structural barriers persist to the equal and meaningful participation of women in institutions and decision making across all sectors.

Pillar 3: Prevention

Patriarchy in South Asia creates circumstances that perpetuate social norms which condone and reinforce SGBV against women and girls.

• Deep-rooted patriarchal norms around femininity and masculinity and expectations that women and girls will behave in a particular way reinforce and perpetuate SGBV. Research from South Asian countries shows that both men and women accept and justify SGBV towards women and girls, which are usually seen as necessary forms of corrective action towards women and girls.⁴⁰⁶ There is a lack of recognition that women

⁴⁰⁶ Samuels, Jones and Gupta, 2017.
and girls are first and foremost citizens, individuals who should be accorded the same rights and privileges as men and boys.

- Perceptions of women as victims or subjects—rather than as individuals with rights to their own identities, sexualities, and other forms of self-expression—has circumscribed the social and legal provisions for women’s safety. This perception perpetuates the patriarchal belief that female household members must be protected by men and in ways that ensure female conformity to roles defined by traditional, patriarchal norms.\textsuperscript{407} Men’s coercive and controlling behaviours towards women begin early with adolescent boys found to control their girlfriends, including controlling their mobility. Research from South Asian countries shows that adolescent boys impose their desires on their girlfriends, force the girls to meet them, and monitor their social interactions by, for example, checking their phones.\textsuperscript{408}

**There is evidence of social norms changing, but unevenly and giving rise to backlash against women and girls.**

- Girls have much more freedom than they once had - they can marry later, have more choice in their spouses, and they can finish their education and even aspire to having a degree.
- However, there is also evidence of a backlash with many men being threatened by these changes. This backlash can be seen in men reinforcing rigid patriarchal and religious prescriptions for the control of women and girls.\textsuperscript{409}
- Promoting positive gender norms within national institutions and addressing attitudes and practices which reinforce or condone VAWG is crucial for prevention and response which is sustainable and effective.

**Prevention Initiatives are being introduced across the sub-region; but more is needed.**

- Phase 2 of the Partners for Prevention program will support the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of localised VAWG prevention interventions in Bangladesh.\textsuperscript{410}
- Forums to support multi-sector partnerships and approaches are being introduced. For example, a meeting on Multi-Sectoral Services to Respond to Gender-Based Violence in Nepal, organised by UN Women, UNFPA, UNODC, UNDP and WHO in Nepal, with civil society partner WOREC, was held in September 2018. This was the first meeting of its kind on SGBV, with 5 UN agencies and multi-sectors across government and civil society, from all 7 provinces in Nepal.
- The South Asian Network to Address Masculinities (SANAM), supported by Partners for Prevention, is designed to develop the capacity of young activists on masculinities, gender justice and GBV prevention in South Asia.\textsuperscript{411}
- Comprehensive sexuality education is also being introduced in the sub-region. However, a significant gap remains between policy and implementation and a review of 11 Asian countries found that outreach strategies to many out-of-school adolescents remained challenging.\textsuperscript{412}

\textsuperscript{407} Solotaroff, and Rohini, 2014.
\textsuperscript{408} Samuels, Jones and Gupta, 2017.
\textsuperscript{409} Samuels, Jones and Gupta, 2017.
\textsuperscript{410} http://partners4prevention.org/about-prevention/overview
\textsuperscript{411} http://www.partners4prevention.org/news/sanam-projects-explore-diverse-masculinities-south-asia
Pillar 4: Services

There is strong government commitment to a coordinated multi-sectoral approach across health, social services, police, legal and justice sectors across the region.\textsuperscript{413}

- In several countries (including Nepal, India and Bangladesh) in the region, one-stop crisis centres have been established to provide survivors with coordinated access, in one place, to a range of essential services, such as medical services, post-rape care, psychological counselling, police assistance, DNA testing (in some centres), legal assistance, and accommodation. However, many of these services have not been rigorously evaluated on their effectiveness and the extent to which a survivor-centred, rights-based approach is being practiced. For example, evaluation of One Stop Crisis Centres in Nepal revealed uneven quality in case management and referral systems.\textsuperscript{414}

- Key challenges across the sub-region include the lack of quality and accessible essential services (health, justice and social services); a lack of multi-sector coordination between service providers and limited case management services which places the onus on the survivor to access services. Psychosocial support is also currently a neglected area.

Child protection in the South and Central Asia region receives very little political attention and limited funds. There is a reliance on international agencies and CSOs to deliver services. Governments must provide secure funding and devolve authority to district and local levels of government for programme implementation.\textsuperscript{415} There is a need for quality assurance across essential services, increased resourcing and for these services to also be accessible to marginalised groups of women and girls

- There is a need for quality standards for One Stop Crisis Centres, aligned with the Essential Services Package and World Health Organisation guidance.\textsuperscript{416}

- Essential services need to be extended to specific marginalised groups of women such as migrants, married adolescent girls, indigenous women, women with disabilities and women from ethnic minorities.\textsuperscript{417}

The "UN Joint Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls subject to violence", which provides guidance to countries on how to implement global norms on multi-sectoral services and responses is currently being piloted in Pakistan and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal are taking part in the programme as self-starter countries.

Pillar 5: Data

There has been significant progress to document specific forms of SGBV in most South Asian countries.

- The most widespread quantitative and qualitative analysis is found in country-level demographic and health surveys that include questions about intimate partner violence and data on child marriage and excess female child mortality. However, this data is not comprehensive and focuses on particular types of GBV.\textsuperscript{418} While there is more data on intimate partner violence, data remain limited for several aspects of intimate partner violence, including forms of violence other than physical and sexual—such as economic violence or controlling behaviour—and intimate partner violence faced by never-married women or older

\textsuperscript{413} UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, 2019. Spotlight Initiative: Focus – South Asia Presentation.
\textsuperscript{414} Spotlight South Asia Presentation, 3 May 2019.
\textsuperscript{416} Spotlight South Asia Presentation, 3 May 2019.
\textsuperscript{417} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{418} The Asia Foundation, 2017.
women. Research on domestic violence perpetrated by other household members is limited for women at all ages and for divorced or widowed women. Reliable data is lacking to estimate prevalence or trends in physical and sexual abuse against girls, sexual harassment, trafficking in persons, honour killings, and custodial violence.

- A dedicated VAW prevalence study was just conducted in Bangladesh, one is underway in Sri Lanka and another one is planned for Nepal.
- There is also promising evidence emerging from What Works initiatives in Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan.
- Data on Sri Lanka and Bangladesh is also available as a result of the United Nations Partners for Prevention Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific.

Pillar 6: CSOs / Women’s Movement

South Asia is characterised by an active and vocal women’s rights movement who are making headway in demanding policy makers and communities step up actions on gender equality including legislative reform.

- In India, active campaigning by local NGOs with support from the international community has ushered in stronger penalties for rape.
- In Afghanistan, the women’s movement successfully lobbied the government to reform Article 26 of the Criminal Procedure Code in 2014, which previously prohibited relatives of the accused from testifying in criminal cases of violence against women.
- In Bangladesh, women’s NGOs support victims / survivors of gender-based violence, provide prevention programmes targeting men and boys, as well as empower poor, rural women through microcredit schemes.
- In Pakistan, the Women’s Action Forum has challenged discriminatory legislation against women, including dress codes. Their activism has also inspired others to create women’s rights groups and resource centres.

However, women’s rights organisations, networks and movements continue to be under-resourced, excluded from decision making spaces and face violence and security threats.

- Restrictions on civil society across the region include the threat of, and targeted violence, against human rights defenders and women’s rights organisations.
- Women’s rights organisations report intimidation, threats to their safety or violence because of their active role in the community. Women in Afghanistan reported numerous examples of threats they and their families have received because of their work. In Nepal, women activists also reported harassment due to their public role.
- Restrictions on women’s mobility and participation in public spaces also impact on the ability of women’s right organisations to engage in national and sub-national processes and to undertake their work.
- Engagement is also crucial with women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and civil society groups and networks working with diverse groups including girls and adolescent groups; women with disabilities; women in the sex industry; LGBTQI groups, rural women; older women; street women; women living with HIV, and their families; women heads of households; and women from ethnic and linguistic minorities.

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419 Solotaroff, and Rohini, 2014.
420 Solotaroff, and Rohini, 2014.
421 Spotlight South Asia Presentation, 3 May 2019.
422 OECD, 2014.
423 ActionAid, Womankind Worldwide, IDS. 2012. From the ground up Women’s roles in local peacebuilding in Afghanistan, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sierra Leone, p.33.
The initiative will engage civil society according to various modalities, ensuring full engagement of civil society organizations and the women’s movement in design of programmes as well as in governance mechanisms (through civil society reference groups and participation in steering committee). Civil society organizations will also be involved in the implementation of all pillars as implementing partners of the programme. Finally, as described in the above sections, the Programme will specifically target CSOs as “agents of change”, providing support to develop their capacity (not only on technical matters but also through operational and financial support), as well as protecting the civic space to allow them to continue to be leaders in the effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.
2. RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risk management supports the delivery of the Spotlight Initiative’s strategic objectives, given the risk context in which the fund operates. The Spotlight Initiative’s risks and assumptions for the Central and South Asia region, as well as mitigating measures, are listed below.

Table 5: Spotlight Initiative Central and South Asia Risks and Assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Risk Level:</th>
<th>Likelihood:</th>
<th>Impact:</th>
<th>Mitigating measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance from family, community, traditional and religious leaders</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Likely (4)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>✓ Support existing programs involved with engagement of men especially from family, community elders, traditional and religious leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Support existing programs focused on sensitization and empowerment of women, traditional and political leaders to understand, mobilize against</td>
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<td></td>
<td>violence against women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyclones, Earthquakes, Flooding and other natural disasters</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Likely (4)</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>✓ Provide contingency funding to contribute to VAWG emergency response on an annual basis</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Support flexibility in programming given the disruption of emergency programming to regular activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited national ownership</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Possible (3)</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>✓ For the ownership and commitment of governments in this initiative, there should be a clear understanding of what this programme wants to achieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in complementarity to other actions and its added value.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Strong consultation and engagement with Government to ensure ownership, motivation and sustainability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Provide support to existing regional and national networks and mechanisms.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Target high level public servants with behaviour change programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programmatic risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource mobilization strategies to attract resources for the Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes at the country level are developed and implemented</td>
<td>Very High</td>
<td>Likely (4)</td>
<td>Major</td>
<td>✓ Engage with partners frequently to monitor implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Adjust programmatic approach as needed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Have a balance of high and lower capacity partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Programmes are not fully funded to achieve all deliverables due to the lack of required resources (resources additional to the EU envelopes)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Unlikely (2)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>✓ Resource mobilization strategies to attract resources for the Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes at the country level are developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Resource mobilization strategies to attract resources for the Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes at the country level are developed and implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risks</td>
<td>Risk Level:</td>
<td>Likelihood:</td>
<td>Impact:</td>
<td>Mitigating measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding and services not available after Initiative ends due to lack of resources</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Possible (3)</td>
<td>Major (4)</td>
<td>✓ In collaboration with government and the private sector (where possible) develop a feasible financing strategy with conditions that secure a financial sustainability plan from the outset – ensuring ownership through civil society’s engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquired capacity and knowledge not translated in transformative action</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Possible (3)</td>
<td>Major (4)</td>
<td>✓ Undertake assessment to understand why knowledge is not translated into action and work closely with national stakeholders to address them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of technical and financial resources including to improve service delivery</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Unlikely (2)</td>
<td>Major (4)</td>
<td>✓ Diversify funding sources to fill cost gaps; ensure financing and sustainability strategy from outset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of donor commitment to funding DV/IPV</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Possible (3)</td>
<td>Moderate (3)</td>
<td>✓ Apply methodologies for financing gender equality and gender budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiduciary risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Support strong costing methodologies for DV/IPV work, including to make the case for investment on gender equality and addressing DV/IPV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disbursements of resources to small stakeholders (CSOs) and national implementing partner have the potential to provide incentives for diversionary activities.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Possible (3)</td>
<td>Minor (2)</td>
<td>✓ Funding to the grass-roots level CSOs under pillar six can be operationalized through existing mechanism in the region, which can channel the resources to grass-root level CSOs, based on an open and transparent process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assumptions:**

✓ No major change in the political situation in the region will affect implementation of the Spotlight Initiative  
✓ The Spotlight Initiative has significant political and administrative support, which facilitates the involvement and commitment of Central and South Asia governments and civil society organisations  
✓ There is significant national commitment including through dedication of domestic resources to ensure sustainability and long-term impact of the programme and overall efforts  
✓ There is significant national commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment
Risk management methodology is depicted below, where the risk level is measured as the product of Likelihood and Consequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>Occurrence</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Likely</td>
<td>The event is expected to occur in most circumstances</td>
<td>Twice a month or more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>The event will probably occur in most circumstances</td>
<td>Once every two months or more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possibly</td>
<td>The event might occur at some time</td>
<td>Once a year or more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>The event could occur at some time</td>
<td>Once every three years or more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare</td>
<td>The event may occur in exceptional circumstances</td>
<td>Once every seven years or more frequently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insignificant</td>
<td>An event leading to negligible damage or disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor</td>
<td>An event leading to limited damage or disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>An event leading to serious damage or disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>An event leading to critical damage or disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme</td>
<td>An event leading to massive or irreparable damage or disruption</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Level of Risk

- **Very High**: Immediate action required by executive management. Mitigation activities/treatment options are mandatory to reduce likelihood and/or consequence. Risk cannot be accepted unless this occurs.
- **High**: Immediate action required by senior/executive management. Mitigation activities/treatment options are mandatory to reduce likelihood and/or consequence. Monitoring strategy to be implemented by Risk Owner.
- **Medium**: Senior Management attention required. Mitigation activities/treatment options are undertaken to reduce likelihood and/or consequence. Monitoring strategy to be implemented by Risk Owner.
- **Low**: Management attention required. Specified ownership of risk. Mitigation activities/treatment options are recommended to reduce likelihood and/or consequence.

### Consequences

- **Almost Certain**: High
- **Likely**: High
- **Possible**: High
- **Unlikely**: High
- **Rare**: High
3. LESSONS LEARNED, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.1 LESSONS LEARNED

The Spotlight Initiative will also build on and respond to key lessons from Central and South Asia to address VAWG.

Pillar 1: Laws and policies

Some countries have specific action plans, policies or strategies to combat VAWG; however, these plans do not address all forms of violence and can be strengthened. Where no national action plans exist, they should be developed, taking into account all relevant aspects needed to effectively address the causes and consequences of VAWG. Legislation and plans should include budget for effective implementation and resourcing for coordination. Laws should also consider social norms.

UNFPA in Central Asia recommend that:

- In order to provide effective protection and prevention for victims and survivors, multi-sectoral response mechanisms need to be established. Primarily, this means that policies and services in all related fields should also be reviewed and assessed to adequately address the causes (e.g. prevailing cultural and patriarchal attitudes that manifest in gender- and rights-unfriendly social norms and cultural acceptance of violence), the consequences (e.g. lack of security; lack of access to justice, health, and social services sectors) and related factors (e.g. inadequate action from and capacity of service providers; lack of resources; and ineffective coordination, among others) of VAWG. The coordination of these multi-sectorial response mechanisms at all levels must be clearly defined and agreed upon. Furthermore, the establishment or strengthening of national referral mechanisms is of essential importance.

- When reviewing existing legislation for its adequacy in effectively preventing and eliminating VAWG, special attention must be paid to the need for laws to address all forms of violence (i.e. physical, sexual, psychological, economic). Moreover, adequate penalties for perpetrators and compensation for victims and survivors must be included. Where no laws on VAWG exist, there is an urgent need to get such laws passed and subsequently, implemented.425

The World Bank recommends that the many laws and policies across the (South Asian) region’s countries to prevent and address violence and gender inequality need to be rigorously implemented, and relevant institutions held accountable for enforcement. To do so, governments need to make addressing violence against women and girls more of a political priority than it has been to date.426

When reviewing existing legislation all forms of SGBV need to be incorporated and that adequate penalties for perpetrators should be included. Where no laws on VAWG exist, there is an urgent need to get such laws passed and subsequently, implemented.427

425 UNFPA, 2015
There is a need to ensure the monitoring, oversight and accountability for the implementation of laws by parliaments, the judiciary, national human rights institutions and civil society actors. This includes continuing to nurture and strengthen civil societies role in monitoring the implementation of laws, including judicial processes, policing, and health services.

The infrastructure and capacity offered by specialised courts, fast-track processes, and one-stop shops for survivors are promising. However, their usefulness and potential adoption elsewhere in Asia must be rigorously evaluated. Similarly, women police units are also an innovation, but they do not eliminate the need for all police officers to respond to cases of SGBV against women and girls. More research is needed to assess the effectiveness of specialised police units.

The region should eliminate discriminatory laws in the family code, remove discrepancies between civil laws and customary laws and practices in respect to women’s land rights.

Dedicated awareness-raising training on gender-based violence and other violations of women’s rights for the judiciary, police and public authorities at all levels is critical for effectively implementing legislation and ensuring women’s rights to justice. These training programmes should be long term and gender transformative in approach.

Providing legal assistance, establishing welfare centres, encouraging women’s self-help groups and disseminating information on their rights, especially in rural areas, would improve poor women’s access to justice.

Protection strategies should take into account the needs and vulnerabilities of particular groups of women such as age, marital status, location (residing in urban, town, rural or remote areas), health, ability, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or experience of poverty. Additional efforts in the form of adapted awareness-raising and special targeted services are needed to ensure that these groups can access the necessary information, services.

Pillar 2: Institutions

There is a need for adequate training for law-enforcement staff and health and social workers to develop capacities to prevent VAWG and guarantee access to justice and services for victims/survivors.

Institutional cultures which reinforce and condone discriminatory social norms must be addressed including increasing the representation and meaningful participation of women in institutions at all levels.

The World Bank recommends that:

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431 OECD, 2014.
432 OECD, 2014.
434 UNFPA, 2015.
435 UNFPA, 2015.
“Efforts to address violence against women and girls often are pigeonholed into ministries that focus on “women’s affairs” or reproductive health. Violence pervades all realms of women’s lives, however, as we demonstrate throughout this book. Thus, in order to successfully address violence, governments must institutionalize their efforts within all ministries that deal with various realms of life, rather than relegate and isolate such efforts to one or a few specific ministries. Bangladesh’s Multi-Sectoral Programme on Violence against Women (MSPVAW), ... is a good example of successful collaboration across ministries.”  

Pillar 3: Prevention

The following lessons have been documented by the Partnership for Prevention Programme:

- Project team, stakeholders and implementers need intensive capacity building
- Evidenced-based approaches should be contextualized but based on the following principles: addressing gender inequality, using a participatory approach to facilitate transformation among individuals, families and communities and maintaining a frequency of sessions to support transformation.
- Collaborate fully with communities throughout the process of planning and implementation to maximize buy-in and ownership. Staff and facilitators need to embrace the principles, be deeply committed to the logistical and technical needs of the project and be strongly supported throughout the project.
- It is challenging to measure social norm transformation at multiple levels, but projects that gathered quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated impacts of the interventions.
- Ethical approval for M&E is recommended given the sensitivity of EVAWG.
- Teams need ongoing capacity strengthening and technical advice which requires investment.

Prevention strategies should target messages and approaches to particular populations, for examples, girls and boys, young women and young men, women, men, disadvantaged groups of women or men, community and faith leaders, media. Multiple, coordinated inventions at multiple levels are required across the ecological model in are required.

Interventions should occur early in life and should engage survivors and those at risk as active participants. A range of interventions addressing child marriage and notions of masculinity and femininity among young girls and boys attest to the importance of intervening early before biased gender norms are internalized. Efforts to prevent child abuse and trafficking need to explicitly engage survivors and those at risk. Efforts to address other forms of violence also need to more explicitly engage children, adult women at risk, and survivors as active participants in designing and implementing programs, and not as passive recipients.

The role of men and boys cannot just be the recipients of messages or hailed as 'male champions' in prevention programmes, they need to be proactively engaged in prevention. The World Bank recommends that "Men and

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436 Solataroff and Pande, 2014
439 Ibid.
boys should be more systematically engaged at all levels and across all forms of violence. The only systematic and evaluated engagement of men and boys that we were able to identify in connection with violence prevention and response for South Asia was in the domain of intimate partner violence or interventions addressing norms of masculinity.440

Effective prevention strategies should counter prevailing gender stereotypes and sexism in all institutions and levels of society from the individual to the family, community and society as a whole. This should include tackling harmful masculinities and promoting progressive social norms in institutions, communities and the workplace. 441

Program implementors need the required skills to prevent SGBV and challenge and transform social norms that reinforce and perpetuate SGBV against women and girls.442

Prevention interventions should be grounded in evidence-based models which use available evidence and data from local sources and experiences to adapt and contextualise interventions in a systematic way. Interventions should address gender inequality, use participatory approaches and ensure that the duration and frequency of sessions to supports transformation of attitudes and behaviours. 443

Prevention interventions benefit from community partnership and staff and facilitators who embrace the intervention principles and skills for their own transformation and were strongly supported throughout their work.444

As SGBV against women and girls remains pervasive, integrating response support services for survivors of SGBV, or offering referrals to services, within prevention projects is necessary. 445

Although it can be challenging to quantify and measure social norm transformation at multiple levels of the socioecological model prevention interventions should gather quantitative and qualitative data to demonstrate impacts. 446

Particular lessons should be drawn from the “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region”.

Pillar 4: Services

Adequate training for law-enforcement staff and health and social workers is of utmost importance to develop capacities that can actively prevent VAWG and guarantee access to justice and services for victims and survivors. Prevention measures need to provide pro-active approaches to prevent potential victimisation. Sufficient funding that guarantees longer-term access to effective services for victims and survivors is an absolute necessity. These

440 Ibid.
441 UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.
443 Gevers, Taylor, Droste and Williams, 2018.
444 Gevers, Taylor, Droste and Williams, 2018.
446 Gevers, Taylor, Droste and Williams, 2018.
services should be adequately staffed and capacitated to prevent VAWG and protect victims and survivors. The awareness of these services among (potential) victims and survivors needs to be raised.\textsuperscript{447}

In order to provide effective protection and prevention for victims and survivors, multi-sectoral response mechanisms need to be established to deliver quality free services in line with international standards at local, national and regional levels. This should include specialised services for victims / survivors of SGBV and specialised services for children. \textsuperscript{448}

**Sufficient funding that guarantees longer-term access to effective services for victims / survivors is an absolute necessity.** These services should be adequately staffed and capacitated to prevent VAWG and protect victims / survivors. \textsuperscript{449}

The World Bank found that: “Research suggests that enhanced screening for intimate partner violence and referral services through health interventions are effective in enabling survivors of domestic violence to end abusive relationships (Miller et al. 2011); those who participate in such services also report significantly fewer threats of abuse (McFarlane et al. 2006). Screening for mental health is abysmal, however. Despite evidence that survivors of domestic violence are at increased risk of suffering from depression and other health issues, few health-related violence response interventions address depression or provide mental health counselling. Serious effort is needed to expand and evaluate the provision of such services.” \textsuperscript{450}

UNFPA in Central Asia found that, most shelters tend to be run by nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) whose work is primarily funded by external donors, is project-based, and is not sustainable in the long term. The same applies to other front-line services such as psychological counselling, self-help groups, legal aid, and toll-free helplines which are common throughout the region, but are not available 24/7. Minimum standards for the provision of services do not exist; the number of advocacy, counselling centres, and specialised rape crisis centres is insufficient; and long-term support for victims and survivors is generally non-existent\textsuperscript{451}.

Interventions need to be sensitive to particular needs and vulnerabilities of adolescents. We found little evidence of attention to adolescent vulnerabilities in interventions that consider adolescents together with girls and women at other stages of their lives. \textsuperscript{452}

**Pillar 5: Data**

There is an urgent need to improve data collection systems so that they include all forms of SGBV and disaggregate data by age, sex, area (urban/rural), and relationship between the perpetrator and victim / survivor.\textsuperscript{453} This data should be publicly available and accessible to a wide range of actors to raise awareness and get inputs to policy making and monitoring. \textsuperscript{454} It should also be analysed and used to inform plans, policies and programmes. In particular, work should be based on the kNOwVAWdata initiative and efforts should be made to expand and strengthen its interventions.

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[447]{UNFPA, 2015.}
\footnotetext[448]{UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.}
\footnotetext[449]{UNFPA, 2015; UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.}
\footnotetext[450]{Solataroff and Pande, 2014}
\footnotetext[451]{UNFPA, 2015. Regional Issue Brief; UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.}
\footnotetext[452]{Solataroff and Pande, 2014}
\footnotetext[453]{UNFPA, 2015. Regional Issue Brief; UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.}
\footnotetext[454]{UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP, 2018.}
\end{footnotes}
Pillar 6: CSOs/Women’s Movement

More enabling legislation is required for open up space for the recognition of the role of women’s rights and women’s civil society organisations in a number of countries.

The World Bank recommends that “Organizations addressing different forms of violence need to engage with each other to enable opportunities for learning. Even when risk factors and approaches are similar across forms of violence, there is little overlap or cross-fertilization across interventions or actors, resulting in a loss of learning.” The World Bank also found that CSOs and NGOs need to increase capacity in monitoring and evaluation of programs to end SGBV, including identifying and monitoring unintended consequences.

3.2 COMPLEMENTARITY, SYNERGY, AND DONOR COORDINATION

The Spotlight Initiative will build on relevant national and regional experiences in Central and South Asia, drawing on the progress made thus far.

EU delegations will play a critical role in country implementation, as well as at the regional level, including through their participation in Country and Regional Level Steering Committees. EU delegations will be a part of the process from the outset.

The UN will bring the combined expertise of a wide range of agencies, funds and programmes, and civil society to this Initiative; the three core agencies of the Spotlight Initiative: the UN Entity for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (UN Women), UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as the UN International Children’s Fund (UNICEF), will provide key technical support in the design and implementation of the Initiative, under the overall strategic coordination, leadership, and supervision of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG). Other UN agencies in collaboration with civil society and stakeholders, will participate in the implementation of Country Programmes based on their expertise and mandate. At the national level, each UN agency’s role will be further determined depending on regional and national context, existing partnerships as well as on country offices’ capacities. The UN system will work together in the region, including with existing EU supported initiatives, and other programmes working on promoting gender equality, and addressing intimate partner violence. The UN regional offices and the EU regional delegation will be engaged in the regional programme. EU Delegations in all selected countries will be intimately involved in the conceptualisation of national programmes.

Core to the Spotlight Initiative’s aims will be working with national governments. The Initiative will support governments’ relevant state institutions, including in the legislature and the judiciary. It will help address gaps and build on national advances in terms of national legislation, data development and dissemination, inter-institutional operation, and policy monitoring and implementation. Spotlight will align to and strengthen existing legislation, policies, structures and including services, so as to not duplicate or create new mechanisms. This approach ensures adherence to existing normative frameworks in country, while maximising resources, knowledge, and services, and better guarantees national ownership and sustainability. This includes the on-going pioneering work of civil society, which will inform and shape Country Programmes.

The Spotlight Initiative will engage CSOs as direct partners in outreach, advocacy, and implementation. CSOs with their national and grass-roots presence will be key to all elements of the Initiative, from project conceptualisation through to implementation. CSOs are key to the success and sustainability of the programs. The priority is supporting national CSOs and women’s rights organisations as opposed to International NGOs. The program will have a strong focus on building technical and organisational capacity of CSOs.

The development of Country and Regional Programmes in Asia will be directly coordinated with the regional Thematic Spotlight Programme focusing on South East-Asia, “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region”. The programme is being implemented jointly by ILO and UN
Women, in collaboration with UNODC and in close collaboration with the EU Delegation in Bangkok. After one year and a half of implementation, concrete results are already visible; (1) The programme brought together relevant ministries and agencies working on the diverse issues related to ensuring safe migration for women migrant workers, in order to develop work-plans, (2) Consultative dialogues to identify the priority areas for legislative and policy focus were carried in all the ten ASEAN countries, (3) Scoping studies and baseline assessments are being finalised, (4) implementation of the programme has started in target countries and at regional level, including activities such as revision of legislations, provision of trainings and financial support to CSOs.

The Spotlight Initiative will also build on, complement, and use the knowledge and lessons from all relevant, past, and existing UN (including inter-agency), EU, and other partners’ initiatives, global funds, programmes, and campaigns ranging in scope, purpose, and size. For example, relevant global and regional initiatives include, but are not limited to: Global Child Marriage Programme, Partners for Prevention, Global Programmes to End Child Marriage (UNICEF and UNFPA) and Son preference (UNFPA), UN Women Trust Fund to End VAW; Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund; Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence; UN SG’s UNITE Campaign to end VAW; The UN Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence and its accompanying guidance, including the Essential Services Package (UN Women, UNFPA, WHO UNDP and UNODC); UN Framework to Underpin Action to Prevent Violence (UN Women, ILO, WHO, UNDP, OHCHR); UN Regional Joint Programme for Asia; UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict; Global Database on Violence Against Women; UN Inventory on Violence Against Women; Virtual Knowledge Centre to end VAWG; UNFPA kNOWvVAW data initiative; The Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies; and the ILO Initiative to develop an international labour standard on violence and harassment in the world of work.

The Spotlight Initiative will also build on existing EU-funded Programmes and use the knowledge and lessons generated by these programmes to inform the design and implementation of Country and Regional Programmes: “Across Generation and Gender Borders - Communities Combatting Gender-Based Violence in Kyrgyzstan”, “Combating Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CCSEC) in Bangladesh”, “Improving the Framework for Reporting and Resolution of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Tajikistan”, “Global action to prevent and address trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants in Asia and the Middle East (GLO.ACT Asia and the Middle East)”, “Protecting children affected by migration in Southeast, South, and Central Asia” (implemented by UNICEF), “Advancing women’s rights through enhanced protection and self-employment”, “Elimination of discrimination against women based on the traditional ritual practises”.

The Spotlight Initiative will also build on and complement existing programmes with relevant components in selected countries in Central and South Asia.

3.3 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Diagram 3: Agenda 2030 key components
In Central and South Asia, the Spotlight Initiative’s theory of change incorporates key, transversal components, demonstrated in the figure above and in the text below:

✓ **Leaving no one behind.** All women and girls, irrespective of marginalisation and exclusion due to poverty, ethnicity, disability, religion, age, geography, migratory status, HIV status, profession, sexual orientation and gender identification, and other background, should live free of violence. Built into the design of the fund are measures to ensure meaningful participation of groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination. The programmatic framework emphasises efforts to address those furthest behind. Critical in the context of Central and South Asia will be ensuring that within the Country Programmes and the regional component, women and girls with disabilities, in remote rural areas, women in the sex industry, lesbian, bisexual, trans and third genders, those who are married-in to their husband’s communities, and those in conflict zones are engaged, are able to participate in project design, development and dissemination, and are reached.

✓ **Engagement and partnership with civil society, including community-based and sports organisations, faith-based organisations and leaders, women’s and youth organisations.** Support, engagement, and participation of women’s organisations, as well as community-based organisations, must be integrated at all levels of the Spotlight Initiative’s operation. These actors must be participants that support the development and implementation of programme activities, distilling knowledge and expertise to inform policy dialogue and public policies. They must also be direct recipients of funds meant to develop capacities and build strong movements in support of gender equality and the elimination of VAWG. Men and boys will be specifically involved, as well as traditional and community leaders, to understand and address prevailing social norms and prevent VAWG and harmful practices.

✓ **Women and girls’ empowerment**, defined as the ability to exercise agency, make autonomous decisions, and exercise rights, will be an overarching strategy. Support to social protection and economic empowerment initiatives with a survivor centric approach will be considered part of the overall Initiative, along with long-term recovery opportunities for women and girls’ survivors of violence.

✓ **In line with a rights-based approach, address SGBV against women and girls across the life cycle, including specific efforts to reach girls and adolescent girls.** It will be imperative to explicitly acknowledge the similarities and relationships between violence against women and violence against girls. It will be equally important to recognise that, while there are similarities, these are two distinct population groups, heterogeneous in terms of age, ethnicity, disability, poverty, and other descriptors. Therefore, strategies to promote their rights and address intimate partner violence / domestic violence must be tailored to age and context.

✓ **Do No Harm.** Whatever the programme or intervention, the well-being of survivors and all women and girls must be prioritised. All programming must take a survivor-centred approach and include on-going risk analysis and be conducted by trained staff.

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655 Women and girls in conflict or emergency affected contexts are also more vulnerable to violence. They are not specifically noted here because the Spotlight Initiative will not operate in these contexts.
### 4. DESCRIPTION OF ACTION

#### 4.1 OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

#### 4.1.1 Global Theory of Change

A diverse and interconnected set of interventions is required to address the continuum of violence faced by **women and girls**. Actions should include: instituting and reforming legal and policy frameworks; working to ensure institutions are gender-responsive; establishing comprehensive and evidence-based prevention programmes aimed at changing social norms and gender stereotypes; ensuring access to essential social, health and police and justice services that respond to victims / survivors; promoting the collection and use of diverse forms of quality, comparable data to inform public policy, advocacy, policy making, and delivery of complimentary services to improve prevention\(^{456}\) and finally, supporting autonomous women’s rights movements to influence, and monitor policy and to ensure accountability. A comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach is essential for fighting VAWG and harmful practices, and ensuring progress is maintained.

The graphic below shows six main areas for which outcomes will be achieved simultaneously and comprehensively, with the goal of ensuring that all women and girls, especially the most vulnerable, live a life **free of violence**. Implementation of outcomes will be emphasised given country needs, and the particular context of women and girls in that country or region. The path forward is informed by research, demonstrated practice and programmes, as well as other inputs.

**Diagram 4: Spotlight Initiative outcome areas**

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4.2 INTERVENTION LOGIC

4.2.1 Spotlight Initiative Intervention Logic Based on Key Outcome Areas

**Laws and policies (Pillar 1/Outcome 1):**
All women and girls will live free of SGBV because of strengthened policies and legislation,
if (1) women rights organisations/activists and SGBV experts are engaged in assessing, developing, and implementing policies and legislation and developing budgets for SGBV against women and girls, and (2) if laws, policies and budgets are implemented and (3) the implementation of legislation and policies are monitored,
then (4) an enabling legislative and policy environment on SGBV and other forms of discrimination can be put into place and translated into actions, guaranteeing the rights of women and girls,
because (5) effectively implemented legislative and policy frameworks address impunity and enable coordinated action, including in the areas of prevention, services, and data collection, and because (6) laws and programmes that integrate SGBV against women and girls services are developed, implemented, and monitored.

**Institutional strengthening (Pillar 2/Outcome 2):**
All women and girls will live free of intimate partner violence and will be able to realise their rights because of strengthened institutions and organisations that implement policies and legislation, and dedicate adequate resources,
if (1) relevant decision-makers and stakeholders in all sectors of the government are informed and mobilised to address SGBV against women and girls, and if (2) institutions at all levels and relevant stakeholders have strengthened capacity on SGBV against women and girls, and if (3) national and subnational bargaining processes are effective in overcoming the hurdles of collective action to address and prevent SGBV against women and girls and if (4) adequate budgets are allocated,
then (5) institutions will develop, coordinate, and implement programmes that integrate the elimination of SGBV against women and girls and address other SDG targets into development planning processes,
because (6) institutional change requires appropriate capacity and adequate funding as well as political engagement and leadership.

**Prevention programmes (Pillar 3/Outcome 3):**
All women and girls will live in an environment where they experience respectful social norms, free of stereotypes, harmful behaviours and practices, discrimination and violence,
if (1) multiple strategies such as community mobilisation, key stakeholders' engagement, and education strategies both in and out of schools, are carried out in an integrated and coordinated manner based on a shared understanding and approach in line with international standards and evidence on preventing SGBV against women and girls,
then (2) favourable social norms, attitudes, practices and behaviours will be promoted at the community and individual levels to prevent SGBV against women and girls,
because (3) multi-pronged prevention initiatives that mutually reinforce each other can effectively shift socio-cultural norms at all levels, including those affecting women's sexuality and reproduction.

**Essential services (Pillar 4/Outcome 4):**
All women and girls will have access to quality, essential services, including sexual and reproductive health services,
if (1) service providers have the capacity to deliver essential services, including services, and to prosecute perpetrators in line with international human rights standards and guidelines, and (2) if these services are well coordinated and made available and accessible to all women and girls, and if (3) women and girls are informed and empowered to exercise their rights to services, including SRH services and access to justice, then (4) women and girls who experience SGBV against women and girls will increase their use of services to recover from violence, while perpetrators will be prosecuted, because (5) underlying barriers to women and girls’ access to services have been addressed, (6) including in relation to gender and socio-cultural norms affecting women’s sexuality and reproduction.

Data and evidence (Pillar 5/Outcome 5):
All women and girl’s realities’ will be represented in reliable, quality and comparable data that will be used to inform legislation, policies, and services to address SGBV against women and girls, if (1) measurement and methodologies for SGBV against women and girls data collection are improved and strengthened (including monitoring and reporting requirements for SDG target 5.2 indicators), and (2) the capacity of national institutions to collect disaggregated VAWG data in line with globally agreed standards is strengthened, and (3) disaggregated data (including to extent possible on age, ethnicity, location, socio-economic status, and disability) are made accessible and disseminated to decision-makers and civil society, (4) then laws, policies, and programmes will be based on evidence and better able to respond to the specific context and realities of women and girls, including those most marginalised, (5) because interventions will be based on quality, disaggregated, and globally comparable data.

Women’s rights organisations, autonomous social movements, and civil society organisations (Pillar 6/Outcome 6):
All women and girls’ rights and voices will be included through an effective and inclusive women's movement, if (1) the knowledge, expertise and capacities of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements, and CSO, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination is drawn upon and strengthened, and (2) the space for these organisations is free and conducive to their work, and (3) multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks are established at local, national, regional, and global levels with these organisations, then (4) women’s rights organisations, autonomous social movements, and CSO will be able to influence, sustain, and advance progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment, and SGBV against women and girls policies and programmes will respond to the needs of all women and girls, including those facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, because (5) the activism of women’s rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSO, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination drives progress on ending SGBV against women and girls.

4.3 CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIA KEY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Given that in Asia, the Spotlight Initiative will support on-going and new regional and country level efforts to address SGBV, a conceptual framework has been developed. It articulates how these issues are intrinsically related, and how the Initiative can programme around their similar root causes, monitoring and evaluation challenges, and common intervention strategies. Evidence demonstrates that initiatives addressing SGBV that use multiple entry points across multiple sectors have more success in meeting their objectives. It should be noted
that under the Spotlight Initiative in Asia, there will be a strong component on addressing social norms and improving access to services with a focus on women who experience multiple forms of discrimination.

As noted earlier, there is a gap in implementing laws and policies. New laws and policies have been introduced in some countries while, in others, legislations are still required and the majority of legislation does not address the various types of violence within family contexts. Several countries do not classify marital rape as a form of violence, and few recognise the psychological abuse of women and girls in the family context. There is limited prosecution and conviction of trafficking women and SGBV and girls and many countries are still failing to address weak or non-existent legislation on early marriage: the legal age of marriage is lower for girls than boys in most countries.

While there is greater awareness about gender and SGBV against women and girls in Asia, cultural acceptance of violence, especially in the family remains unacceptably high. Patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes of the perceived role of women in society are common across the region, and such attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are entrenched in deeply rooted social norms. The socialization of strict masculine and feminine gender identities contributes to the reinforcement of men’s entitlement to engage in aggressive behaviour and act as the power holder and the predominant decision-maker which contributes to violence against women and girls being justified. Transforming harmful customary attitudes is essential to addressing VAWG and the support of and action by traditional, religious, and community leadership is critical to changing harmful social norms. Existing prevention programs based will be supported.

There are limited social services for survivors of GBV in all countries. Crisis services mainly are present in urban areas. Most crisis work is managed by NGOs who lack long-term sustainable funding. Where services do exist, they need further resources and staff require training on essential services standards.

There are data gaps in administrative data and comparable prevalence data. Existing data collection and research efforts have so far mainly focused on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child abuse and FGM, while at the same time, many forms of GBV are under-documented. This includes femicide: sexual violence in conflict; trafficking in women and girls; sexual harassment and violence in workplaces, schools and institutional settings, including health facilities, prisons and detention centres. Very limited information is available on vulnerable groups of women, including girls, elderly women, women with disabilities and women discriminated against on the basis of their sexuality. For instance, the lack of gender-disaggregated data on children who were involved in criminal proceedings as victims results in girls being largely invisible as a group, and their needs not taken into consideration. While there is more data on intimate partner violence, data remain limited for several aspects of intimate partner violence, including forms of violence other than physical and sexual—such as economic violence or controlling behaviour—and intimate partner violence faced by never-married women or older women.

The development of Country and Regional Programmes in Asia will be directly coordinated with the regional Thematic Spotlight Programme focusing on South East-Asia, “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region”. The programme is being implemented jointly by International Labour Organisation and UN Women, in collaboration with the EU Delegation in Bangkok.

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457 UNFPA, 2015.
At country level, the Initiative will focus its interventions on the following areas:

1) **Pillar 1: Laws and policies**
   - Strengthen legislation and policies on VAWG
   - Explore ways to harmonize customary, indigenous and/or religious law and the formal justice system
   - Develop sectoral policies and national plans of actions (multisectoral if possible)
   - Strengthen the implementation of laws and policies
   - Ability of women’s rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda

2) **Pillar 2: Institutions**
   - Strengthening analysis of EVAWG, operational culture, policies and programs amongst institutions and the organizations supporting them
   - Strengthening multi-sector, institutional coordination around EVAWG
   - Strengthening capacity of local-level institutions and organizations to implement EVAWG strategies or programmes
   - Enhance Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) for better EVAWG results
   - Establishing monitoring, oversight, and social accountability mechanisms

3) **Pillar 3: Prevention and social norms change**
   - Strengthening analysis of the root cause and drivers of VAWG amongst staff, including personal reflections on power.
   - Developing a Theory of Change and designing your program
   - Community Mobilization and Activism
   - School-Based Interventions
   - Women and Girls’ Empowerment Activities
   - Parenting Programs
   - Work with Couples
   - Advocacy Campaigns and Coordination

4) **Pillar 4: Services to survivors**
   - Adapt global standards and guidance for essential services at the country/local level and integrate in service delivery
   - Provide coordinated, multi-sectoral and quality essential services for VAWG survivors in line with quality standards and tools in selected countries
   - Strengthen capacity of service providers
   - Advocate for increased access to quality, coordinated, multi-sectoral essential services
   - Develop and cost an implementation plan for services
   - Monitor and evaluate implementation of service provision and adapt an implementation plan

5) **Pillar 5: Data**
   - Capacity strengthening of key partners (National Statistical Offices, service providers, women’s rights organizations, academia) to collect data on VAWG using a rights-based/feminist approach, in coordination with the kNOwVAWdata Initiative
   - Researching, analyzing and using quality comparable data on VAWG and HPs to inform decision making and program design, in coordination with the kNOwVAWdata Initiative
   - Sharing results with those who participated in the research and whose interests the research serves to discuss implications and ideas
6) **Pillar 6: civil society and the women’s movement**

- Strengthening multi-stakeholder dialogue, partnerships and advocacy and civil society ownership and leadership of development processes
- Community- and relationship-building
- Supporting civil society’s accountability role
- Robust core support and capacity-building of activists, women’s human rights defenders and progressive CSOs (Pillar 6 of the Spotlight Initiative (in particular Output 6.3) was designed with the sole intention of providing core support to national and, in particular, grassroots CSOs)
- Establish learning exchange platforms
- Mobilizing resources and strategic opportunities
- Analyzing power
- Use creative communications, technology and media

At regional level, the Initiative will focus its interventions on 4 pillars: Laws and policies, Institutional Strengthening, Prevention, Data (Pillar 1, 2, 3 and 5). See below section on Regional Component.
Spotlight Initiative Regional Results Framework (CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIA)

The Spotlight Initiative will ensure disaggregated data at a minimum by income, sex, age, ethnicity, disability and geographic location. Data disaggregation will also be pursued for other characteristics relevant in national contexts over the lifespan of the Country Programmes. “Other status” or characteristics include discrimination on the basis of age (with attention to youth and older persons), nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status (including HIV), place of residence, economic and social situation, and civil, political or other status.

Impact

All women and girls, particularly those most vulnerable, live a life free of violence

Impact Indicators

Direct

- SDG 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical and/or, sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age; (Tier II, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC)
- SDG 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner since age 15 in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence; (Tier II, UNICEF, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, UNODC)

Indirect

- SDG 16.2.3 Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18; (Tier II, UNICEF)

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

Outcome 1 Theory of Change (ToC)

If (1) women and SGBC including intimate partner violence experts are engaged in assessing, developing and implementing policies and legislation to end SGBV
(2) if the implementation of legislations and policies is monitored
then (3) an enabling legislative and policy environment on SGBV and other forms of discrimination is in place and translated into plans, guaranteeing the rights of women and girls
because (4) effectively implemented legislative and policy frameworks address impunity and provide for coordinated action, including in the areas of prevention, services and data collection
(5) laws and programmes that integrate ending SGBV into SRH services are developed, implemented and monitored
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Regional Outcomes</th>
<th>Regional Core Outputs and Output Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative and policy frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of VAWG and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans</td>
<td>Output 1.1 National and regional partners(^{461}) have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending SGBV and/or on gender equality and non-discrimination that respond to the rights of the most groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies’ recommendations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 1.1 Proportion of target countries with laws and policies on SGBV that adequately respond to the rights of all women and girls are evidence-based and in line with international human rights standards and treaty bodies’ recommendations(^{460})</td>
<td>• Indicator 1.1.1 Number of draft new and/or strengthened laws and/or policies on SGBV, and/or on gender equality and non-discrimination developed that are in line with international HR standards and respond to the rights of women and girls, particularly those facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 1.2 Proportion of target countries that have national and/or sub-national evidence-based, costed action plans and monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) frameworks on ending SGBV that respond to the rights of all women and girls and are developed in a participatory manner</td>
<td>• Indicator 1.1.2 Number of inquiries conducted by human rights institutions on SGBV and/or on gender equality and non-discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 1.3 Proportion of target countries that have laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women’s rights groups, autonomous social movements, CSOs and women human rights defenders/feminist activists to advance the human rights agenda</td>
<td>• Indicator 1.1.3 Proportion of draft laws and/or policies on SGBV and/or on gender equality and non-discrimination, which have received significant inputs from women’s rights advocates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{460}\) Progress towards international standards will be measured through an analysis of specific components (“degree to which”) as described in the Methodological Notes

\(^{461}\) Parliamentarians, human rights institutions and women’s right advocates

\(^{462}\) Key government/national decision makers (Heads of State, Finance Ministers, Ministries of Justice and Police, Security Ministers and relevant planning institutions) including women’s rights advocates
Regional Outcomes | Regional Core Outputs and Output Indicators
--- | ---
Output 1.3 National, sub-national and/or regional partners have greater knowledge and awareness of human rights obligations and are able to draft laws and/or policies that guarantee the ability of women’s rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda
- Indicator 1.3.1 Number of draft laws and/or policies developed that guarantee the ability of women’s rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda
- Indicator 1.3.2 Proportion of draft laws and policies that guarantee the ability of women’s rights groups, CSOs and women human rights defenders to advance the human rights agenda which have received significant inputs from women’s rights advocates

2. National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG and harmful practices, including in other sectors

Outcome 2 ToC

If (1) relevant decision-makers and stakeholders in all sectors of government are informed and mobilised to address SGBV
if (2) institutions at all levels and relevant stakeholders have strengthened capacity on ending SGBV
if (3) national and subnational bargaining processes are effective in overcoming the hurdles of collective action to address and prevent SGBV
if (4) adequate budgets are allocated
then (5) institutions will develop, coordinate and implement programmes that integrate the elimination of SGBV and other SDG targets into development planning processes,
because (6) institutional change requires appropriate capacity, adequate funding as well as political engagement and leadership to sustainably address SGBV

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463 Key government officials and women’s human rights defenders
464 Written submissions, public events and other visible actions
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Regional Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG and harmful practices, including in other sectors</td>
<td><strong>Output 2.1</strong> Key officials at national and/or sub-national levels in all relevant institutions[^465] are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to SGBV especially for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including in other sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 2.1 Proportion of countries that have functioning national and/or sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms at the highest levels for addressing SGBV that include representation from marginalised groups</td>
<td>• Indicator 2.1.1 Number of institutions that develop strategies, plans and/or programmes to prevent and respond to SGBV including for women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 2.2 Proportion of countries that allocate x% or more of national budgets to the prevention and elimination of all forms of SGBV</td>
<td>• Indicator 2.1.2 Proportion of countries with internal and external accountability mechanisms within relevant government institutions in place to monitor gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) and SGBV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 2.3 Proportion of countries where SGBV is integrated in 6 other sectors (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture) development plans that are evidence-based and in line with globally agreed standards</td>
<td>• Indicator 2.1.3 Number of strategies, plans and programmes of other relevant sectors that integrate efforts to end SGBV developed in line with international HR standards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 2.1.4 Proportion of other sectors’ programmes and/or development plans developed with significant inputs on SGBV from women’s rights advocates</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Output 2.2</strong> Multi-stakeholder national and/or sub-national coordination mechanisms established at the highest level and/or strengthened that are adequately funded and include multi-sectoral representation and representation from the most marginalised groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 2.2.1 Proportion of supported multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms established at the highest level and/or strengthened composed of relevant stakeholders, with a clear mandate and governance structure and with annual work plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Output 2.3</strong> Partners (Parliamentarians, key government officials and women’s rights advocates) at national and/or sub-national levels have greater knowledge, capacities and tools on gender-responsive budgeting to end SGBV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 2.3.1 Proportion of dedicated and multi-sectoral programmes developed that include proposed allocations of funds to end SGBV</td>
</tr>
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[^465]: E.g. justice, statistics, police, health, community based, etc.
3. **Gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent VAWG and harmful practices**

**Outcome 3 ToC**

If (1) multiple strategies such as community mobilisation, key stakeholders' engagement and education strategies are carried out in an integrated and coordinated manner based on a shared understanding and approach in line with international standards and evidence on preventing SGBV then (2) favourable social norms, attitudes and behaviours will be promoted at community and individual level to prevent SGBV because (3) multi-pronged prevention initiatives that mutually reinforce each other can effectively shift individual and socio-cultural norms including those affecting women's sexuality and reproduction.

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<tr>
<th>Regional Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent SGBV</td>
<td><strong>Output 3.1</strong> National and/or sub-national evidence-based programmes are developed to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in line with international standards, for in and out of school settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 3.1 Percentage of people who think it is justifiable for a man to (subject) beat his wife/intimate partner (to violence), by sex and age</td>
<td>• Indicator 3.1.1 Proportion of countries with draft new and/or strengthened Comprehensive Sexuality Education programmes in line with international standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 3.2 Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or girl to FGM, b. Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or child marriage</td>
<td>• Indicator 3.1.2 Number of young women and girls, young men and boys who participate in in and out of school programmes that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and exercise of rights, including reproductive rights [466]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 3.3 Proportion of countries with at least 3 evidence-based, transformative/comprehensive prevention strategies/programmes that address the rights of those marginalised</td>
<td><strong>Output 3.2</strong> Community advocacy platforms are established/strengthened to develop strategies and programmes, [467] including community dialogues, public information and advocacy campaigns, to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls’ sexuality and reproduction, self-confidence and self-esteem and transforming harmful masculinities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 3.2.1 Number of women, men, girls and boys who regularly attend community programmes to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls’ sexuality and reproduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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\[466\] Including peer-to-peer, promoting gender transformative and human rights'-based attitudes/beliefs, respectful and equitable relationships and the expression and exercise of their rights, including reproductive rights

\[467\] Including informing parenting skills around gender socialization through early childhood development programmes

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Regional Outcomes and Regional Core Outputs and Output Indicators

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<tr>
<td>and are developed in a participatory manner</td>
<td>• Indicator 3.2.2 Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 3.2.3 Number of men and boys who regularly attend gender transformative programmes addressing violent masculinities and men's violence towards women and girls in community centres, schools and other relevant spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Output 3.3 Decision-makers in relevant non-state institutions(^{468}) and key informal decision-makers(^{469}) are better able to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending SGBV, and for gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls’ rights</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 3.3.1 Number of news outlets that develop standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 3.3.2 Number of relevant non-state institutions that have developed and/or strengthened strategies/policies on ending VAWG and harmful practices and promoting gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls’ rights, including those groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, in line with international HR standards</td>
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4. Women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long-term recovery from violence

Outcome 4 ToC

If (1) service providers have the capacity to deliver essential services, including SRH services, and to prosecute perpetrators in line with international human rights standards and guidelines

(2) if these services are made available and accessible to women and girls

and if (3) women and girls are informed and empowered to exercise their rights to services (including SRHRs and access to justice)

then (4) women and girls who experience SGBV, will increase their use of services and recover from violence, while perpetrators will be prosecuted because (5) underlying barriers to women and girls’ access to services have been addressed

(6) including in relation to gender and socio-cultural norms affecting women’s sexuality and reproduction

\(^{468}\) Including the media, sports, workplaces, etc.

\(^{469}\) Will differ from region to region and includes decision makers from informal institutions, e.g. traditional, religious and community leaders
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women and girls who experience SGBV use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long-term recovery from violence</td>
<td><strong>Output 4.1</strong> Relevant government authorities and women’s rights organisations at national and sub-national levels have better knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services, including SRH services and access to justice, to women and girls’ victims and survivors of SGBV especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 4.1 Proportion of women, including those facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, who report experiencing physical or sexual violence who seek help, by sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 4.2.a Number of cases of SGBV reported to the police, b. proportions of cases reported to the police that are brought to court, c. proportions of cases reported to the police that resulted in convictions of perpetrators, all during a specific time period (e.g. past 12 months)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 4.3 Proportion of countries which have a dedicated management information system (MIS) on SGBV at the national level which can measure number of women/girl victims / survivors of violence that have received quality, essential multi-sectoral services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Output 4.2</strong> Women and girls’ victims and survivors of SGBV and their families are informed of and can access quality essential services, including longer-term recovery services and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 4.2.1 Number of women and girls’ victims / survivors of SGBV that have increased knowledge of and access to quality essential services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 4.2.2 Number of women and girls’ victims / survivors and victims and their families, including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms or discrimination, that have increased knowledge of and access to accompaniment/support initiatives, including longer-term recovery services</td>
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470 This indicator should be measured for women seeking services *within the past 12 months*, in order to measure progress and change over time—as lifetime prevalence of violence is not a sound measure of change over time.
5. Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of VAWG and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes

Outcome 5 ToC

If (1) Measurement and methodologies for SGBV data collection are improved and strengthened (including monitoring and reporting requirements for SDG target 5.2 indicators)

(2) the capacity of national institutions to collect disaggregated SGBV data in line with globally agreed standards is strengthened and (3) disaggregated data (including to extent possible on age, ethnicity, location, socio-economic status, disability) are analysed and made accessible and disseminated to be used by decision-makers and civil society

(4) then laws, policies and programmes will be based on evidence and better able to respond to the specific context and realities of women and girls, including those most marginalised

(5) because they will be based on quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data

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<tr>
<td>Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of SGBV collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.1 Proportion of countries that have globally comparable data on the prevalence (and incidence, where appropriate) of SGBV collected over time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.2 Proportion of countries with publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on various forms of SGBV at country-level</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.3 Proportion of countries where national statistics related to SGBV incidence and prevalence are disaggregated by income, sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 5.1 Key partners, including relevant statistical officers, service providers in the different branches of government and women’s rights advocates have strengthened capacities to regularly collect data related to SGBV in line with international and regional standards to inform laws, policies and programmes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.1.1 Number of National Statistical Offices that have developed/adapted and contextualised methods and standards at national level to produce prevalence and/or incidence data on SGBV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.1.2 Percentage of targeted countries with a system to collect administrative data on SGBV, in line with international standards, across different sectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 5.2 Quality prevalence and/or incidence data on SGBV is analysed and made publicly available for the monitoring and reporting of the SDG target 5.2 indicators to inform evidence-based decision-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.2.1 Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Indicator 5.2.2 Number of pieces of peer-reviewed qualitative research published</td>
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473 Statistics offices, justice, security and health sector
6. Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalisation, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and SGBV

Outcome 6 ToC

If (1) the knowledge, expertise and capacities of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSO, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination is drawn upon and strengthened, and (2) the space for women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSO including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination's expression and activity is free and conducive to their work, and (3) multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks are established at local, national, regional and global level with women's rights groups and autonomous social movements and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, then (4) women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSO will be able to influence, sustain, and advance progress on GEWE and SGBV policies and programmes that respond to the needs of all women and girls, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, because (5) the activism of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSO, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination is a crucial driver of progress on efforts to end SGBV.

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<tr>
<td>Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalisation, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and SGBV</td>
<td>Output 6.1 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs,(^{475}) have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 6.1 Proportion of countries where women's rights organisations, autonomous</td>
<td>• Indicator 6.1.1 Number of jointly agreed recommendations produced as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 6.1.2 Number of official dialogues with relevant government authorities with the meaningful participation of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{475}\) Including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Outcomes</th>
<th>Regional Core Outputs and Output Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>social movements and relevant CSOs, increase their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate on ending SGBV</td>
<td><strong>Output 6.2</strong> Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs are better supported to use social accountability mechanisms to support their advocacy and influence on prevention and response to SGBV and GEWE more broadly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 6.2 Proportion of countries where there is an increased use of social accountability mechanisms by civil society in order to monitor and engage in efforts to end SGBV</td>
<td>• Indicator 6.2.1 Number of supported women's right groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Indicator 6.3 Proportion of women’s rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, report having greater influence and agency to work on ending SGBV</td>
<td><strong>Output 6.3</strong> Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalisation have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement and monitor their own programmes on SGBV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 6.3.1 Number of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalisation that have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement, monitor and evaluate their own programmes on SGBV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Indicator 6.3.2 Number of women’s rights groups and relevant CSOs using knowledge products developed by the participating UN agencies in the design of their own programmes on SGBV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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474 Including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization

476 E.g. the CEDAW, UPR shadow reports, and social accountability mechanisms such as social audits, citizen report cards, etc.

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5. IMPLEMENTATION

The Investment Plan serves as the regional programmatic framework for Central and South Asia under the Spotlight Initiative Fund terms of reference (ToRs) and its global theory of change. It defines the thematic approach for the region and sets priority countries and actions. The Central and South Asia Investment Plan is also the framework for any earmarked contributions to the Central and South Asia Spotlight Initiative. With regard to the EU contract, the Investment Plan will be included as Annex I C: Description of action for Central and South Asia. The overall budget for Central and South Asia will be specified in the revised Annex III: Budget of the Action. For additional contributors, the Standard Administrative Agreement to be concluded with other contributors can also allow for an earmarking to the region and its Investment Plan.

The implementation period for the Spotlight Initiative started on 1 July 2017 and will end on 30 June 2023. The Central and South Asia Investment Plan was developed beginning of 2019. The Country Programmes are expected to launch their 36-month implementation at the end of 2019. Up to $200,000 in costs per Country Programme and Regional Programme are eligible as of 1st October 2019, subject to the financing decision to be taken by the Commission.

The implementation modalities for the Investment Plan are described in the Spotlight Initiative ToRs and in the Description of Action Annex I A of the PAGODA agreement. The implementation will be carried out under the oversight of the Spotlight Initiative joint governance framework, the Governing Body, and the Operational Steering Committee, with the support of the Secretariat (Technical and Management Units) and the Administrative Agent (UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office). The Investment Plan is to be implemented through a series of Joint Programmes: one Regional Joint Programme and initially in up to three Country Programmes (in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). Reserve countries (Bangladesh, Nepal and Uzbekistan) are included in the region in case of budgetary reallocation or if new contributors join the Spotlight Initiative.

At the country-level, the Country Programmes are developed following UN Development Group (UNDG) guidelines for Joint Programming, 478 and the key recommendations from the Secretary-General’s report on repositioning the UN Development System. 479 The Joint Programmes modality intends to achieve greater system-wide coherence, the most adequate way to implement the comprehensive approach set by the Spotlight’s theory of change. It will take into account the principles of national ownership, alignment with national priorities, and the comparative advantage of Recipient UN Organisations (RUNOs) in the country. The Joint programmes will also need to meet the quality standards of the EU as well as the communication and visibility requirements set by the Pagoda.

The development and implementation of Country Programmes will be led by the UN Resident Coordinators, in line with their enhanced leadership and responsibility accorded by the UN Development System reform agenda, and in partnership with the EU. The RUNOs will be requested to develop comprehensive Country Programmes focused on achieving sustainable development.

The following principles will be followed when configuring Country Programmes:

- The UN Resident Coordinator, in close consultation with the Head of the EU Delegation, should identify the relevant Recipient UN Organisations of his/her respective Country Programmes, based on their

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477 As agreed during the 3rd Operational Steering Committee, Zambia and Chad will be included in the list of reserve countries. Further decisions will be made during the next Operational Steering Committee regarding the three remaining reserve countries to be included for the region.
mandate, cost effectiveness of their interventions, capacity to lead and implement (including geographical presence, experience, results, knowledge and technical expertise, capacity to scale up and enable transformative actions) and other relevant variables.

- The UN at country-level, led by the UN Resident Coordinator will ensure that the EU Delegation is involved throughout the entire CP development process and that its development is a joint effort.

- Each Country Programme will be designed on the basis of the overall country vision, fully in line with the Central and South Asia Investment Plan and estimated financial needs to implement the Spotlight Initiative’s Pillars.

- Ideally, the Country Programme should be implemented maximum by three to five Recipient UN Agencies (or co-delegates).

- Each agency may participate in more than one pillar of the Country Programme, if justified by the nature of the activities.

- The Country Programme coordination will be overseen by the UN Resident Coordinator’s office reporting to the UN Resident Coordinator. The Resident Coordinator will draw from the technical UN agencies to ensure coherent and strong programmes on VAWG are developed and implemented.

- The Country Programme will build on complementarities and will bring together the added value of the RUNOs. Its design should ensure that components build on each other, promote mutual accountability on the delivery of the results, and avoid implementation in silos.

- Complementarity of RUNOs’ interventions should be ensured to achieve results and geographical coverage to reach the target population, provide required capacity, and cover multiple programme areas.

- Interventions led by RUNOs must have the ability to: advance gender equality; prevent and respond to violence; and link to existing coordination mechanisms such as the Gender Theme Group.

- Establishment of strong results groups, coordination mechanisms including a multi-stakeholder Country Steering Committees, and reinforcement of existing sector/cluster groups should be undertaken.

- All stakeholders, including governmental and CSO (in particular, women’s organisations) or networks ready to provide adequate support (resources, time, and willingness to work together) should be included. Distinct roles and responsibilities should be defined.

- The civil society representatives should: be part of the design of the Country Programme; a member of the Country and Regional Programme Steering Committees (20 percent representation); receive dedicated resources under pillar six (minimum 10-15%); and be mainstreamed in implementation across all other pillars.

- Development of financing strategies that promote innovative and sustainable solutions should be undertaken.

The development of the Country Programmes will follow key steps described in the Spotlight Initiative TOR and shown in the diagram below. Those steps are taken simultaneously by the design teams.
The Secretariat of the Spotlight Initiative will provide a Country Programme template, a tentative work plan, and a guidance note to support the development of each component. The Secretariat will be available for technical support for each priority country.

Once a country or regional programme is approved, it will be overseen and guided by a multi-stakeholder Country/Regional Steering Committee, co-chaired by the designated government official and the UN Resident Coordinator. At the regional level, a multi-stakeholder Regional Steering Committee will be established to oversee and guide the implementation of the Regional Programme and provide overall guidance for the Initiative at regional level. To the extent possible, existing structures, such as UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) results groups and regional working group on gender will be engaged. Connections and links will be forged with other pooled funds or Joint Programmes operating at the country-level. Civil society representatives on the Country/Regional Steering Committees will be nominated by the respective Country/Regional Civil Society Reference Groups comprising a diverse range of civil society stakeholders working at the country/regional level on ending VAWG.

These structures may need to be adjusted to meet the participatory characteristics of the Initiative, as indicated above. In the event a Regional Programme covers multiple countries, adjustments can be made to establish a regional coordination mechanism composed only of EU-UN representatives from regional offices. To maintain a light governance structure, country-level/regional steering committees should not be established in parallel for the same Joint Programme.

The main task of the Country-Level/Regional Steering Committee (where regional programmes are applicable) is to guide and oversee the implementation of each Joint Programme by fulfilling the following roles and responsibilities:

Diagram 5: Country Program Spotlight Initiative ToR: Key Steps
✓ Ensure proper communication and coordination on the UN-EU Spotlight Initiative at the country/regional levels and support participatory implementation of the Country Programme, in alignment with national priorities, agreed UN strategic programming frameworks (UNDAF), and EU priorities;

✓ Approve programme annual work plans, review output level results, and adjust implementation set-up;

✓ Review and approve periodic and annual country/regional programme narrative reports submitted by RUNOs;

✓ Approve any programmatic or budgetary (revisions of less than 25 percent of the value of the budget) programme revisions within the limits of the approved programme document by the Operational Steering Committee;

✓ Review risk management strategies and ensure the programme is proactively managing and mitigating risks;

✓ Manage stakeholder relationships at the country-level.

Country-Level Steering Committees will be country-specific and aligned with the priorities and dynamics of each country. This reflects Initiative principles, along with inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decisions, country participation, and ownership. It also ensures a manageable size (about 10 persons) to permit efficient decision-making. The following members should be part of Country-Level Steering Committees:

✓ UN Resident Coordinator
✓ EU Representatives
✓ Government and participating national organisations
✓ RUNOs
✓ 20% of the committee should be the CSO representatives from women’s civil society organisations/networks with a strong track record of working on ending VAWG and who are nominated by the Country/Regional Civil Society Reference Groups.

Other stakeholders may be invited to participate in planning, deliberation, and monitoring roles of the Committee. This includes representatives from academic and research institutions, local communities, and/or the private sector.

One critical aspect of the Country Programme will be to align the governance structure with the UN Development System reform agenda and the best practices promoted by the UNDG for a pass-through modality, with the UN Resident Coordinator and RUNOs accountable for the overseeing implementation within each country. They will assume the following responsibilities:

The UN Resident Coordinator:

• Provides overall strategic direction and oversight of the implementation;

• Has decision-making authority: approves the Country Programme document and workplans, and submits the Country Programme to the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee; confirms selection of RUNOS and the convening agency;

• Serves as a co-chair of the Spotlight Initiative Country Programme’s Steering Committee (with
Government), the highest body for strategic guidance, fiduciary and management oversight, and coordination;

- Facilitates collaboration between RUNOs, the host government and the EU delegation for the implementation of the Country Programme;
- Leads the resource mobilisation for the Country Programme;
- Oversees implementation progress and addresses problems; reviews and approves progress reports, budget revisions/reallocations, and evaluation reports.

**The Resident Coordinator’s Office in full synergy with the RUNOs’ technical skills:**

- Coordinates the Country Programme implementation;
- Accountable for coordination of programmatic activities and narrative reporting;
- Coordinates activities of the UN Country Team’s established structures, which will carry on assigned functions for operational and programmatic coordination: including coordination of Country Programme partners, coordination and production of annual work plans, and coordination of monitoring of annual targets;
- Provides administrative support with Country Steering Committee meetings;
- Facilitates Country Programme audits and evaluation;
- Involved in resource mobilisation;
- Involved in day-to-day coordination.

**RUNOs - Accountable for programmatic and financial outputs implementation:**

- Operate in accordance with their own regulations, rules, directives, and procedures;
- Assume full programmatic and financial accountability for funds disbursed by the Administrative Agent;
- Participate in the development of the Country Programme document by providing technical inputs and knowledge in their mandate area;
- Develop annual workplan and budgets for their respective outputs, implements the activities and delivers outputs, reports back on narrative and financial achievements;
- Fully accountable to the Resident UN Coordinator, the Spotlight Initiative Office Steering Committee (OSC), and the donors.

### 6. COUNTRY SELECTION CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY FOR COUNTRY SHORTLISTING

The selection of the Spotlight Initiative countries in Central and South Asia followed a systematic and process, which involved the UN and EU at global, regional and country levels. The result was the selection of 2 countries in Central and 1 country in South Asia to implement Spotlight. The 3 countries that were selected are Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This was done using the following criteria, along with the accompanying weighting, as approved by the Operational Steering Committee of (OSC) the Spotlight Initiative:

The first two criteria are considered primary criteria and the remainder are secondary criteria.
Stage I: Application of Primary Criteria

The first stage involved the application of the primary criteria to all 13 countries eligible to receive Spotlight Initiative funds from the European Development Fund in Central and South Asia. The focus area for Central and South Asia was focused on Sexual and Gender Based Violence. A total of 10 different indicators were identified and weighted to finally arrive at a composite measure of prevalence for each country.

These following indicators were the key primary indicators (KPI) for SGBV.

Table 6: Key Primary Indicators for SGBV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KPI</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sexual and Gender Based Violence (physical and/or sexual violence committed by a current/former intimate partner)</td>
<td><em>UNPA KnowVAWdata; DHS where KnowVAW data unavailable</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Prevalence of Physical Violence against Women and Girls (any perpetrator)</td>
<td><em>UNPA KnowVAWdata; DHS where KnowVAW data unavailable</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Women Justified Wife Beating</td>
<td><em>DHS, MICS</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods</td>
<td><em>DHS, MICS</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Gender Inequality Index indicators</td>
<td><em>GII</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data standardisation and weighting

The data was standardised and where data was unavailable for countries from the sources specified above, the country’s composite prevalence measure was calculated in a manner that did not penalise it for the data gaps.

Stage II: Application of Secondary Criteria

The secondary criteria categories and weights, as approved by the OSC, are noted in the table below.

Table 7: Country Selection Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country selection criteria</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Composite Prevalence Indicators</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. GII indicators</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Level of government commitment towards ending VAWG</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Absorption capacity at national level</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Presence and capacity of UN Country Teams to deliver</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Presence and capacity of EU delegations in country to engage</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Enabling environment in country in particular for civil society</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Existing initiatives on VAWG at regional/country-level with the potential to be scaled-up</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Possibility to produce ‘models’ for replication in other countries/capacity to influence others in the region (i.e. domino or support effect)</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. REGIONAL COMPONENT

A regional component of the Spotlight Initiative for Central Asia and Afghanistan will support and enhance country-level strategies for eliminating SGBV against women and girls. The regional level serves as a bridge between the global and the country levels. Expertise at the regional level comprises unique knowledge of the countries in the region and regional specificities and dynamics. It aims to add value, maximise investment, and contribute to the scale, sustainability, visibility, lessons learned and replication of such programming. It will address aspects of SGBV that extend beyond borders and require regional engagement. Specifically, the regional component will work across four pillars of the Spotlight Initiative i.e. Laws and Policies, Institutions, Prevention and Data.

While the regional component is focusing on Central Asia and Afghanistan, it is expected that dedicated knowledge management and knowledge exchange activities will be developed with other regions, particularly with South Asia. Opportunities to share lessons-learned from programmes implemented in South Asia on Gender Equality and violence against women and girls should be developed. The programme will also support networking opportunities from these two subregions, between Governments, between CSOs and bringing together CSOs, Governments and other experts.

Similarly working through regional civil society organisations and NGOs including youth organisations and organisations of persons living with disabilities, the regional programme will build capacity for advocacy and implementation of initiatives on SGBV among regional level civil society organisations and networks in the region. In this regard, dedicated support to the women’s movement and activities targeting civil society as “agents of change” will be channelled through United Nations Trust Funds with a dedicated envelope of 3.2 million euros, covering the Central Asia Region (5 countries) as well as Afghanistan. As indicated above, no activities are foreseen under pillar 6 in the regional programme.

The regional component will be overseen and guided by a multi-stakeholder Regional Steering Committee and will include civil society representatives who have been nominated by the Regional Civil Society Reference Group. The Regional Civil Society Reference Group will be comprised of a diverse range of civil society stakeholders working at the regional level, including those representing women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, to ensure adherence to the principle of leaving no one behind.

The development of Regional Programmes in Asia will be coordinated with activities planned under Spotlight Country Programmes in the region and with the regional Thematic Spotlight Programme focusing on South East Asia, “Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers’ rights and opportunities in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region” and concrete synergies, knowledge exchange opportunities and sharing of lessons-learned will be drawn. The programme is being implemented jointly by International Labour Organisation and UN Women, in collaboration with United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and in close collaboration with the EU Delegation in Bangkok.

Vision for Regional Programme

Pillar 1: Legislative and Policy Frameworks

The adoption and / or initiation of policies and strategies are an important step in terms of political commitment and civic activity and have helped develop an institutional basis for promoting gender equality, expanding socio-political opportunities for women, promoting women’s health and economic empowerment. This Spotlight programme in Central Asia and Afghanistan will analyze and promote cross-country sharing of best practices in the legislation in the region, CEDAW Concluding Observations, the Istanbul Convention and other international practices to propose and promote legislative amendments that significantly improve the legislative framework in each of the countries to prevent and respond to VAWG also in compliance with SDG commitments.
Indicative interventions:

- Provision of concrete recommendations to the amendments of legislative frameworks (including laws, by-laws and regulations) in each Central Asian country to prevent and criminalize all forms of violence to ensure legal aid, compensation, effective protection orders, restraining orders, proportionate and dissuasive sanctions, and the application of aggravating circumstances based on CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, SDGs, and international best practices.

- Promote ratification and signature of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

- Support development of indicators and benchmarks as an integral part of a monitoring and evaluation system of the national policies related to violence against women and girls (adaptation of relevant SDGs’ indicators).

- Support countries in conduction of national inquiries by National Human Rights Institutions to examine the situation around SGBV.

**Pillar 2: Institutional Strengthening**

There does not currently exist formal regional institutions that play a role in coordinating work done on violence against women and girls in the Central Asia region. As a result, countries in the region are lacking both a forum for sharing information and updates about their respective efforts in this regard, as well as a repository for knowledge management, sharing of good-practices and evidence.

However, there exist flexible mechanisms of exchange that have existed over the last few years and that are presenting positive prospects. In particular, a political process was initiated through the regional conference organized by the Government of Kyrgyzstan with support from UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and UNICEF: “Turning policies into action: eliminating gender-based violence against women and girls in Central Asia”. The conference brought together lawmakers, government officials, civil society and experts from all countries of Central Asia working to promote legal and policy measures to address gender-based violence. The event promoted coalition-building to exchange good practice and address persisting and emerging challenges.

Under this pillar, the Spotlight Initiative will propose to strengthen flexible mechanisms of coordination, knowledge management and technical assistance across the region. This Pillar will also focus on supporting the design, testing and dissemination of knowledge products and trainings to foster change within national and subnational institutions to address power imbalance and gender equality as a foundation for their work on EVAWG, as well as upstream (i.e. at the highest level of Government) national/sub-national coordination mechanisms for addressing VAWG, integration of VAWG in other key sectors, and gender-responsive budgeting aimed at increasing budgets for VAWG prevention and response.

Indicative interventions:

- Consultation of Governments, civil society organizations, academia and other relevant actors to establish structures of coordination, knowledge management and technical assistance on sexual and gender-based violence and other forms of violence against women and girls in the subregion.

- Provide Technical assistance in integration of the model of coordinated multi-sectoral response to SGBV and design tools, SOPs and knowledge products on the adaptation at regional level of the Global Essential Services Package.

- Develop regional training materials for frontline professionals (health, police, psychosocial) on quality standards and principle of MSR in line with the ESP.
- Develop a regional online course on institutional strengthening and multi-sectoral response to GBV, including case studies scenarios (virtual survivors) to practice the decision-making process during intervention

**Pillar 3: Prevention and social norms**

Public tolerance of violence against women is high in Central Asian countries. For example, according to a recent Oxfam study conducted in six districts of Tajikistan, 96.5% of men interviewed and 71.5% of women consider that women must tolerate violence for the benefit of the family. Cultural bias, patriarchal mindsets, religious beliefs, and stereotypes persist against women and girls in Central Asian countries and are often perpetrated in the media. Sex education, nor comprehensive sexuality education in school – addressing gender stereotypes, values etc. – is not taught and often women are pressured to marry young and to bear several children starting at a young age. Given the opportunities that social media offers, there is a need to strengthen awareness campaigns and work with men and boys to address negative attitudes, in particular in rural areas, and in local languages to reach the most vulnerable.

Indicative interventions:

- New strategies for youth and communities, in particular rural, developed to address gender social norms and prevent violence and implement it through (pre)schools, families, community, and social media.
- Work with religious leaders to promote zero-tolerance to violence.
- Men and boys engaged in speaking out against violence against women and girls and taking action to prevent violence.
- Regional public advocacy campaigns through social media and mainstream media in the region, addressing the key beliefs and stereotypes on gender equality, VAWG and related issues, including through innovation and use of digital solutions

**Pillar 5: Data availability and capacities**

Kazakhstan is the only country in the region to have carried out a comprehensive prevalence study on Violence Against Women supported by UNFPA, UN Women, and WHO, based on the WHO internationally-accepted methodology and standards. The report was finalized and disseminated in 2017 and includes a background on disparities across each of the 16 regions of Kazakhstan. Other Central Asian countries are in the process of conducting a survey (Turkmenistan) which aims to have violence questions included or have expressed an interest to conduct a prevalence of violence survey (Tajikistan) if funding were available. In Kyrgyzstan, the Gender in Society Perception Study (GSPS) has been launched with the support from UN Women, UNFPA and IOM. This nationwide study would be the source of information on gender inequality risk factors, gender-based violence and threats to inclusive peace building, including the risk of women’s involvement in activities of radical religious and non-religious groups.

Given the underreporting and the sensitivity surrounding VAWG, technical and financial support is required to carry out comprehensive studies and to promote cross-country comparability and to promote the use of official, centralized databases which would provide comprehensive statistics on levels and types of violence against women and girls.

Indicative interventions:

- Support the National Statistics Committees in all Central Asian countries and Afghanistan in methodology and baseline development, data collection and analysis on VAWG and applying analyzed data to strengthen policy implementation/revision, in coordination with the kNOwVAWdata Initiative.
- Support in reporting against relevant (gender) SDG indicators
- Support the responsible government bodies (e.g., Ministry of Interior) in improvement of the existing data
generation system on VAW cases and making information regular available through the Ministry’s web-
resources, in coordination with the kNOwVAWdata Initiative.
- Support open data sharing between governments, public bodies, think tanks and the non-profit sector to
unlock opportunities for learning, analysis, and invention to monitor trends, assist in decision-making, and
help in practical ways in prevention and combating VAWG Support mobile apps for girls and women to
report on sexual harassment and violence, based on “responsible design” principle to ensure vulnerable
groups are not at risk from using the product. 480
- Support the set-up of an integrated M&E mechanism including collection of administrative data, in
coordination with the kNOwVAWdata Initiative.

8. COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY

Strong communications and visibility will be central to the Initiative’s success. This includes partnering with civil
society, the media, influencers and other key stakeholders to raise public awareness on VAWG, promote the
Initiative’s impact, change attitudes and behaviours, and ensure visibility for its donors and partners.
Spotlight Initiative communications will focus on the stories of survivors, using a rights-based, survivor centred
model of storytelling (Issue > action > impact). Each Spotlight Initiative team will be expected to submit a
minimum of five human interest stories per calendar year.

All communication and visibility activities at country and regional levels will be aligned with the Spotlight
Initiative’s Global Communication and Visibility Strategy and implemented by the UN Resident Coordinators and
engaged members of Country Teams.

A regional and national visibility plans will be developed for each programme to outline the communications
objectives, messages, audiences, content, channels, partnerships, branding, resources, monitoring and
evaluation, and reporting requirements specific to each content.
Spotlight Initiative communication and visibility activities will build on existing global and regional activities
including the prominent featuring of Spotlight branding displayed during consultations with government and civil
society, as well as Spotlight Initiative related videos and messaging being shared across Spotlight, EU, and UN
communication channels.

Each Spotlight Initiative regional/country programme should have a minimum of one dedicated communications
officer to lead and coordinate communications and visibility efforts. The communications officer may be located
in the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office or within a RUNO.

The Spotlight Secretariat will provide technical support and share -- on a regular basis -- messaging, talking points,
communications products, materials, and guidance as part of its Global Communication and Visibility Plan, with
Resident Coordinators and Country Teams, and inform public outreach tools at regional and country levels.

Country teams are being encouraged to submit photos and videos, stories, and commentary so that Spotlight,
through its UN, EU, and stakeholder networks can disseminate broader dissemination and build public awareness.

Review the Communications and Visibility Guide for more information.

480 For instance, HarassMap is a SMS-to-web solution which means women can anonymously report sexual harassment they face in Egypt by sending a
simple text that is then displayed on a public map on the website. Ec Shlirë (Walk freely) in Kosovo allows real-time reporting of sexual harassment
incidences. The app also provides the users with data analysis tools to highlight trends and patterns of harassment, with the objective of engaging public
authorities to act in order to fight against gender-based violence and sexual harassment.
9. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A full monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed as part of the country and regional programmes. RUNOs are responsible for continuous monitoring and evaluation of programmes, while the Technical Unit of the Spotlight Initiative will oversee the process, providing advice on proper performance indicators and methods of data collection and analysis. The Management Unit will also consolidate country-level information received into a central, results-based management system. This system gathers performance data at the outcome and output levels, linking programme-related and financial result indicators so evaluators can better measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the Spotlight Initiative.

**Result indicators will be specific to each programme.** For outcomes, shared indicators will be defined in the overall or regional result frameworks as outlined in investment plans. Programme stakeholders will be obligated to report against selected outcome indicators. The evaluation of performance indicators will take external factors into account, as well as previously identified assumptions and risks in the theories of change. RUNOs are responsible for gathering data—a mandatory element reflected in every annual report.

For all indicators identified at input, outcome and output level, baseline information will be identified, as well as targets and milestones. RUNOs will be responsible to identify existing baseline data (from existing national surveys on VAWG, DHS, MICS, other national sources) as well as to undertake baseline studies/data collection when data is not already available. When funding is available, RUNOs and counterpart government are initiating such data collection exercises to obtain baseline data as early as possible. In other cases, baseline studies will be included in the country/regional programme document and supported through these programmes’ budget.

**External evaluations are required to assess the performance of each programme and will be conducted mid-term and, if necessary, at the time of project closure.** Evaluations are used to analyse programme performance and test the Spotlight Initiative’s global and regional theories of change.

The Operational Steering Committee will commission mid-term and final independent evaluations to assess the overall performance of the Spotlight Initiative, inclusive of its design, management, and performance against global objectives. During this evaluation, specific recommendations may be provided to the Operational Steering Committee to guide any revisions to the theory of change, governance arrangements, and/or programming cycles.
10. FINANCIAL ALLOCATION

The country programmes approved by the Operational Steering Committee are defining in detail what the approved budget according to each country results framework and theory of change. The funding from the Spotlight Initiative is allocated by the Operational Steering Committee in two distinct phases.

Each Joint Programme document includes a specific workplan (with outputs and relevant performance indicators) and budgets breakdown for Phase I covering 70 percent of the Spotlight allocation to the Region. The implementation duration for phase I is expected to be no more than 24 months (December 2021).

The second phase of the Spotlight funding will be allocated for each country depending on their overall performance and needs. The countries will have the opportunity to trigger a request for a second term allocation once they reached 70 percent expenditures under Phase I. The following criteria will be applied by the OSC for the Phase II allocation:

- The level of engagement of the respective governments and civil society organization;
- The results of the mid-term evaluation and the performance against the output and outcome indicators;
- The financial delivery of the Joint Programme;
- The robustness of the Phase II proposed programmatic scope and needs;
- The sustainability and innovative approach proposed.

In accordance with the Special Conditions of the Contract Article 7.1.5 b iii) and Article 7.1.5 c), the Operational Steering Committee approves each programme budget and its subsequent amendments. Budget amendments can be reflected in subsequent addendum to the contract.
## ASIA CPs and Regional Programme BUDGETS, USD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
<th>KYRGYZSTAN</th>
<th>TAJIKISTAN</th>
<th>TOTAL USD</th>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Spotlight (USD)</td>
<td>RUNO Contrib. (USD)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Staff and other personnel</td>
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<td>2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials</td>
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<tr>
<th>UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES</th>
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<th>UNFPA</th>
<th>UNDP</th>
<th>UNWOMEN</th>
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### Kyrgyzstan

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<th>UNICEF</th>
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### Tajikistan

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<td>Spotlight USD</td>
<td>RUNO Contrib. USD</td>
<td>Spotlight USD</td>
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<td>1,627,959</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
12. COUNTRY PROGRAMME PROFILES

KYRGYZSTAN

Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs): UNDP, UNW, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNODC

Programme Partner(s):
- UN Programme Partners: OHCHR, IOM & WHO
- NGOs, CSOs, women’s rights organizations, CSOs representing vulnerable groups such as migrant women, PWDs, LGBTI, etc.), FBOs,
- Others: Media, Academia, private sectors, Associations (i.e. Kyrgyz Associations of Women Judges, Women’s Police Association, Association of Crisis Centres, trade unions, Kyrgyz Alliance on Family Planning sub-national service providers and related institutions (health centres, etc.), schools (including Madrasa)

Programme Location (provinces or priority areas): National focus for key activities working at the national government and institutional levels as well as in policy reform/advocacy. Another 3 districts (TBC) for specific work in prevention and community mobilization.

Programme Description: The Spotlight Initiative (SI) in Kyrgyzstan will apply a comprehensive set of approaches based on social innovation, Human Rights, multi-sectoral inclusive response and survivor-centred principles to the planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of interventions across the SI’s six Outcome Areas. Particular emphasis will be placed on integrating the voices and experiences and solutions of women and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) principle of Leave No One Behind (LNOB). The SI in Kyrgyzstan has sought to reflect on current or common place models of ‘conducting business’ in order to propose innovative alternatives aligned with commitments to gender transformative and community-led approaches guided by adaptive leadership.

Phase I:
- Total EU contribution: USD 4,700,000
- Total UN Agency Contributions: USD 696,071

Phase II:
- Estimated EU contribution: USD 2,014,286 (To be approved)

Estimated No. of Beneficiaries481

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative numbers</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
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<td>2,007,514</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>5,422</td>
<td>1,289,407</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>8,372</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>30,628</td>
<td>6,524,191</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

481 These are illustrative numbers as district targeting decisions have not been finalized/or validated. Estimations are based on population data and assumptions that community-level interventions will be implemented in 3 districts.
PROGRAMME STRATEGY

PILLAR 1 – LAWS AND POLICIES

THEORY OF CHANGE

If (1) women and SGBV/HP experts are engaged in assessing, developing and implementing policies and legislation on gender equality and SGBV/HP in line with international human rights standards (2) if the implementation of legislations and policies is monitored by policy makers and civil society (3) if the policy and decision makers’ conventional understanding of women rights, gender equality and SGBV is improved and they are mobilized to promote equality between women and men and address SGBV then (4) an enabling legislative and policy environment on SGBV/HP and other forms of discrimination is in place and translated into plans, guaranteeing the rights of women and girls because (5) effectively implemented legislative and policy frameworks address impunity and provide for coordinated action, including in the areas of prevention, services and data collection (66) laws and programmes that integrate VAW/HPs into SRH services are developed, implemented and monitored.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcome 1: Legislative and policy frameworks in line with international human rights standards on VAWG and harmful practices, are in place and translated into action.
### Indicators

#### Activity 1.1.1
Support legislative reform through holistic review and harmonization of legal and policy frameworks on women’s rights and SGBV in line with international standards, including focusing on the intersecting forms of discriminations under criminal, civil, family and administrative legislation

**UNDP**

**UNW**

**UNODC**

- **GoKR, Parliament, CSOs and women’s rights organizations, security & justice actors**

#### Activity 1.1.2
Support the development of secondary legislation, including by-laws, protocols, guidelines and regulations, to operationalize adopted legislative amendments and assist the enforcement of legislation

**UNDP**

**UNODC**

- **GoKR, line ministries and institutions, Parliament, CSOs and women’s rights organizations, security & justice actors**

#### Activity 1.1.3
Support to CSOs and women’s rights organizations to provide inputs to legislative and policy-making on SGBV, conduct public oversight and participate in public hearing and inquiries on implementation of selected laws & policies on women’s rights and SGBV

**UNDP**

**UNFPA**

**UNODC**

- **CSOs, women’s rights organizations, Parliamentary Committees, Forum of Women MPs, Ombudsman GoKR, MoI, MLSD, OPG, gender experts, CSOs**

#### Activity 1.1.4
Strengthen the institutional capacities of the selected Parliamentarians, Parliamentary Committees of the **Jogorku Kenesh**, including establishing a cross-sectoral Working Group to advocate for, draft new and/or strengthen existing legislation and/or policies on VAWG, strengthen legislation and hold state institutions accountable for implementation of selected legislation on women’s rights and SGBV

**UNDP**

**UNFPA**

- **Parliamentary Committees, Forum of Women MPs, CSOs, Women’s Rights Organization, GoKR, MoH, Ministry of Justice, Mandatory Health Insurance Fund, Kyrgyz Alliance on Family Planning**

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482 Progress towards international standards will be measured through an analysis of specific components ("degree to which") as described in the Methodological Notes
Activity 1.1.5
Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Department for Protection of Children’s, Women’s and Family Rights of the Ombudsman to advocate for, monitor, report and increase public interface with CSOs on women rights’ issues and VAWG

Output 1.2
National and/or sub-national partners are better able to develop evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending SGBV in line with international HR standards with M&E frameworks, increase financing and allocate appropriate budgets for their implementation, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination

Indicator 1.2.1
Number of draft evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending SGBV developed that respond to the rights of groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination with M&E frameworks and proposed budgets

Activity 1.2.1
Support to the Justice program for Children specifically for the implementation of the legislation prohibiting violence against children and girls as well as the implementation of the Law prohibiting child marriages

Indicator 1.2.2
Number of key government decision makers with strengthened capacities to draft and cost action plans on ending SGBV and accompanying M&E frameworks

Activity 1.2.2
Support to the creation of a working group to introduce amendments to the Budget Code of KR aimed at allocation of funds for prevention of GBV NAPs and region’s development plans

PILLAR 2 - INSTITUTIONS
THEORY OF CHANGE
If (1) relevant decision-makers and stakeholders in all sectors of government are informed and mobilized to address SGBV/HP if (2) institutions at all levels and relevant stakeholders have strengthened capacity, understanding and formed new attitude towards women and girls subject to SGBV/HP if (3) national and subnational bargaining processes are effective in overcoming the hurdles of collective action to address and prevent SGBV/HP and if (4) adequate budgets are allocated then (5) institutions will develop, coordinate and implement programmes that integrate the elimination of SGBV/HP and other SDG targets into development planning processes, because (6) institutional change requires change in their attitude and appropriate capacity, adequate funding as well as political engagement and leadership to sustainably address SGBV/HP

OUTCOME STATEMENT
Outcome 2. National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to SGBV and harmful practices, including in other sectors

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483 Key government/national decision makers (Heads of State, Finance Ministers, Ministries of Justice and Police, Security Ministers and relevant planning institutions) including women’s rights advocates.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>RUNO</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Outcome 2**: National and sub-national systems and institutions enabled to plan, fund, and deliver multi-sectoral programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG, and harmful practices, including through the implementation of the SDGs  
- *Indicator 2.1 Proportion of countries that have functioning national and/or sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms at the highest levels for addressing SGBV/HP that include representation from marginalized groups*  
- *Indicator 2.2 Proportion of countries that allocate x% or more of national budgets to the prevention and elimination of all forms of SGBV/HP* | **Output 2.1** Key officials at national and/or sub-national levels in all relevant institutions are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG, including DV/IPV, especially for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including in other sectors | **Indicator 2.1.1 Number of institutions that develop strategies, plans and/or programmes to prevent and respond to VAWG, including DV/IPV, including for women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination**<br>**Activity 2.1.1** Support justice and security institutions to conduct internal gender audit(s), including assessment of capacity to deliver on survivor-centred SGBV programmes, and to develop subsequent action plans | UNDP, UNODC | MIA, MOJ, OPG, Supreme Court, Advokatura |
| **Indicator 2.1.2** Develop a protocol and mechanisms of dealing with sexual harassment in selected central and local level institutions through co-creation process with services providers | **Indicator 2.1.3** Support the development and institutionalization of mandatory educational curriculum for security & justice actors (police, judges, prosecutors and lawyers), the Management Academy under the President to enhance institutional gender-sensitive and survivor-centred criminal justice practices | UNDP, UNODC | MIA, MOJ, GPO, Supreme Court, Advokatura, Management Academy, MOE |
| **Indicator 2.1.4** Conduct experiential learning trainings (i.e. GALS) with focus on transformative capacity development initiatives with policy makers and implementers on EVAW to live the values of gender equality within targeted institutions (e.g. positive bystander response), and shift attitudes towards victims with multiple forms of discrimination | **Output 2.2** Multi-stakeholder national and/or sub-national coordination mechanisms established at the highest level and/or strengthened that are adequately funded and include multi-sectoral representation and representation from the most marginalized groups | **Indicator 2.1.5 Percentage of targeted national and sub-national training institutions for public servants that have integrated gender equality and SGBV in their curriculum, as per international standards**<br>**Activity 2.1.3** Support the development and institutionalization of mandatory educational curriculum for security & justice actors (police, judges, prosecutors and lawyers), the Management Academy under the President to enhance institutional gender-sensitive and survivor-centred criminal justice practices | UNW | Bishkek City Administration Office, MIA, CSOs |
| **Activity 2.1.4** Conduct experiential learning trainings (i.e. GALS) with focus on transformative capacity development initiatives with policy makers and implementers on EVAW to live the values of gender equality within targeted institutions (e.g. positive bystander response), and shift attitudes towards victims with multiple forms of discrimination | UNW | CSOs, NGM, PM’s Office, National Council of Gender |
| **Indicator 2.1.6 Number of key government officials trained on human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination**<br>**Activity 2.1.4** Conduct experiential learning trainings (i.e. GALS) with focus on transformative capacity development initiatives with policy makers and implementers on EVAW to live the values of gender equality within targeted institutions (e.g. positive bystander response), and shift attitudes towards victims with multiple forms of discrimination | **Activity 2.2.1** Institutionalize and harmonize the state catalogue of services in accordance with Multi-Sectoral Response (MSR) to include specifically psychosocial and psychological support in the state catalogue of services | UNFPA | MLSD, MoH |
Activity 2.2.2
Strengthen national and sub-national multi-sectoral coordination for EVAWG across key sectors (health, social services, law, police, justice, and humanitarian settings), including the SGBV Coordination Body established under Family Violence Law 2017

PILLAR 3: PREVENTION AND SOCIAL NORMS

THEORY OF CHANGE

If (1) multiple strategies such as community mobilization, key stakeholders’ engagement and education strategies are carried out in an integrated and coordinated manner based on a shared understanding and approach in line with international standards and evidence on preventing SGBV/HP then (2) favourable social norms, attitudes and behaviours will be promoted at community and individual level to prevent SGBV/HP because (3) multi-pronged prevention initiatives that mutually reinforce each other can effectively shift individual and socio-cultural norms including those affecting women’s sexuality and reproduction.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcome 3: Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent SGBV/HP

Output 3.1 National and/or sub-national evidence-based programmes are developed to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in line with international standards, for in and out of school settings.
**Indicator 3.1.3** Number of national and/or sub-national programmes developed for inclusion in educational curricula to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including targeting young women and girls, young men and boys facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

| Activity 3.1.1 | Review of school books (primary-tertiary) with inclusion of SGBVG and Child Marriage (CM) concepts and methodologies (including at the tertiary public legal education, and the development of university curricula on women’s rights, VAWG) | UNICEF, UNDP | MoE, Academia and select Faculties of Law of public universities |

| Activity 3.1.2 | Integrate gender transformative modules into the teacher training program focusing on gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours | UNICEF | MoE |

**Output 3.2** Community advocacy platforms are established/strengthened to develop strategies and programmes, including community dialogues, public information and advocacy campaigns, to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls’ sexuality and reproduction, self-confidence and self-esteem and transforming harmful masculinities. Including informing parenting skills around gender socialization through early childhood development programmes.

| Indicator 3.2.2 Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping | Activity 3.2.1 | Conduct ethnographic review of harmful social norms and identification of target localities, institutions and ‘new’ social norm holders (positive deviants and influencers of community Core Group) | UNW | CSOs, Media, LSGs |

| Activity 3.2.2 | Support the MoJ, through the work of the Bus of Solidarity, to conduct an effective public campaign on women’s rights and EVAWG, targeting communities in rural and remote areas, to promote legal awareness as a tool to challenge discriminatory social norms, gender stereotypes and to contribute to increased women and girls’ empowerment to claim equality before the law | UNDP | MoJ, CSOs, Media |

| Activity 3.2.3 | Implementations of the Communication for Development (C4D) Strategy to end Child Marriage and challenge harmful social and gender norms related to VAWGs. Work through a community Core Group of influencers (positive deviants) to work toward norm change through community mobilization. Reinforce C4D strategy through creation of social media application targeting youth to challenge social norms related to VAWG and CM | UNICEF | Youth and women representatives, CSOs, Religious authorities, School teachers, Media |

| Indicator 3.2.3 Number of men and boys who regularly attend gender transformative Fatherhood programmes | Activity 3.2.4 | Implement gender-transformative Fatherhood programmes that challenge stereotypes about the role men play in caregiving, in childrearing,  | UNFPA | MoH, MLSD, FBOs, CSOs, Community-based health clinics, |

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484 This includes working with faith communities, literary figures, musicians, and other celebrities.
programmes addressing violent masculinities and men’s violence towards women and girls in community centres, schools and other relevant spaces

mediation, and engagement in reproductive health

**Activity 3.2.5**
Integrate content on gender equality, positive masculinities and zero tolerance for VAWG in the curriculum of vocational schools and religious schools (madrasa) for adolescent boys based on piloted vocational schools and madrasas

**Indicator 3.2.4** Number of communities with advocacy platforms established and/or strengthened to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls’ sexuality and reproduction

**Activity 3.2.6** Introduce gender-transformative experiential learning systems (Gender Action Learning System) to facilitate self-assessment on knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and practices on EVAWG and support local initiatives by new social norm holders (community Core Group) to create demand within communities and individuals to stop impunity of violence to promote self-defined messages and formation of public opinion on illegality of violence and HP

**Indicator 3.2.6** Number of networks of men and boys developed and/or strengthened to advocate against SGBV and stand for promoting gender equitable values and behaviours

**Activity 3.2.7** Promote positive masculinities through the MenEngage campaign- including work with social influencers (sports figures, local celebrities, etc.) and implementation of gender transformative programming based on results of the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES)

**Output 3.3** Decision makers in relevant institutions⁴⁸⁵ and key informal decision makers⁴⁸⁶ are better able to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending SGBV and for gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls’ rights

**Indicator 3.3.1** Number of news outlets that develop standards on ethical and gender-sensitive reporting

**Activity 3.3.1** Introduce innovative transformative experiential learning by applying tools of self-assessment to media stakeholders, including high-level decision-makers, editors, commentators, and opinion-makers in traditional and social media, on their knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and practices on EVAWG, building strong networks with new social norm holders in the media and using this new network as a platform to spread personal testimonies (linked with community Core Group)

**Indicator 3.3.5** Number of key informal decision makers and decision makers in relevant institutions with

**Activity 3.3.2** Develop a methodology for planning of local SGBV prevention strategies bringing together local government, police, local crime prevention centres, women committees and active citizens

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⁴⁸⁵ Including the media, sports, workplaces, etc.

⁴⁸⁶ Will differ from region to region and includes decision makers from informal institutions, e.g. traditional, religious and community leaders
strengthened awareness of and capacities to advocate for implementation of legislation and policies on ending SGBV and for gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and women and girls' rights (in collaborate with community Core Group members) to develop joint-action plans to prevent SGBV in their communities and ensuring initial funding allocations for crime prevention work from local state budgets

**PILLAR 4: DELIVERY OF QUALITY ESSENTIAL SERVICES**

**THEORY OF CHANGE**

If (1) service providers have the capacity to deliver essential services and have deep understanding on SGBV, including SRH services, and to prosecute perpetrators in line with international human rights standards and guidelines (2) if these services are made available and accessible to women and girls whereby they also offer solutions and approached as solution holders (not only victims) and if (3) women and girls are informed and empowered to exercise their rights to services, and network among themselves with the facilitation of PDs (including SRHRs and access to justice) then (4) women and girls who experience SGBV and harmful practices will increase their use of services and recover from violence, while perpetrators will be prosecuted because (5) underlying barriers to women and girls' access to services have been addressed (6) including in relation to gender and socio-cultural norms affecting women's sexuality and reproduction.

**OUTCOME STATEMENT**

**Outcome 4:** Women and girls who experience SGBV and harmful practices use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long term recovery from violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>RUNO</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 4:</strong> Women and girls who experience SGBV and harmful practices use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services including for long term recovery from violence</td>
<td><strong>Indicator 4.1</strong> Proportion of women, including those facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, who report experiencing physical or sexual violence who seek help, by sector</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 4.2.a</strong> Number of cases of SGBV reported to the police, b. proportions of cases reported to the police that are brought to court, c. proportions of cases reported to the police that resulted in convictions of perpetrators, all during a specific time period (e.g. past 12 months)</td>
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**Output 4.1** Relevant government authorities and women’s rights organisations at national and sub-national levels have better knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services, including SRH services and access to justice, to women and girls’ survivors of violence, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

| **Indicator 4.1.3** Proportion of countries that have developed and/or strengthened national guidelines or protocols in line with the guidance and tools for essential services | **Activity 4.1.1** Conduct participatory mapping of existing essential services from the perspective of the survivor (health, psychosocial, social, justice, police) at the national and sub-national level | UNFPA | Sectoral ministries/institutions, CSOs, academia, experts |
| | **Activity 4.1.2** Based on Activity 4.1.3.1, contextualize the Essential Services Package, update SOPs and provide support for implementation of SOPs including- specifically-referral pathways | UNFPA | Sectoral ministries/institutions, LSGs, sub-national level service providers |

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687 This indicator should be measured for women seeking services *within the past 12 months*, in order to measure progress and change over time—as lifetime prevalence of violence is not a sound measure of change over time.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Responsible Party/Staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1.4</td>
<td>Number of government service providers who have increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girls' survivors of violence</td>
<td>4.1.3 Implementation of the inter-ministerial database on vulnerable children for the identification of girls at risk of child marriage and violence with training of social workers</td>
<td>UNICEF, MoH, MLSD, MoJ, Local Government.</td>
</tr>
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<td>4.1.4 Strengthen the capacities and set training standards (development of training packages) of sectoral service providers (health, police, law enforcement, social workers, prosecution, crisis centres, forensics; judiciary) on service delivery in line with international standards as well as localized referral mechanisms</td>
<td>UNICEF, UNFPA, UNW, UNODC</td>
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<td>4.1.5 Develop and apply new technology such as Virtual Reality Tool with the service providers to improve service provision in a survivor-centred manner following global best practices on improving SGBV services</td>
<td>UNW</td>
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<td>4.1.6 Support the Supreme Court to produce resource materials for judges on good practices from case law adopted by courts in handling SGBV, family and matrimonial rights, to be compiled and acknowledged as judicial precedent and source of law for adjudication</td>
<td>UNDP, Supreme Court, Association of Kyrgyz Women Judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.9</td>
<td>Proportion of countries that have developed and/or strengthened national guidelines or protocols for essential services that specifically address the needs of women and girls facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
<td>4.1.7 Strengthen the quality and delivery of services for women and girls with disabilities through the adaptation of Guidelines for Providing Rights-Based and Gender-Responsive Services to Address SGBV and SRHR, and roll out training package</td>
<td>UNFPA, Sectoral ministries/institutions, CSOs, academia, experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1</td>
<td>Number of women and girls’ survivors of violence that have increased knowledge of and access to quality essential services</td>
<td>4.2.1 Strengthen access to justice and primary and qualified legal aid for survivors of SGBV, including free legal assistance, information, counselling and representation in courts, through the established 1) Ministry of Justice Free Legal Aid Centres; 2) pro-bono legal mechanisms established in partnership with the private sectors; and 3) pro-bono lawyers of Crisis Centres</td>
<td>UNDP, MoJ, CSOs, legal aid providers, Crisis Centres, private sector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.3</td>
<td>Proportion of countries that design strategies for increasing the knowledge of and access to services for women and girls, including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
<td>4.2.2 Implement strategies to strengthen the ability of women and girls with disabilities, migrant, and key populations (HIV, LGBTQI) survivors of violence to access quality essential services</td>
<td>UNFPA, Sectoral ministries/institutions, CSOs, experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PILLAR 5: DATA AVAILABILITY AND CAPACITIES

THEORY OF CHANGE

If (1) Measurement and methodologies for SGBV/HP data collection are improved and strengthened (including monitoring and reporting requirements for SDG target 5.2 indicators) (2) if the capacity of national institutions to collect disaggregated SGBV/HP data in line with globally agreed standards is strengthened and (3) if disaggregated data (including to extent possible on age, ethnicity, location, socio-economic status, disability) are made accessible and disseminated to be used by decision makers and civil society (4) then laws, policies and programmes will be based on evidence and better able to respond to the specific context and realities of women and girls, including those most marginalized (5) because they will be based on quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcome 5: 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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>RUNO</th>
<th>Key Partners</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 5:</strong> Quality, disaggregated and regionally/globally comparable data (in line with international standards) on different forms GBV/HP collected, properly analysed, and effectively used to inform laws, policies and programmes.</td>
<td><strong>Indicator 5.1</strong> Proportion of countries that have globally comparable data on the prevalence (and incidence, where appropriate) of SGBV/HP, collected over time</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>National Statistics Committee, key institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 5.1</strong> Key partners, including relevant statistical officers, service providers in the different branches of government and women’s rights advocates have strengthened capacities to regularly collect data related to VAWG, including DV/IPV, in line with international and regional standards to inform laws, policies and programmes, statistics offices, justice, security and health sector</td>
<td><strong>Indicator 5.1.2</strong> Percentage of targeted countries with a system to collect administrative data on SGBV/HP, in line with international standards, across different sectors</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>National Statistics Committee, key institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 5.1.3</strong> Number of government personnel, including service providers, from different sectors who have enhanced capacities to collect prevalence and/or incidence data, including qualitative data, on SGBV in line with international and regional standards</td>
<td><strong>Activity 5.1.1</strong> Co-develop a data sharing policy, creating a digital hub for dissemination of non-sensitive/analytical data; engage CSO, media and academia, the private sector and grassroots institutions in monitoring of data sharing</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>MLSD, Ministry of Interior, MoH, MoES, NSC, MoJ, CSOs, Academia, Media GPO, MOI, Supreme court, Office of the General Prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 5.1.2</strong> Revise/update and integrate the ethical guides/protocols in data collection, recording and reporting forms for use and exchange of data on SGBV/VAWG, including electronic management systems. Ensure protocols for linking data management systems to reduce double counting</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>National Statistics Committee, key institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 5.1.4</strong> Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making</td>
<td><strong>Activity 5.1.3</strong> Strengthen the collection and analysis of data related to SGBV including criminal justice administrative data on domestic and sexual violence (upgrading of Module 1 of Unified Registry of Crimes and Misdemeanours, technical assistance to key stakeholders/actors to analyse and compile data on SGBV across the criminal justice chain) (SDG 5 and SDG16 indicators)</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>MLSD, Ministry of Interior, MoH, MoES, NSC, MoJ, CSOs, Academia, Media GPO, MOI, Supreme court, Office of the General Prosecutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 5.2</strong> Quality prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG, including DV/IPV, is analysed and made publicly available for the monitoring and reporting of the SDG target 5.2 indicators to inform evidence-based decision making</td>
<td><strong>Indicator 5.2.1</strong> Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>National Statistics Committee, CSOs, private sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity 5.2.1</strong> Ensure dissemination and accessibility of data through data visualization to make it user-friendly for gender/human rights experts and decision-makers, including media</td>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>National Statistics Committee, CSOs, private sectors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PILLAR 6: SUPPORTING THE WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

THEORY OF CHANGE

If (1) the knowledge, expertise and capacities of human/women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and civil society organisations, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (further as ‘CSOs and movements’) is drawn upon and strengthened, and (2) the space for local and national CSOs and movements’ expression and activity is free and conducive to their work, and (3) multi-stakeholder partnerships and networks are established at local and national level based on shared understanding of ‘leading change on EVAWG’ with CSOs and movements, then (4) CSOs and movements will be able to influence, sustain, and advance progress on GEWE and ending SGBV policies and programmes that respond to the needs of all women and girls, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, because (5) the activism of CSOs and movements from local and national levels representing various generations is a crucial driver of progress on efforts to end SGBV in a joint as well as individual manner.

OUTCOME STATEMENT

Outcome 6: Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending SGBV

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 6.1</strong> Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV</td>
<td><strong>Activity 6.1.1</strong> Conduct social network mapping to identify missing groups/individual activists, associations and other underrepresented groups that are excluded from formal CSO or NGO structures and networks but who are crucial to social change</td>
<td>UNW</td>
<td>Civil society actors, including media, social media, religious leaders, academia, rights-based networks and groups, community activists, professional NGOs, think tanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator 6.1.1</strong> Number of jointly agreed recommendations produced as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues that include including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination</td>
<td><strong>Activity 6.1.2</strong> Conduct a capacity review of the movement/network, including assessing technical and functional capabilities, training needs/wants and capacities for advocacy, fund raising, etc.</td>
<td>UNW UNDP</td>
<td>Civil society actors, including media, social media, religious leaders, academia, rights-based networks and groups, community activists, professional NGOs, think tanks</td>
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</tbody>
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489 Including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization

490 Including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization
Activity 6.1.3
Develop comprehensive self-assessment tool for targeted CSOs, etc. to use to measure knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices related to VAWGs and how they are currently addressing these issues (part of the Leading Change of EVAW process) and from results of this (and 6.1.1.2), facilitate a CSO-led process of actions/strategies and recommendations to fill gaps or leverage strengths

UNW
Civil society actors, including media, social media, religious leaders, academia, rights-based networks and groups, community activists, professional NGOs, think tanks

Activity 6.1.4
Provide strategic support to CSOs to implement multi-sectoral strategies (developed in Activity 6.1.1.3) to improve networking, joint-advocacy and partnerships for EVAWG (actions to be jointly decided but to be led by CSOs)

UNW
UNDP
UNFPA
UNODC
UNICEF
Civil society actors, including media, social media, religious leaders, academia, rights-based networks and groups, community activists, professional NGOs, think tanks

Activity 6.1.5
Provide Social Innovation grants based on strategy action plans and criteria related to innovation, inclusion and gender-transformative outcomes

UNW
CSOs both national and sub-national

Activity 6.1.6
Conduct targeted training on participatory and inclusive project design and fundraising (Trust Fund)

UNW
UNDP
CSOs and Media

Activity 6.1.7
Build a pool of qualified GBV experts at national and sub-national level, by introducing a certification process (CSO recommendation)

UNW
UNFPA
Civil society actors, including media, social media, religious leaders, academia, rights-based networks and groups, community activists, professional NGOs, think tanks

Output 6.2 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs are better supported to use social accountability mechanisms to support their advocacy and influence on prevention and response to SGBV and GEWE more broadly

Indicator 6.2.1 Number of supported women's right groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy

Activity 6.2.1
Strengthening CSOs’ role as accountability holders (watchdog) on GoKR implementation of international laws/commitments (Beijing 25+ as well as SDG 5) as well as national-level committees (NGM)

UNW
UNDP
(UNHCHR)
CSOs

Activity 6.2.2
Knowledge management on Leading Change for sharing with wider groups in the country and among civil society and gender advocates to serve accountability on SGBV

UNW
Academia, media, CSOs, FBOs, local governments

ALIGNMENT WITH SDGS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

The Kyrgyzstan Programme under the SI will support the region’s advancement towards achieving the SDGs. The eradication of VAWG, SGBV and HP, which relate to two important SDG targets (5.2 and 5.3), has an impact on other SDGs. The act of guaranteeing that women and girls exercise their right to live a life free of violence, is closely related to the goals and targets regarding the right to a healthy life (SDG 3), inclusive and equitable quality education (SDG 4, targets 4.7 and 4.a), the reduction of inequalities (SDG 10, targets 10.2 and 10.3), inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities (SDG 11, targets 11.2 and 11.7), and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16, target 16.1 and 16.2). Under the Kyrgyzstan Programme, key partnerships will also be developed for the achievements of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 17). The implementation of Spotlight in Kyrgyzstan
constitutes a substantive opportunity to support country level efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, and to promote their development at a local scale.

According to the 2018 review of "Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) for Achieving SDG Progress"491, developed by the UN Interagency MAPS Team, Goal 5 was emphasized as a critical priority in order to achieve all of the SDGs. That is, the elimination of gender inequality and the push towards the empowerment of women and girls represents both an accelerator of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and a solution for the sustainable development of the nation. Specifically, the report emphasizes the need for Kyrgyzstan to focus on prevention and response to gender-based violence, prioritizing the following areas in order to achieve SDG 5 targets:

- Increasing access to justice for survivors of all forms of gender-based violence
- Eliminating early and forced marriage
- Strengthening multi-sectoral coordination and response to GBV and essential services for survivors of violence

Supporting women’s political participation in Parliament and Government at all levels are key priorities. Accordingly, SI Kyrgyzstan holds the critical potential to address these priorities, with a focus on prevention and response to gender-based violence and promotion of equitable gender norms and values, which will, in turn support progress towards SDG5. Furthermore, in order to contribute to the SDGs, the Kyrgyzstan UNDAF highlights the needs to promote gender equality; specifically ensuring institutions effectively promote gender equality and working towards women’s economic empowerment. Lastly, the National Statistical Committee is tasked with monitoring progress of SDG5 indicators, SI Kyrgyzstan will strengthen the capacity of this institution to effectively monitor this area.

The programme will support accountability for results through a human rights-based approach, capacitating both rights holders and duty bearers to ensure meaningful participation, civic engagement, and supporting the role of communities and civil society organizations in shaping public discussion and social accountability across the region. Through outcomes Two and Four programme interventions, Spotlight will support achievement of a corollary SDG 16, which recognizes the centrality of access to justice, rule of law, and accountable institutions in EVAW and achieving sustainable development. This includes building the capacity of national and subnational governments for gender-responsive planning and budgeting and of institutions to ensure access to justice for survivors of VAW.

Spotlight will ensure local governments are well positioned to play a catalytic role in involving local actors and enhancing local action addressing SGBV in fulfilment of SDG 3 and 5, as well as SDG 10 and 16. In addition, Spotlight is expanding opportunities for local civil society, national human rights institutions and community networks to engage decision makers, including to build consensus on SGBV.

SI Kyrgyzstan will contribute to a number of national frameworks, plans and instruments. For instance, gender equality principles have been incorporated in the National Sustainable Development Strategy (2018-2040), which includes gender equality as a crosscutting theme with a focus on gender parity in decision making, reduction of discrimination against women and girls and ensuring equal access to employment opportunities. Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan developed a National Strategy on Achieving Gender Equality 2012-2020 which is implemented through bi-annual National Action Plans. The Strategy focuses on four key areas: 1) women’s economic empowerment; 2) education; 3) eliminating gender discrimination and improving access to justice; 4) gender parity in decision-making. Both strategies have a monitoring framework, however, the extent to which monitoring data is available has been questioned by civil society.492

SI Kyrgyzstan provides a unique opportunity to contribute to these national plans, thus amplifying efforts of the SI, as well as leveraging the buy-in from decisions makers. Specifically, SI Kyrgyzstan’s work on Pillar 3 will contribute to the promotion of all targets where gender inequalities are root causes; Pillar 5 will provide

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491 UN Interagency MAPS Team, 2018: A Report on Kyrgyzstan’s Progress to SDGs: A Review of Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support for Achieving SDG Progress

the necessary data to inform monitoring processes and the ongoing revisions of national action plans; Pillars 1, 2, and 4 will institutionalize gender equality in policies, institutions and services and Pillar 6 will contribute to the ongoing participation of civil society in monitoring national frameworks and plans. These efforts will be bolstered by ongoing capacity development support to decision makers, as well as gender-responsive budgeting support, to ensure national plans have the funding to support implementation.

**GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

**Country Programme National Steering Committee (CP-NSC)**

As the highest governance structure for the Spotlight Initiative in Kyrgyzstan, the Country Programme National Steering Committee will be tasked with providing strategic leadership and oversight to the CP. The CP-NSC will have the authority to make decisions that are in accordance with the objectives, approach and scope of the programme once the SI CPD is approved.

The CP-NSC is expected to make key Programme decisions, guide the implementing partners and responsible parties in the execution of the Programme, and ensure effective oversight through review of, and feedback to strategic programme documents (for example, Joint Work Plans, evaluation management responses, and potential revisions to the CPD, as relevant).

The specific roles and responsibilities of the CP-NSC will be validated through further consultation during programme design, under the following guiding principles:

- Ensuring accountability, effective management and implementation of the SI through proper communication and coordination, in alignment with Kyrgyzstan’s priorities and considering UNDAF 2018-2022 and EU’s pillars and priorities;
- Approving JWPs, reviewing output level results and adjusting implementation with the aim of ensuring maximum programmatic impact;
- Reviewing and approving periodic and annual joint programme narrative reports submitted by the technical team;
- Approving programmatic or budgetary programme revisions within the limits of the approved CPD by the global OSC;
- Reviewing risk management strategies and ensuring the programme is proactively managing and mitigating risks.

Full ToR will be drafted for review and endorsement by the CP-NSC during its first meeting.

The composition of the CP-NSC has been consulted with the Vice Prime Minister of Kyrgyzstan, the EU Delegation to Kyrgyzstan, the CSIRG established for the CP and the UNCT in Kyrgyzstan. As such, the CP-NSC will involve representation of key UN stakeholders, EU Delegation, governmental partners and civil society (see below for the full list of members). The proposed membership leverages government institutions that oversee state priority setting, planning and budgeting, inter-governmental issues and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, as well as the technical agencies involved in the NAP on GBV to ensure the SI contributes to a whole-of-government approach to ending VAWG that also directly contributes to existing national commitments and the Inter-Ministerial NAP GBV Coordination mechanism.

The CP-NSC will be co-chaired by Vice Prime Minister and UN RC. The civil society members of the CP-NSC will constitute no less than 20% of it. In addition, other stakeholders may be invited to participate in meetings related to planning, deliberation and monitoring roles of the Committee. This includes relevant development partners, representatives from academic/research institutions, local communities and/or private sector.

The CP-NSC will meet bi-annually at the highest representation to review progress and discuss overall strategy of the SI in Kyrgyzstan.

**Composition of the Country Programme National Steering Committee:**

1. United Nations Resident Coordinator (Co-chair)
2. Vice Prime Minister (Co-chair), with the leadership role and chairmanship of the National Council on Gender
3. European Union Delegation to Kyrgyzstan (Head of Delegation)
4. Ministry of Labour and Social Development (Deputy Minister)
5. State Agency on Youth, Sports and Physical Culture (Director)
6. Ministry of Health (Deputy Minister)
7. Ministry of Justice (Deputy Minister)
8. Ministry of Internal Affairs (Deputy Minister)
9. National Statistical Committee (Director)
10. Ministry of Education and Science (Deputy Minister)
11. General Prosecutors Office (GPO)
12. Office of Ombudsman
13. Parliament
15. Civil Society National Reference Group Representative nominated by Civil Society Interim Reference Group
16. Civil Society National Reference Group Representative nominated by Civil Society Interim Reference Group

**Technical Working Group of the Government**

With support from the Vice Prime Minister, the **Government Technical Working Group** (GTWG) for the Development of Country Programme on the Implementation of the Spotlight Initiative has been set up under the NCG. The GTWG serves as the consultative body to the programme development process and will continue to serve as the technical consultative group of the Government in the implementation stage of the CP.

The GTWG is co-chaired by Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Development and, on behalf of the UN system in Kyrgyzstan, by the UNW Representative in Kyrgyzstan. The GTWG is composed of 27 members, including the Government, UN, EU and civil society with representation at the level of heads of units (See Annex 4 for full list of members).

The GTWG will serve as a project monitoring committee for the CP (which will include civil society, EU and UN representatives) and will meet every quarter to review progress on implementation, discuss progress, review opportunities and risks and prepare for CP-NSC meetings and propose remedial actions. Recommendations by the GTWG requiring urgent actions should be approved by UN RC in consultation with the Vice Prime Minister.

*Figure 1. Governance mechanism of the Spotlight Initiative in Kyrgyzstan*
**UN Resident Coordinator** (UN RC) is responsible for overall programme leadership, management and accountability of the SI in Kyrgyzstan, providing leadership and interacting with the highest governmental authorities, the EU representative and other related partners. UN RC has the final decision-making authority within the UN and is responsible for the overall strategic direction and oversight of RUNOs for the programme.

These functions include:

a) Strategically managing the SI and its oversight;

b) Approving the CPD and confirming selected RUNOs and programme partners;

c) Facilitating collaboration among UN agencies, governmental authorities and EU Delegation for the SI implementation;

d) Overseeing the progress of SI implementation including convening bi-monthly meetings of RUNOs to review progress and approving remedial actions;

e) Approving periodic reports, as well as budget revisions and funding reallocation, in accordance with the SI’s ToR and Operational Manual;

f) Intervening in the resolution of conflicts, which may arise between institutional counterparts, in the event they may not be solved by the CP-NSC; and

g) Leading efforts to mobilize additional resources.

h) UN RC is accountable to UN DSG for the overall design, set-up, implementation and reporting on the CP, including ensuring national ownership at the highest level, sustainability of results, complementing resource mobilization and broad engagement with the EU and other relevant partners and stakeholders.

**Office of the UN Resident Coordinator** (RCO) will support UN RC’s leadership role and will report progress on the SI in Kyrgyzstan to the SI Secretariat. The RCO is responsible for the political and institutional coherence of the SI as well as the coordination, working jointly with RUNOs in the implementation and leading the partnership with the EU Delegation. The RCO will also provide secretariat support to the CP-NSC, GTWG, CS-NRG, while the technical coherence agency (UNW) will ensure conceptual, programmatic, narrative and substantive coherence among the programme outcomes, outputs and joint work plans. The RCO will be responsible for all programme interactions on SI with the Government and the EU and will streamline interactions and communications with the EOSG, SI Secretariat, the Government of Kyrgyzstan, EU Delegation, development partners and the CS-NRG.

The RCO will coordinate execution of the CP and will ensure coordination between the agencies/institutions responsible for implementing activities and monitoring the Initiative, including joint EU Delegation-UN-Government monitoring missions.
**TAJIKISTAN**

**Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs):** UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN WOMEN

**Programme Partner(s):**
- **Government:** Implementing Partners currently under consideration are: i) Committee on Women and Family Affairs; ii) Ministry of Justice, iii) Ministry of Internal Affairs, iv) Ministry of Health and Social Protection, v) Ministry of Education and Science, vi) Agency for Statistics. **Programme Partners:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Committee on Religious Affairs, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry of Labor, Committee on Youth and Sports, Police, Courts (including the Supreme Court); General Prosecutor’s Office, State Agency Legal Aid Centre, Union of Advocates.
- **NGOs, CSOs:** At this stage of programme design, specific CSOs have not been agreed as implementing partners (with the exception of the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia, as part of an on-going partnership that will ensure services under Pillar 4). However there is agreement that the programme will aim to engage with the following types of CSOs: women’s rights organizations and networks; grassroots and women community groups; organizations of persons with disabilities (like League of Women with Disabilities); faith-based groups; human rights organizations; youth groups; girls’ networks; gender equality advocates; media workers; men-led networks (like Sport Federations) and others to be identified during the inception phase, who proved to be effective partners during the previous cooperation experience.
- **Independent Commissions and Oversight Bodies** – Ombudsman’s Office, Ombudsman for Child Rights; Parliament

**Programme Location (provinces or priority areas):** To ensure effective and meaningful impact of the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, the Programme will focus on a comprehensive set of actions at the national level, with targeted actions at sub-national level. Preliminary analysis of needs, gaps and opportunities, from a thematic and geographic lens was done in accordance with the SI Guidance and, based on consultation with the Government, development partners and CS-NRG, RUNOs agreed to focus the prevention and service provision outreach interventions in three regions (Soghd, Khatlon and Districts of Republican Subordination) and in the capital Dushanbe – targeting two districts in each region and the four districts of Dushanbe City. This selection will however be subject to final approval by the Government.

**Programme Description:**

The overall vision of the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan is that women and girls enjoy their right to a life free of violence. The programme will contribute to the elimination of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) by responding to the needs of women and girls and addressing the underlying causes of violence against women and girls using a multi-sectoral and intersectional approach across the ecological model.

The Spotlight Initiative will accelerate Tajikistan’s progress toward reaching its targets under the 2030 Agenda, particularly in regards to SDG 5 on Gender Equality, but also SDG 3 “Health and Well-Being”, SDG 4 “Quality Education”, SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities”, SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”, and SDG 17 on “Partnerships”.

It will contribute to the National Development Strategy for the period from 2016 to 2030 and the Mid-term Development Programme for the period 2016-2020 and reinforce Tajikistan’s implementation of its commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee, among other obligations.

The Programme is grounded on the core principle of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first. The interventions have been designed to target women and girls most marginalized (rural, poor, with disabilities), at higher-risk of sexual and gender based violence and groups that face multiple or intersecting forms of discrimination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I:</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total EU contribution:</strong></td>
<td>USD 4,900,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total UN Agency Contributions:</strong></td>
<td>USD 667,037</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phase II:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated EU contribution:</strong></td>
<td>USD 2,100,000 (To be approved)</td>
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**Estimated No. of Beneficiaries:** A breakdown by Pillar and methodology used for estimation is provided in Section II of this document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative numbers</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>89,301</td>
<td>2,512,558</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>72,797</td>
<td>1,090,006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>36,527</td>
<td>2,499,709</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
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<td>2,029,552</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>241,896</td>
<td>8,931,200</td>
</tr>
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**INDICATIVE INVESTMENT DISTRIBUTION**

**INVESTMENT by PILLAR**

- **OUTCOME 1:** 10%
- **OUTCOME 2:** 10%
- **OUTCOME 3:** 31%
- **OUTCOME 4:** 26%
- **OUTCOME 5:** 11%
- **OUTCOME 6:** 12%

**INVESTMENT by AGENCY**

- **UNICEF:** 22%
- **UN!**
- **UNFPA:** 25%
- **UNDP:** 31%

**Distribution of Programme Outcome Costs vs Programme Management Costs**

- **Programme Outcome Cost:** 82%
- **PMC+RCO:** 18%
PROGRAMME STRATEGY

OUTCOME 1 – LAWS AND POLICIES

Outcome: Legislative and policy frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of SGBV and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans.

Theory of Change: If (1) women and CSOs, supported by SGBV/HP experts, are engaged in assessing, developing and implementing legislation and policies to end SGBV/HP and (2) if the implementation of legislations and policies is strengthened and monitored, then (3) an enabling legislative and policy environment on SGBV/HP and other forms of discrimination based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards is in place and translated into plans, guaranteeing the rights of women and girls, because (4) effectively implemented legislative and policy frameworks address impunity and provide for coordinated action, including in the areas of prevention, services and data collection.

How it works

Output 1.1 National and regional partners have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending SGBV and/or gender equality and non-discrimination that respond to the rights of the most groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies’ recommendations

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 1.1.1) Participatory mapping and analysis of key legislation, policies and procedures related to SGBV in justice, health, education, labour sectors, in line with international standards, to assess gaps in prevention and response to SGBV and identify discriminatory provisions in order to establish the priority areas of intervention and support the drafting of /amendment to the key laws and policies. This will build on work done by the ILO in Tajikistan on compliance with international labour standards; and gaps identified in the annual reporting to the CEDAW and its Committees.

- (Act 1.1.2) Based on this review, and working in close cooperation with CSOs, Spotlight will provide technical assistance to the Government and the Parliament to support drafting of evidence-based amendments for identified priority legislations, policies, and procedures related to SGBV (especially with focus on creating enabling environment for criminalization of domestic violence and effective conviction of crimes), in line with international standards. This will complement the activities in the SDC project on preventing domestic violence (PDV) which examined laws and regulations on the protection of women’s rights; and drafted amendments and additions that were submitted to the Government.

- (Act 1.1.3) To support the review and amendment efforts, invest in the sensitization of key stakeholders in legislative and policy development processes, including both the executive and legislative branch, on gender equality and the prevention of and response to violence, and involving rights holders, including youth, people with disabilities, and other groups that are traditionally left behind. This will include advocacy on the promotion of the ratification and signature of the Istanbul Convention, as a priority in supporting the full realization of women’s rights alongside the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Output 1.2 National and/or sub-national partners are better able to develop evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending SGBV in line with international HR standards with M&E frameworks, increase financing and allocate appropriate budgets for their implementation, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 1.2.1) Investment in advocating and providing technical assistance to key government officials for the integration of concrete, measurable and costed interventions to combat SGBV into the National Long-term and Mid-term Development Strategies and as well as into the Local Development Programmes, linked to nationalized SDG framework including SDG5, in close consultation with and monitoring by the CSOs. The integration of SGBV in these plans is a prerequisite to advocate for and
support clear delineation of responsibilities in this area and sets the ground to provide capacity strengthening of local governments on SGBV.

- (Act 1.2.2) As the Spotlight Tajikistan Programme invests on strengthening the institutional commitment to EVAWG, there will be a focus on the participatory mid-term review of the implementations the NAP PVF (2014-2023) and development of the set of recommendations for enhancing effectiveness of NAP implementation based on international standards, including an investment on costing of services for eliminating SGBV (to support an evidence based approach to this process) and design of an M&E framework for the NAP. This will be done in partnership and close coordination with CoWFA and the relevant Government stakeholders, to ensure that the Spotlight Tajikistan Programme is strengthening the NAP PVF in alignment with the existing efforts and coordination mechanisms and no parallel processes are created. This investment will also include CSOs active in EVAWG and will involve youth, people with disabilities, and other groups that are traditionally left behind. This intervention also aims to set the stage for further investment in gender responsive budgeting (GRB), by providing greater knowledge, capacities and tools on GRB to end SGBV. The Spotlight Tajikistan Programme is currently considering investing further in GRB as priority for Spotlight in the third year of implementation.

- It is important to note that WGWD will participate in the processes of mid-term review of the implementation of the NAP LPV, and in the subsequent process of the development of the NAP on SGBV prevention (beyond 2023). WGWD, by participation in focus groups, will have an opportunity to voice their needs, priority concerns as well as, suggestions on the improvement of system of service provision to VAW survivors. It will help in ensuring in-depth understanding of WWD problems by State institutions, service providers and develop evidence based state measures for improvement of services to prevent and protect from SGBV.

OUTCOME 2 - INSTITUTIONS

Outcome: National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to SGBV and harmful practices, including in other sectors

Theory of Change: If (1) relevant decision-makers and stakeholders in all sectors of government are informed and mobilized to address SGBV/HP and if (2) institutions at all levels and relevant stakeholders have strengthened capacity on SGBV/HP and if (3) national and subnational bargaining processes are effective in overcoming the hurdles of collective action to address and prevent SGBV/HP and if (4) adequate budgets are allocated then (5) institutions will develop, coordinate and implement programmes that integrate the elimination of SGBV/HP and other SDG targets into development planning processes, because (6) institutional change requires appropriate capacity, adequate funding as well as political engagement and leadership to sustainably address SGBV/HP.

How it works

Output 2.1: Key officials at national and/or sub-national levels in all relevant institutions are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG, including DV/IPV, especially for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including in other sectors.

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 2.1.1) Developing a comprehensive training package on gender mainstreaming, SGBV and transformative leadership – based on existing materials from the UN Family and other key development partners (such as the SDC/PVF) and according to the capacity assessment that will be conducted during the baseline - for the capacity building of key ministries, agencies, parliament. Considering the need to act with one voice and coordinated messages, this will include a Training of Trainers course to UN Agencies in support of institutional strengthening in EVAW across key institutions.

- Using the training package developed and based on the capacity assessment conducted, RUNOS will support the capacity development and institutional strengthening of the following key ministries,
based on RUNOS’ mandates and entry points:

- (Act 2.1.2) MoES, MoHSP and CoWFA
- (Act 2.1.3) MoJ, MoIA (including the Police), and Judiciary, aiming to develop a gender mainstreaming strategy (incorporated into existing internal documents) that will promote increased access of women to decision-making positions and support the development of accountability and monitoring mechanisms.
- (Act 2.1.4) Recognizing the importance of involving religious groups and institutions in EVAWG, this intervention will not only use the general training package developed under the Spotlight Tajikistan Programme but also adapt a UNFPA training module on Islam and Gender, with a focus on prevention and response to VAWG/SGBV, and disseminate it to CoRA. The expected result is that CoRA adopts and disseminates it to religious leaders, so training of trainers to conduct trainings for religious leaders on how to incorporate tools to end DV into their religious community work will be provided.
- (Act 2.1.5) Engaging national human rights institutions to review international commitments made by the Government on EVAWG, and to report discrepancies and present recommendations. This will include support to the Ombudsman’s Office in conducting comparative analyses, research and M&E of the situation on the implementation of international commitments of the country at national and target district level (to be implemented by a CSO), as well as support in developing a referral system and operationalizing the Case Management System for registering SGBV cases.
- (Act 2.1.6) Providing technical assistance to the Office of Ombudsman for child rights to design its child friendly complaint mechanism, with specific focus on handling complaints from girl survivors of violence and facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

Output 2.2: Multi-stakeholder national and/or sub-national coordination mechanisms established at the highest level and/or strengthened that are adequately funded and include multi-sectoral representation and representation from the most marginalized groups.

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 2.2.1) Formally institutionalizing the Multi-sectoral Coordination Group on Prevention of VAWG, and helping to develop the Group’s Annual Work Plan to increase cross-agency response, cooperation, monitoring, and referral for victims of SGBV. The Spotlight Initiative will assist the CoWFA to establish a national level multi-sectoral coordination group (MSCG). An institutional framework for the MSCG will be envisioned by a group of experts from the CoWFA, MoHSP, MoIA, and lawyers. This framework, once approved will provide legal authority to the MSCG and provide a sustainable, government approved, base for the duration of SI and beyond. MSCG will be provided with one staff person who will be charged with facilitation and coordination arrangements for the MSCG. Ministries participating in the MSCG include CoWFA, MoHP, and the MoIA. Each will have leading coordinators who will be responsible for developing a draft work plan. SI will support conducting four round tables per year. The initial set of roundtables will be focused on the launching of the draft work plan and delineating and incorporating roles and responsibilities between the engaged government agencies. Further roundtables will focus on the process of implementation of a multi-sectoral approach. The MSCG will facilitate local implementation and monitoring of activities that address GBV, improve access to integrated quality services (including health, psycho-social, and legal), strengthen the referral system for victims of SGBV. The MSCG will also provide feedback to policy makers on progress made and challenges faced in EVAWG and suggestions for changes to the legal framework required to meet established goals. Additionally, the MSCG will serve as a platform to advocate for and address harmful cultural stereotypes and discrimination against women and girls that can lead to violence.
- (Act 2.2.1) Creation of Regional Multi-sectoral Coordination Groups on Prevention of VAWG and help develop the Group’s Annual Work Plan to increase cross-agency response, cooperation, monitoring, and referral for victims of SGBV at the province and district level working in coordination with the national Multi-Sectoral Coordination Group. During the baseline it will be assessed to which extent
it is possible to use exiting regional platforms. The National level MSCG will provide technical support to the local MSCG, conduct monitoring visits, and organizing joint meetings. In this way, SI is providing linkages between institutional framework, policy, and implementation supporting victims at the local level. These groups will coordinate overall implementation of the action plan on GBV prevention.

OUTCOME 3 - PREVENTION

Outcome: Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent SGBV and harmful practices.

Theory of Change: If (1) multiple strategies such as community mobilization, key stakeholders' engagement and education strategies are carried out in an integrated and coordinated manner based on a shared understanding and approach in line with international standards and evidence on preventing SGBV/HP, then (2) favourable social norms, attitudes and behaviours will be promoted at community and individual level to prevent SGBV/HP, because (3) multi-pronged prevention initiatives that mutually reinforce each other can effectively shift individual and socio-cultural norms including those affecting women’s sexuality and reproduction.

How it works:

Output 3.1 National and sub-national evidence-based programmes are developed to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including on Comprehensive Sexuality Education in line with international standards, for in and out of school settings

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 3.1.1) A participatory study on social norms to identify knowledge, attitudes, practices stereotypes that influence the normalization of violence against women, girls, and adolescent girls at the national, community and family levels. This will be done as part of the baseline and the results of the study will inform the development of interventions that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, as well as the advocacy efforts, notably a behaviour change communication strategy.

- (Act 3.1.2) Technical assistance to MoE to align curricula for grades 7-11 to the UNESCO guidelines on sexuality education, specifically related to gender and gender based violence; incorporation of this updated Healthy Life Style (HLS) curriculum to be compulsory into new National Education Strategy; and training of secondary school teachers on using the updated curriculum on HLS and gender based violence at schools in one selected region.

- (Act 3.1.3) Develop and implement parent focused interventions designed to promote positive parenting practices and effective parent-child communication and parent-parent communication that will address spousal abuse. This will be reinforced by the innovative and successfully tested stepping stone intervention, addressing several gender domains: social-cultural norms and beliefs, gender roles and responsibilities, access to and control over assets and patterns of power and decision making.

- (Act 3.1.4) Parent focused interventions to support EVAWG will be strengthened by theatre-based educational performances to teach positive parenting practices and positive masculinity, including information sessions for parents to learn to speak with their children about selected healthy lifestyle education (HLSE) topics including dating violence, bullying, and early marriage. Theatre-based educational performances to teach positive parenting practices and positive masculinity.

- (Act 3.1.5) Implement in-school and out-of-school programmes to strengthen student councils and girls committees within the councils and other peer-to-peer platforms to advocate and engage youth to design prevention approaches of VAG and SGBV and resilience of girls to violence. This will include building 21st century skills (as well as of skills) of girls, notably at risk groups, in order to provide for their successful transition from school to work life as a prevention measure to be resilient to VAG and SGBV.
● (Act 3.1.6) Using the power of youth centered social media influencers, create viral-oriented YouTube videos targeted at 18-24 year olds, that challenge traditional social norms, promote positive masculinity, and HLS/SRHR information in an accessible and fun way. This will be complemented by competitions for fans of the social media influencers to create their own videos and upload them onto YouTube, amplifying direct engagement of youth. In parallel, a theatre campaign will visit dormitories of university students to increase encounters with the target audience and spread HLS/SRHR information in an accessible and fun way.

● (Act 3.1.7) Promote and institutionalize survivor-centered reporting and ethical principles among media workers including journalists through a) development of National Guideline for journalists and reporters on reporting on SGBV with relevant organizations, b) trainings to develop capacity on survivor-centered reporting, c) dissemination and socializing of the guideline for journalists, d) establishment of a mechanism with the union of journalists to award best examples and success stories on SGBV reporting. Under this intervention media campaigns and advocacy events will be organized aimed at attitude and behaviour change towards SGBV for various audiences including women, men and children.

Output 3.2 Community advocacy platforms are established/strengthened to develop strategies and programmes (including informing parenting skills around gender socialization through early childhood development programmes) including community dialogues, public information and advocacy campaigns, to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls’ sexuality and reproduction, self-confidence and self-esteem and transforming harmful masculinities.

● (Act 3.2.1) Support the government in designing a comprehensive multi-media Behaviour Change Communication Strategy, promoting social norms change across the ecological model (societal, community, family, relationship and individual levels), tailoring messaging and interventions to ensure appropriate coordination. Note that WGWD will be active drivers of change in the interventions of promoting transformational social and behavioural norms change process to prevent VAWG at individual and community levels. It will help in tailoring messages that will specifically challenge cultural and environmental barriers, and advocating the rights of WGWD to life free from violence. This strategy will inform mass media campaigns/activities including production of visuals for the campaign and community mobilization, in line with messaging identified in the KAPB study, including the identification and training of community champions (local government officials, community and religious leaders)

● Note that the work with religious leaders will be carried out based on the engagement and partnership with CoRA (as detailed in Pillar 2 above). CoRA - as an official government body - will facilitate and coordinate the process of involving religious leaders to address GBV in target districts through training high level and local level Imams on Islam and SGBV. Religious leaders have a very strong influence on the population through sermons and pastoral consultations where they can incorporate positive messages to men and boys to prevent SGBV.

● (Act 3.2.2) Introduce innovative approaches on work with social norms – ethnographic review on SGBV and identification of new social norm holders to create a demand within communities and individuals to stop impunity of violence; formation a public opinion on illegality of violence and HP, stressing it as crime. Mobilized community members will be supported to lead the process, including: self-reflection and understanding of inner beliefs and attitudes on VAWG; personal conscious decisions on that he/she is unwilling to continue bear with violence and seek/learn the ways of fighting against violence. At this stage commitment to change violent and discriminatory norms is high; start personal change process; unite with community members to undertake joint actions to change norms at family/community levels; reflection on the process and acknowledging victorious examples of changes and documenting lessons learned. The approach and experience in 6 pilot districts will be documented for further up scaling throughout the country.

● (Act 3.2.3) Carry out community mobilization interventions through the support to paralegals, jamoat activists, youth, people with disabilities, women living with HIV and local governments, including support to public council women members, under the local police, to strengthen and
promote community policing for improved access and trust of police services.

- (Act 3.2.4) Building upon UNFPA’s regional and national “Men Engage” program, which involves partnering with men and boys to change social norms and end GBV, this activity will leverage the power of male “influencers” (famous sports stars) to demonstrate positive models of masculinity, transform gender stereotypes and change the narrative on gender norms and violence. This is done through direct sports-based activities with girls and boys, and an advocacy campaign featuring these sports “influencers” promoting anti-SGBV messages to their fan base. Engaging men through positive models of masculinity is a proven method to change perception of social norms. UNFPA has regionally pioneered the model of engaging sports stars (influencers) as an entry point to engage men and boys in SGBV messaging.

OUTCOME 4 - ESSENTIAL SERVICES

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

Theory of Change: If (1) service providers have the capacity to deliver essential services, including SRH services, and to prosecute perpetrators in line with international human rights standards and guidelines and (2) if these services are made available and accessible to women and girls if (3) women and girls are informed and empowered to exercise their rights to services (including SRHRs and access to justice) then (4) women and girls who experience SGBV and harmful practices will increase their use of services and recover from violence, while perpetrators will be prosecuted, because (5) underlying barriers to women and girls’ access to services have been addressed, (6) including in relation to gender and socio-cultural norms affecting women’s sexuality and reproduction.

How it works

Output 4.1 Relevant government authorities and women’s rights organisations at national and sub-national levels have better knowledge and capacity to deliver quality and coordinated essential services, including SRH services and access to justice, to women and girls’ survivors of violence, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 4.1.1) Adaptation and adoption of UN Essential Service package and Standard Operating Procedure for providing quality essential services for survivors of SGBV. The SOPs for police, health and psycho-social services will be adapted for use and administered by service providers to victims of SGBV at the point of service delivery. This will include training of first line SGBV health service providers on the adopted Standard Operating Procedures on providing quality services to victims of SGBV (activity 4.1.1), and the national protocol on rape, to improve quality of service delivery in response to SGBV and strengthen a referral system and multi-sectoral cooperation to respond to SGBV.

- (Act 4.1.2) Development of capacity of service providers (legal aid, Justice and Police) through assessment of gaps of service delivery, elaboration and strengthening coordination of services with active participation of survivors and provision of training.

- (Act 4.1.3) Provision of psychosocial support under the adolescents mental health to girls survivors of SGBV or facing intersecting forms of discrimination.

- (Act 4.1.4) Increasing the number of Victims Support Rooms and strengthen existing shelters, to provide safe spaces for victims of SGBV to stay and receive services. VSRs are rooms within existing health facilities when women and children victims of SGBV can shelter for up to two months time. Currently, VSRs are the only sustainable form of shelter for victims in Tajikistan as they are funded and supported by the government (MoH) and are located in different regions. The VSRs provide shelter, food, health care, and psychosocial support to victims of SGBV. This intervention will work with the MoH to order the establishment of new VSRs and allocate staff with funding from the State budget. Additionally, the Spotlight Tajikistan Programme’s investment will strengthen the VSRs by ensuring that primary service providers at VSRs are able to implement the SOPs adopted and
strengthen the referral system for victims by integrating information about the victim hotline at VSRs and incorporating the services of legal professionals. The VSRs as government owned facilities would be the subject to the oversight from the MSCG at the national and regional levels (Pillar 2), bringing coordination from MoH, CoWFA, and MoIA towards victims services in Tajikistan. This expands and improves the existing network of VSRs, with full ownership from the Ministry of Health, ensuring sustainability. In parallel, the information and data collected under the programme will allow for better campaigning and advocacy efforts to engage the Government in improving these services, notably funding existing shelters.

- (Act 4.1.5) As part of the improvement and expansion of the VSRs, the programme will ensure the integration of international best-practice guidance on response and provision of gender sensitive quality services to victims of SGBV into primary health care institutions (Health house, Rural health centers).

**Output 4.2 Women and girls’ survivors of violence and their families are informed of and can access quality essential services, including longer-term recovery services and opportunities**

This will be advanced through:

- (Act 4.2.1) Improving the system of service provision to address specific needs of women with disabilities during investigation process of VAWG cases (medical forensic services), led by the League of women with disabilities, as per Istanbul Convention Action Plan. In addition, WGWD will act as reference group in the process of development of protocol for the improvement the quality of medical forensic services and case management for special groups of women and girls, including procedures for medical forensic experts on the specifics of conducting medical examinations, conducting interviews with victims, taking medical history notes, examining and recording injuries, features of photographing, screening and drawing up conclusions on the cases of violence against women and girls with disabilities.

- (Act 4.2.2) Promoting the existence and support of the functioning of the hotline for response to SGBV cases (1313), which provides free psychological counselling, legal and health advice to survivors of SGBV, based on a developed exit strategy to ensure sustainability. This will include Capacity building of the Hotline service centre through elaboration and implementation of the manuals and SOPs for the staff and activities to deliver the quality services for SGBV survivors.

- Note that, considering Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (EFCA) was in change of implementing and supporting the hotline (with EU funding) to date, it is recommended that, in this exceptional case, this engagement is continued through direct contracting. EFCA is a public organization established in the region in 2005 with the goal of supporting civil society initiatives, developing entrepreneurship, education and good governance in Central Asia. The organization implements projects in the areas of: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Human Rights and Rule of Law; Civil Society Development and Good Governance and Youth Empowerment and Education.

- (Act 4.2.3) Developing, maintaining and promoting a mobile application, co-designed by women and girls, notably WGWD, which will provide links to online and offline access to free counselling and information and promotion of service providers to women and girls survivors of SGBV.

- (Act 4.2.4) Supporting civil society and women’s rights organizations in implementing programmes for economic reintegration of SGBV survivors. This will include capacity building, mentoring and guidance to service providers (women’s rights organizations working with survivors and their family members) as well as transfer of funds to CSOs to implement the WEE/reintegration program.

- (Act 4.2.5) Conducting Mobile Public Health Clinics to provide professional, basic health, legal and psycho-social services for women and girls in remote areas that usually have little to no access to SGBV and SRHR.
OUTCOME 5 - DATA

Outcome: Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of SGBV and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes

Theory of Change: If (1) Measurement and methodologies for SGBV/HP data collection are improved and strengthened (including monitoring and reporting requirements for SDG target 5.2 indicators and (2) the capacity of national institutions to collect disaggregated SGBV/HP data in line with globally agreed standards is strengthened and (3) disaggregated data is made accessible and disseminated to be used by decision makers and civil society(4) then laws, policies and programmes will be based on evidence and better able to respond to the specific context and realities of women and girls, including those most marginalized (5) because they will be based on quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data.

How it works

Output 5.1 Key partners, including relevant statistical officers, service providers in the different branches of government (including Statistics offices, justice, security and health sector) and women’s rights advocates have strengthened capacities to regularly collect data related to SGBV in line with international and regional standards to inform laws, policies and programmes

This will be advanced through:

- (Act. 5.1.1) Determine the current state of data collection on SGBV in Tajikistan through a participatory review and mapping of existing administrative data, identification of data gaps, procedures and assessment the technical capacity of the key seven agencies involved with production, collection and analysis of data related to GBV, in order to establish the areas of intervention and support the development of data indicators and procedures.

- (Act. 5.1.2) Based on this mapping, and working in close cooperation with relevant government agencies and CSOs, revise and harmonize tools and instruments of the seven agencies involved with production, collection, monitoring, and analysis of data related to GBV to ensure common definition, methodologies, indicators, definition of standards and protocols, ethical standards, and processes inline with international standards on data on SGBV; towards the goal of creating a unified mechanism of collection of GBV data across Agencies.

- (Act. 5.1.3) Training of data officers in agencies on applying the newly created unified indicators and procedures to implement collection and reporting on gender based violence data to the Agency Statistics. Building upon the common indicators developed, in collaboration with the Agency of Statistics, a form will be developed using the developed indicators. With the support of the AS, this form will be used by primary data collection institutions as a basis for reporting SGBV/HP information.

- (Act. 5.1.4) Based on the tools and indicators developed under this Pillar, strengthen the capacity of women’s rights advocates and CSOs to collect incidence data, including qualitative data, on SGBV, with a focus on groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination for evidence based monitoring and reporting (CEDAW, UPR).

OUTCOME 6 - CSOS

Outcome: 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 SGBV

Theory of Change: If (1) gender advocates and civil society organisations will come together and undertake scrutinized review of personal attitudes and beliefs towards VAWG, and (2) the knowledge, expertise and capacities of gender advocates and civil society organisations strengthened based on transformative leadership approach, tailor-made to address capacity gaps, as well in support to inner self-motivated actions for eliminating violence and inequalities, responding to the needs of all women and girls, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, then (4) gender advocates and civil society
organisations will be jointly undertaking integrated and coherent multi-sectoral actions and experimentation on innovative approaches, because (5) activism and solidarity of civil society movement is strong to demand for accountability, influence decision making, sustain, and advance progress on GEWE and ending SGBV policies and programmes.

**How it works:**

*Output 6.1* Women’s rights groups and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV, more specifically, with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels.

This will be advanced through:

- (Act. 6.1.1) Specific needs of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of SGBV advocated for during Parliament Zero hearings by graduates of the School of Gender Advocates. This will be achieved by creating a pool of EVAWG advocates and experts through organising the School of Gender Advocates - focus on transformative leadership for accelerating progress on EVAWG, evidence based campaigning, data analysis and use for planning and policy making, use on IT/ICT for strengthening influence of CS on policy making, demanding accountability. Knowledge management through systematic documentation of practices, including observation of processes, difficulties, enabling factors, defining lessons learned.

- (Act. 6.1.2) Support to strengthen the women’s movement and gender advocates for leading changes at legislative and institutional levels, as well as transformation of social norms and behaviours towards EVAWG. This will be implemented by providing a Platform for CS activists to come together and develop Civil Society Strategy to Leading Change on EVAWG, including defining CSOs capacity needs on transformative leadership. This transformative leadership approach helps to reveal rooted beliefs and attitudes – from where CSO can think of solutions on how to make changes towards EVAWG. Strategy will include networking and multi-sectoral coordination between CSOs working in different sectors to jointly experiment on new approaches of advocating for/promoting demand for change within society / communities / family relations.

- (Act. 6.1.3) Support civil society actors’ initiatives as part of implementation of the Strategy Leading Change on EVAWG. This will be implemented through technical and financial support to CS activists and CSOs to implement priorities they jointly defined in the Civil Society Strategy to Leading Change on EVAWG. Joint actions will focus on accelerating progress on practical realization of policies and laws that respond to the needs of women and girls, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination to be implemented by CSOs with involvement of women activists and representatives of different groups and sectors (WWD, HIV, youth, rural women, abandoned wives, single mothers).

- (Act 6.1.4) Support CSOs’ participation in CEDAW&UPR process. This will include expert meetings, collection of data and analysis, consultations, training on HR reporting and support in drafting analytical reports.

- (Act 6.1.5) Facilitate knowledge-exchange and capacity building of CSOs representing groups focusing on multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination of violence (focus on LGBTQI, sex workers, people with disabilities) through strengthening strategic program management and fundraising abilities, ability to document cases of SGBV for evidence based advocacy at the national and global level (CEDAW).

- (Act 6.1.6) Support the functioning of the CS-NRG to advise the Spotlight Country Programmes and advocate and partner for the realization of its objectives – support meetings and travelling of members as required and ensure the means for CS-NRG to effectively provide meaningful input to the programme - and its members on the Steering Committee.
ALIGNMENT WITH SDGS AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS


However, the inclusion of gender equality targets in these strategic documents ensures that indicators, implementing agencies, and financing are also delineated.

The Spotlight Tajikistan Programme will actively contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and accelerate Tajikistan’s progress toward reaching its targets under the 2030 Agenda, particularly in regards to SDG 5 on Gender Equality, but also SDG 3 “Health and Well-Being”, SDG. 4 “Quality Education”, SDG 10 “Reduced Inequalities”, SDG 16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”, and SDG 17 on “Partnerships”.

In 2016, the Government of Tajikistan adopted the National Development Strategy for the period from 2016 to 2030 (NDS-2030) and the Mid-term Development Programme for the period 2016-2020 (MtDP-2020). The NDS-2030 is emphasizing the Government of Tajikistan’s commitments to pursue Agenda 2030.

The NDS-2030 provides direct linkages to the global Agenda 2030 and the SDGs, with clear articulation of links specified in various sections of both the NDS-2030 and the MtDP-2020. The UN organized an SDG Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) mission of experts in December 2016. In preparation for the mission, UNDP prepared a rapid integrated assessment (RIA) of linkages between the NDS, key sector strategies and SDGs. RIA has also helped identify gaps in such areas as gender, inequality and environment. The new NDS was seen to have high level of alignment with SDGs targets (78%).

Key recommendations from MAPS mission included:

- Continued mainstreaming of the Agenda 2030 at the national and sub-national level involves aligning sectoral and local development plans and priorities with the SDG targets and defining actions to meet the SDGs;
- Strengthen institutional capacities for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the SDGs progress;
- Focus on objectives having catalytic effect for Tajikistan’s development, including but not limited to access to energy sources, gender equality, regional development, youth issues (unqualified labour, youth labour migration, and radicalization);
- The need to address the issues of SDGs financing and domestic resource mobilization through more effective and transparent use of state funds and remittances.
- Localizing SDGs and addressing capacities of local stakeholders to promote the “Leave no one behind agenda” at the local level.
- Engagement of civil society and citizens in the processes of planning and monitoring of SDGs.

The Spotlight Tajikistan Programme will support the implementation of the NDS - 2030

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

As the highest governance structure for the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan, and in compliance with the Spotlight Initiative guidance, the Country Programme Steering Committee (CP-SC) will be tasked with providing strategic leadership and oversight to the Programme. The CP-SC will have the authority to make decisions that are in accordance with the objectives, approach and scope of the programme once the Spotlight Initiative Tajikistan Programme Document is approved.

The CP-SC is expected to make key Programme decisions, guide the implementing partners and responsible parties in the execution of the Programme, and ensure effective oversight through review of, and feedback to strategic programme documents (for example, Annual Workplans, Evaluation Management Responses, and potential revisions of the Programme Document, as relevant).
The specific roles and responsibilities of the CP-SC will be validated through further consultation that will take place at the final stages of programme design, under the following guiding principles:

- Ensuring accountability, effective management and implementation of the SI through proper communication and coordination, in alignment with Tajikistan’s priorities and considering UNDAF’s outcomes and European Union priorities.
- Approving annual work plans, reviewing output level results and adjusting implementation with the aim of ensuring maximum programmatic impact
- Reviewing and approving periodic and annual joint programme narrative reports submitted by the technical team.
- Approving programmatic or budgetary programme revisions within the limits of the approved programme document by the Operational Steering Committee.
- Reviewing risk management strategies and ensuring the programme is proactively managing and mitigating risks.
- Managing stakeholder relationships at country level.

The following list of members, as summarized in the revised diagram in Figure 1 below, has been discussed in consultations with the Government and Civil Society held to date and will need to get final approval by the Government:

- UN Resident Coordinator (co-chair)
- CoWFA (co-chair)
- European Union Ambassador or representative, who will have a key role in providing strategic advice to the Programme
- National Government representatives currently being discussed – Executive Office of the President, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Governors of the 3 target regions (currently under discussion)
- Country Representative of UN Women (or representative)
- Country Representative of UNDP (or representative)
- Country Representative of UNICEF (or representative)
- Country Representative of UNFPA (or representative)
- Civil Society National Reference Group representative nominated by the CS Reference Group – number of representatives to ensure 20% representation.

Other stakeholders may be invited to participate in planning, deliberation and monitoring roles of the Committee. This includes representatives from academic/research institutions, local communities and/or the private sector.

The **UN Resident Coordinator and the Heads of UN Recipient Organisations** (RUNOs), which are (UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF) are jointly accountable to the Government and the people of Tajikistan for the delivery of strategic results of the Country Programme. The Heads of RUNOs are accountable to the RC. The RC will convene a regular meeting of the Heads of RUNOs (frequency still to be decided) to periodically review the progress of Country Programme implementation, provide feedback, discuss and agree on issues that require strategic decision-making. In addition to the Country Programme Steering Committee, communications and regular field monitoring visits, the Spotlight Tajikistan Programme is also discussing strategies to introduce beneficiary feedback mechanisms to ensure accountability.
Figure 1 – Spotlight Tajikistan Programme Governance Structure – subject to Government confirmation

**Spotlight Initiative Governance Structure Tajikistan**

**Steering Committee**
Country Programme Steering Committee (Chaired by CoWFA and UN RC)
Members: EU Ambassador, 4 RUNOs, Central Government Representatives (Executive Office of the President; Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs), Regional Authorities (Governors from target Regions) CSOs (3 Reps from CS-NRG)

**Resident Coordinator**
Technical Coherence
Overall accountability and leadership with Govt & EU Delegation
Co-Chair of SI Steering Committee

**Responsible UN Organizations (RUNOs):**
UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF

**CS-NRG**
Provide advice in design and implementation
Insights on trends and needs
Connection with women’s movement
Ensure partners’ align to National Programme objectives

**EU Delegation in Tajikistan**
Oversight & Work in coordination

**Resident Coordinator’s Office**
Overall Coordination
SI Communications, M&E/ Knowledge Management & Reporting
Convene Steering Committee and CS Reference Group