

## Spotlight Mid-term Assessment Report using ROM review

Type of ROM review **Projects and Programmes**  
 Project title *Spotlight Initiative Country Programme in Malawi*  
 Project reference  
 EU Delegation in charge *HEAD OF COOPERATION MALAWI – IVO HOEFKENS*

Key information			
Domain (instrument)	AFRICA		
DAC Sector	Human and Social Development: « Gender Equality »		
Zone Benefitting from the Action	Malawi		
Type of Project/Programme	Violence against women and girls		
Geographic Implementation	Single country		
Contracting Party	SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE		
EU contribution	20,990,484 \$		
Project Implementation Dates	Start Date	1 January 2019	End Date 31 December 2022
ROM expert(s) name(s)	Maureen Chirwa and Alice Behrendt		
Field phase	Start Date	12 January 2021	End Date 16 February 2021

Scoring overview: <b>green (good)</b> <b>orange (problems)</b> <b>red (serious deficiencies)</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Relevance	●	●	●	●	●	●
Efficiency	7	8	9	10	11	
	●	●	●	●	●	
Effectiveness	12	13	14			
	●	●	●			
Sustainability	15					
	●					

Persons interviewed and surveyed	Interviews/ FGD	Survey
EU Delegation	3	NA
Partner country government	6	14
UN agencies	11	22
CSO reference group	2	[12] <sup>1</sup>
Implementing partners	6	21
Final Beneficiaries	30	NA
Other	4	NA

Key documents	Number
Essential documents	13
Other documents	21

<sup>1</sup> Out of the 21 IPs who participated in the online survey, 12 indicated that they were part of the CSO Reference Group

## A. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

### **Purpose and objectives of the Mid-term Assessment (MTA):**

The purpose of the MTA is to assess the programme at country level as soon as it reaches the end of phase I to take stock of where the Spotlight Initiative is vis-à-vis its initial programme and to assess the new ways of working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The specific objectives are to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the programme, based on the agreed MTA questions, and to formulate relevant recommendations to improve subsequent project implementation.

As per the Terms of Reference, the MTA uses the EU Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) methodology as an approach to ensure that the results are comparable (across countries) and easy to interpret. However, the questions to be answered for the MTA are different from standard ROM methodology questions and were agreed in advance by the EU and the Spotlight Secretariat. The 15 MTA questions are grouped by Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability, which form the main headings of the report.

The ROM methodology uses the following criteria for grading the questions:

**Table 1. Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions**

<b>Qualitative</b>	<b>Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions</b>
<b>Good/very good</b>	The situation is considered satisfactory, but there may be room for improvement. Recommendations are useful, but not vital to the project or programme.
<b>Problems identified and small improvements needed</b>	There are issues which need to be addressed, otherwise the global performance of the project or programme may be negatively affected. Necessary improvements do not however require a major revision of the intervention logic and implementation arrangements.
<b>Serious problems identified and major adjustments needed</b>	There are deficiencies which are so serious that, if not addressed, they may lead to failure of the project or programme. Major adjustments and revision of the intervention logic and/or implementation arrangements are necessary.

In Malawi, the Spotlight Initiative (SI) is implemented in six districts: Nkhata-Bay, Mzimba (Northern Region); Dowa, Ntchisi (Central Region); Machinga and Nsanje (Southern Region). These districts were selected based on performance on key indicators, as well as presence of other programmes and UN organizations. The programme intends to scaled up to three additional districts, getting to nine districts by mobilizing partners and additional resources.

For this MTA, a total of 62 informants were interviewed either through key informant interviews (KIIs) or Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The KIIs were conducted at national and subnational levels including with six government officials, three European Union Delegation staff (EUD), 12 representatives from UN organisations, including from Recipient UN organisations (RUNOs), the Resident Coordinator Office (RCO), UN Head of Agencies (UN HoA), two members from the Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG), six implementing partners (IPs) and four other stakeholders that included three SI District

Coordinators and Chairperson of the Media Network. In addition, 30 beneficiaries were consulted in four FGDs:

- in Dowa with the Ifenso Platform for Primary School Boys and girls (out of school). Five boys and seven girls were interviewed separately to allow free expression of their perceptions and views. Prior to meeting the girls and boys, assent was sought through their patron who collaborates with PACHI.
- in Ntchisi with six representatives of the Inclusive Movement Building Committee
- in Machinga with the Community of Practice which included 1 chief, 2 representatives of the Community Victim Support Unit (1 female and 1 male), 1 child protection officer (male), 2 mentors (2 females) and 1 chairperson from the Village savings loans (female). This was the only focus group discussion with both male and female participants. It was raised prior to organising the FGD and feedback was received that interviewing these stakeholders together would not affect their opinions. Prior to the FGD, participants were offered to have a separate FGD for male and female participants, but this was not accepted by the participants.
- In Machinga with six participants of the Barbershop Toolkit comprised of men, boys, chiefs and religious leaders (Christian and Muslim).

The list of stakeholders consulted is presented in Annex 2. The MTA also included an online survey to which 57 respondents participated, including 14 government officials, 22 representatives from UN agencies and 21 IPs and was informed by the internal Mid-term Review (MTR) undertaken by the Malawi Spotlight Initiative team in 2020 along with other relevant programme documents.

**Limitations and measures taken:**

- The main limitation was limited time for data collection. The period allocated for the 25 planned interviews and focus group discussions, including field visit to three districts, was short. Because of this, it was not always feasible to conduct the interviews at the agreed time and several interviews were rescheduled. This flexibility from everyone involved enabled eight additional interviews to be undertaken. The total number of interviews conducted was 33.
- Certified data measuring progress against the indicators and milestones for 2020 were not available during data collection. Qualitative information on activities conducted in 2020 was obtained from document review, key informant interviews and focus group discussion. The absence of comprehensive and quality assured monitoring data in time for the Mid-term assessment review constitutes a limitation for the assessment, which the Spotlight Secretariat should consider in future exercises.
- Official financial reports are available for up to Quarter 3 2020 [30 September 2020]. Certified financial reports for the whole year 2020 will be made available in late May 2021, these reports follow the established inter-agency process for reporting on pooled funds in a Multi-donor Trust Fund and according to the timeline set in the EU agreement special conditions.

## B. RELEVANCE

<p><b>1. Does the action align to the principles of the Spotlight Initiative as listed in the Spotlight Initiative Fund TORs?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Problems</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies</p>
<p>Findings from FGDs with the beneficiaries and KIIs with EUD, RC, HoA, RUNOs, government agencies, implementing partners, CSO Reference Group show a strong consensus that the programme is aligned to the guiding principles as outlined in a Multi Partner Trust Fund Terms of Reference 2017-2023. The programme adheres to the principle of ‘do no harm’ and ‘leaving no-one behind’. It is survivor centred and is modelled around the United Nations development system reform. These findings are corroborated with the findings from the online survey which show a strong agreement among responses with more than 80 per cent of respondents agreeing that the Spotlight Initiative in Malawi adheres to the Spotlight Initiative principles. See annex 3 for more details.</p> <p>The programme has adopted many principles to ensure that approaches are gender responsive and gender transformative and promote a human rights-based approach including the commitment of ‘leaving no one behind’. The programme focuses on women and girls with disabilities, LGBTQI, elderly, people with albinism and survivors of GBV, amongst others. Most online survey respondents (80%) believe that the programme involves all necessary stakeholders including community-based organizations, community level structures, faith-based organizations, gender Office at the District Council, government, private sector and media, young and adult men. Among those that disagree, three respondents from an IP, RUNO and the Government believe that traditional and religious leaders, as well as Faith Based Organisations are not sufficiently involved. The document review shows that the programme is actively involving Chiefs through the Barbershop toolbox and the initiation of a Chiefs council. However, both the FGD conducted as part of this MTA and the findings of the MTR indicated that not all Chiefs feel sufficiently involved because they are not always informed when IPs are conducting activities in their areas or because they would like to be involved more in trainings. The MTA evaluation team believes that the different opinions on the sufficient engagement of Chiefs and religious leaders may be linked to the late roll out of these activities in Phase 1.</p> <p>While the design of the programme is fully aligned with the Spotlight Initiative principles, there were differences of opinion on the extent to which the principle on “<i>Interventions ensure state and multilateral institutions are primary partners in programme implementation and developing longer-term financial sustainability</i>” is already being realised. The Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Gender are key partners and provide an enabling platform for the implementation of the programme in the districts through the District Commissioner’s office. During the design, the programme was developed taking into consideration the existing District Development Plans (DDPs). However, key informants from government partners at national and district council expressed that the programme does not yet sufficiently align to their DDPs. The expectation of the government both at national and district levels was that the attention to SGBV, Harmful practices (HP), HIV and disabilities would be integrated or mainstreamed in the DDPs as a result of the support from the Spotlight Initiative. This work has started but has not yet been completed. UNDP, as part of another programme and with support of the Spotlight Initiative, has been supporting the review of the DDPs in a bottom-up approach supporting the empowerment of women and girls in conducting social audits and building the capacity of Village Development Councils on gender responsive budgeting principles. Along with the capacity building, an assessment is conducted at village level which forms the basis for developing the Village Action Plans (VAPs) which in turn inform the development of the DDPs. These processes were started</p>	

and tools for integration of SGBV, HP, HIV and disability were developed, however the process also required a review of the Local Government ‘Data Requirement Guidelines’ which form the basis for Local Council Socio-Economic Profiles and DDPs. Due to COVID travel restrictions, a planned stakeholder meeting to review the Data Requirement Guideline and Checklist did not take place. Hence, while the Spotlight Initiative is engaging state actors and primary actors and contributing to developing longer-term sustainability by integrating attention to SGBV, HP, HIV, and disabilities into the DPPs, the process is currently stalled and hence government partners consulted consider that this principle is not yet fully realised.

**Key findings:**

- The programme adheres to the Spotlight Initiative guiding principles, in particular those related to promoting interventions which are gender responsive and transformative and in line with human rights principles such as leaving no one behind. It focuses particularly on women and girls with disabilities, LGBTQI, elderly, people with albinism and survivors of GBV, amongst others. Some survey respondents indicated that Chiefs and religious leaders are not sufficiently engaged, but this could not be corroborated by the document review.
- While the design of the programme is well aligned to the Spotlight Initiative guiding principles, government officials mentioned that the principle of “Interventions ensure state and multilateral institutions are primary partners in programme implementation and developing longer-term financial sustainability” is not yet fully realised. Document review confirmed that the programme has put measures in place to realise this principle, however, factors outside of their control have delayed the full realisation of these principles.

**Recommendations:**

- For Phase 2, follow up on the review of the Local Government Data Requirement Guidelines and continue to support the integration and mainstreaming of SGBV, HP, disability as part of the VAP and DDP processes

**2A. Are the Initiative’s deliverables aligned with the UN agencies’ mandate and priorities? Are the right UN agencies involved?**

**2B. Are programmes implemented in line with the UN System reform?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

Serious deficiencies

**Alignment of deliverables to the UN agencies’ mandate.**

The UN agencies have complementary priorities in the country which give them good capacity to implement the programme. The Country Programme Document outlines the each RUNO its technical expertise, experiences with addressing VAWG and HP in Malawi and capacity in the country. Each one of them has a collaborative comparative advantage and takes the lead of one of the pillars, while they also contribute to other pillars based on their expertise in the country (see table 2 below). Key informants were able to explain the complementarity of the agencies during the interviews.

**Table 2. Division of labour among RUNOs**

UN Agency	UNICEF	UNFPA	UNDP	UN WOMEN
<b>Pillar Lead</b>	3	4	2 and 5	1 and 6
<b>Contribution</b>	4 and 5	2, 3, and 5	1 and 4	2, 3, 4, and 5.

**UNICEF** has a comparative advantage in programmes to transform gender discriminatory roles, expectations, and practices. This includes efforts to address discriminatory policies as well as the socialization processes and narratives that define gendered roles and practices, supporting girls and boys from early childhood through adolescence to adopt and shape more equitable gender norms and behaviours. It also includes prevention and protection services to address harmful practices, as well as the implementation of integrated interpersonal and media-based behaviour and social change platforms. In line with its expertise, experience and accumulated knowledge, UNICEF leads on the implementation of Pillar number 3 on “Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours are promoted at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices. UNICEF has budgeted for the equivalent of 3 full-time positions spread across 15 staff members, including a full-time programme officer on protection and justice, a communication for development specialist (70%), a programme officer on protection and case management (37%), programme officer on data (15%) on girls’ education (15%). The chief of protection, Education and Adolescents, as well as the Protection Specialist and C4D Manager each also contribute 5 per cent of their time to the Spotlight Initiative. In addition, UNICEF budgeted for a programme associate (10%), a finance associate (10%), a supply officer (15%), HACT officer (15%) and admin associate (10%).

**UNDP’s** comparative advantage lies within tackling impunity for sexual and gender-based violent crimes; improving access to justice, legal aid for women and girls; building institutional capacities; and community-level prevention to raise awareness. Based on its expertise, experiences and knowledge, UNDP leads Pillars 2 and 5. Pillar 2 is on “Capacities of national and sub-national systems and institutions are strengthened for the improved planning, funding and deliverance of multi-sectoral programmes; and Pillar 5 is on quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices will be collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to reform laws, policies and programmes. UNDP has budgeted for the equivalent of 11 full time staff, including an M&E officer and communication specialist to be assigned to the Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, as well as 6 full-time district coordinators, a full-time Spotlight Initiative coordinator, a full-time finance/admin person, portfolio manager (25%), M&E specialist (20%), programme analyst (50%) and programme associate (50%).

**UN Women’s** comparative advantage lies in ensuring national and local plans, strategies, policies and budgets are gender-responsive, and to build institutional capacity at all levels to address discrimination in laws and policies. It also includes ensuring justice institutions are accessible to and deliver for women and girls in all contexts; building up capacity of stakeholders to prevent VAWG and deliver essential services; ensuring safe spaces for girls to speak out and bring issues of harmful cultural practices into the spotlight; addressing harmful practices; and repealing of discriminatory legislation and norms that impede women’s access to SRH services. It is in this regard that UN Women leads Pillars 1 and 6. Pillar 1 is on ensuring legislative and policy framework on violence against women and girls and harmful practices are in place, in line with international human rights standards. Pillar 6 is on women’s rights groups, autonomous social movements and CSO including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending VAWG. UN Women has budgeted for the equivalent of 4 full time staff, spread over 6 people, including a programme specialist on EAWG (70%), a full-time policy coherence specialist (to be seconded to the Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat), an operations manager (50%), programme officer (50%), monitoring specialist (35%), programme finance assistant (100%).

UNFPA's comparative advantage lies strongly in sexual and reproductive health rights, including advancing gender equality and empower women and girls to exercise their reproductive rights and to be protected from violence and harmful practices; increasing multisectoral capacity to prevent and address GBV with a focus on advocacy, data, health and health systems, psychosocial support, and coordination; improving access to information and services for SRH and reproductive rights for those furthest behind; improving capacities of police and other front-line service providers; forecast, procure, distribute and track the delivery of sexual and reproductive health commodities; and putting in place accountability mechanisms for SRH and reproductive rights. UNFPA leads Pillar 4: women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices are empowered to use available, accessible, acceptable and quality essential services, including sexual and reproductive health services and those meant for long-term recovery from violence. The equivalent of 9.5 full-time staff were allocated to the programme, including a full-time programme officer, 6 national UN volunteers at district level to provide technical support to service providers, a monitoring specialist (60%), two programme analysts (one full-time and one 60%) and programme finance assistant (30%).

Based on their individual capacity and the portfolio each one has accumulated, the right RUNOs with right skill mix are involved. There was a positive observation from the EUD as expressed in this quote:

*"... there has been quite a good coordination so far and a good complementarity, and there is like one focal point for attention, I think it's a good setup from what we understood ..., things have been going smoothly with each other and every agency, and they've been working at technical level on a good basis, and we are happy about it" (EUD).*

#### **Programme implemented in line with the UN System reform**

UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA are the four Recipient United Nations Organizations (RUNOs) working together for effectiveness and efficiency in planning, implementation and reporting to achieve results. The reform makes the output much more impactful than when the RUNOs were working separately.

*"...the UN reform brings about two or three principles. I think we have applied to Spotlight the first principle of coming together to work as one, so these are not agency specific programmes, but all working together to make the output much more impactful." (UN representative)*

The arrangement was reported as promising albeit with "teething problems" because the reform is new for everyone. Challenges were acknowledged and are inherent to large institutions as well as different sizes of the RUNOs in Malawi. However, the challenges are manageable and under control with the leadership of the Resident Coordinator.

In the online survey, participants were asked who they think is responsible for technical coherence of the programme. The majority (49%,  $n=22$ ) indicated UN Women, while 14 per cent reported this to be UNDP, another 23 per cent provided other options and 14 per cent did not know. The lack of clarity as to whether the technical coherence was a responsibility of the RC, UN Women or the Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat is linked to the fact that UN Women is responsible for the technical coherence, but the Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat is hosted by the RCO. UN Women has also seconded a technical coherence specialist to RCO. On whether UN Women was the best choice given their mandate, 79 per cent stated UN Women have the expertise in gender and women empowerment and have good working relationships with women. Only three survey respondents provide more negative feedback indicating that UN Women needs stronger capacity, in particular on the coordination of various actors, including from other UN agencies. The RUNOs and EUD are satisfied with the collaboration with the Resident Coordinator's office.

**Key findings:**

- The involved UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA) have complimentary experience and expertise that give them a strong capacity to implement the programme. Based on their individual capacity and the portfolio each one has accumulated, the right RUNOs with right skill mix are involved.
- Stakeholders are generally satisfied with how the programme is adhering to the UN Reform principles.

**3. Does the action presently respond to the needs of the target groups / end beneficiaries? Are the necessary consultations taking place with key stakeholders?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

Serious deficiencies

**The present programme action responds to the needs of the target groups and beneficiaries.**

The programme responds to the needs of women and girls who are survivors of violence and harmful practices. The programme was designed around the evidence generated from a situation analysis conducted at the conceptualization of the programme. The Country Action Theory of Change (Toc) was developed taking into consideration the local context based on which the monitoring and evaluation framework was developed. Participants expressed satisfaction with the ToC and perceived that it addressed critical issues from the situation analysis.

The MTR has highlighted that the programme is continuing to respond to the needs of women and girls. Consultations have taken place for the different outcomes. For example, in relation to Pillar 1, key actors from legislative and policy institutions were engaged to discuss on how to enhance the domestic legal framework to benefit women and girls. The following institutions were consulted: the MoJCA, MoGCDSW, Judiciary, Malawi Police Service, Law Commission, Malawi Human Right Commission, MoHA, Women Judges Association of Malawi, Women Lawyers Association of Malawi, Gender Justice Unit, Malawi Law Society, EU, other UN Agencies, and the SI CSNRG. This resulted in improved knowledge and capacities of duty bearers on how to ensure the legal protection of women and girls.

Consultations also focused on marginalised populations such as persons with disabilities and how they can be incorporated in relevant committees at community level. While the MTR indicated that more could still be done to increase the engagement of other vulnerable groups such as persons with albinism, sex workers and other key populations, the MTA has found that efforts are being made to increase engagement and a guide for integrating SGBV, Harmful Practices, Disability, HIV and other vulnerabilities has been produced. Use of this guide for integrating these vulnerable groups in VAPs and DDPs will be rolled out by June and implemented during Phase II.

In relation to the involvement of boys and men, key informant interviews and focus group discussions highlighted that the programme does not sufficiently cater for the needs of boys and men. The Spotlight Initiative focuses on girls and women and uses men and boys as allies in ending violence against women and girls. The document review and MTR showed that boys had been engaged through the boys' transformation and male champion activities and that they have been engaged to orient other boys on ending VAWG, to conduct community awareness campaigns and assist in linking survivors to the Spotlight Initiative and other service providers. Boys are engaged as part of the Safe Schools but there has been an outcry that school programmes in general (not only under the Spotlight Initiative) disproportionately focus on girl's education and thereby discriminate against boys. Men consulted as part of the MTR and

the MTA indicated that they have been involved through barbershop toolkits and male champion activities, however, they indicated that they have also experienced violence such as beating, being locked out of the house when arriving late, not being served food, and discriminating language. This type of violence is linked to the denial of conjugal rights and not directly linked to sexual violence. While the focus on girls and women, as part of the Spotlight Initiative, is appropriate and in line with the Theory of Change, the feedback from the focus group discussions highlights that it is also important to listen to the concerns expressed by men and boys to ensure they are not alienated but instead feel empowered to participate.

Grassroots organisations consulted as part of the MTA also expressed their appreciation of the programme and that it is responsive to the needs of the communities. These organisations, through the work of the IPs, feel supported through trainings and basic resources such as stationary. Beneficiaries of the programme, such as community structures who are used to reach out to community members, are also satisfied and were able to attest to the improvement of their work. It was reported that with the support from the programme they have been able report matters of gender and sexual violence better to Police They committee members are able to reach out to those furthest behind, follow up on reported cases and ensure more cases are satisfactorily closed.

### **Necessary consultations take place with key stakeholders**

The development of the Spotlight Initiative programme and structure in Malawi was done based on a wide consultation with key stakeholders from the EU, UN agencies, Government and CSO representatives. A total of nine consultations were held between June and October 2018. Government representatives from the national and district levels were involved in the consultations, except for the first one which was held between UN agencies and the EU to discuss the draft roadmap and allocate responsibilities for the development of the Country Programme Document (CPD). At district level, consultations were carried out with community-based organizations, individual beneficiaries, and opinion leaders. This was also confirmed by the online survey in which more than 70 per cent of the respondents indicated that District officials and CSOs were consulted. As the Civil Society Reference Group was not yet in place, consultants were held with an interim CS Reference Group. Government representatives at the national level, interviewed as part of the MTA and who had been involved in the consultations, confirmed that they were consulted and were asked to interrogate whether the design made sense in the context of Malawi.

*“... there was a draft already from the UN family, ... already designed by our colleagues from the UN and the two ministries came in to interrogate the design and see if it made sense in the context of the Malawi government setting ...”* (Government Official. KII)

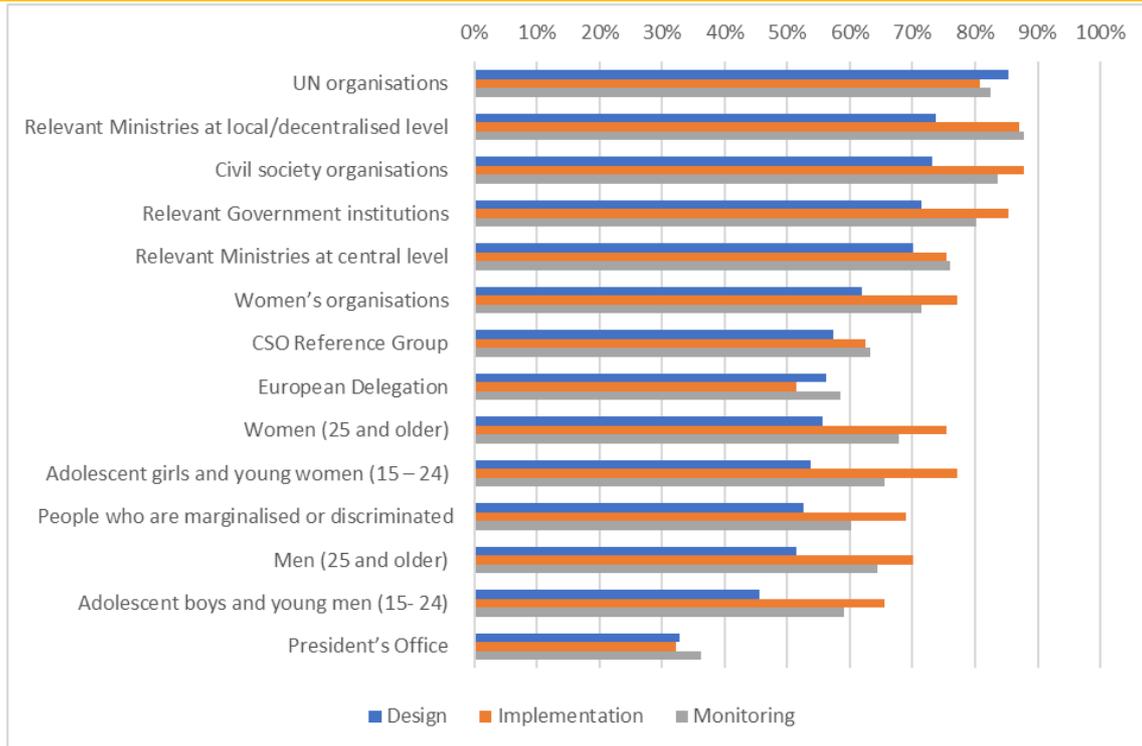
The programme workplan was presented to and approved by the National Steering Committee which is chaired by the Secretary to the President and Cabinet. The programme was seen to be in line with the Ministry of Local Government’s mandate and developed in line with the decentralization framework, both in terms of design and implementation modalities.

Chiefs consulted as part of the MTR provided contradictory views on whether they are consulted with planning, implementation, and reporting. Some felt adequately consulted during development and roll out of the programme, while others felt left out and inadequately engaged with planning, implementation, and reporting. These latter opinions arise when the IPs carry out activities without the knowledge of the District Coordinator who would have notified the Chief in advance and advised the IP of protocol. In addition, Chiefs felt inadequately consulted because of not getting feedback on what is going on in their areas, also in terms of incidences of GBV. These feedback mechanisms are being supported by the

Spotlight Initiative. The Chiefs Forums will provide feedback mechanisms at national, district and community levels. The roll out has been planned for the 1st half of 2021 and will continue into Phase II. There are, however, challenges related to the restriction of physical meetings due to COVID-19, but the Initiative is working on alternatives to address these challenges.

From the online survey (see figure 1 below), it is observed that target groups, such as adolescent boys and girls, are involved in the implementation and monitoring of the programme but were less involved during the design stage. This was a general opinion in the online survey comments where respondents indicated that the implementation and monitoring is highly participatory but that during the design not all target groups were consulted, in particular adolescent boys and men.

Figure 1. Stakeholder Involvement on design, implementation and monitoring



Source: Online Survey, 2021

There are mechanisms in place to collect feedback from beneficiaries, such as the community scorecard, to allow girls, boys, women, and men provide feedback on the quality of the protection services. Also, the internal MTR in 2020 was undertaken to obtain feedback on the Spotlight Initiative's implementation during phase 1 from rights holders (women, girls, men, boys, Chiefs, and the most-at-risk groups in targeted communities), and duty bearers (particularly district authorities). Data collection included anonymised surveys for district authorities, key informant interviews and focus group discussions with community leaders and targeted beneficiaries. The MTR provided useful learnings on the awareness of community members on VAWG, the activities being implemented by the Spotlight Initiative and their respective participation, the roles of Chiefs and their relationship with the Spotlight Initiative, the engagement from boys and men in the activities and what the programme could do differently. The MTR brought out useful learnings and recommendations on the programme which have been taken into consideration for the development and implementation of Phase 2. These are presented in Annex 3.

From inception, the programme has made attempts to enhance its response by engaging interested groups such as the Media Network. The Media Network is a voluntary group of journalists trained by

the Spotlight Initiative in gender related laws, gender sensitive reporting and Spotlight Initiative programme. They have an informal or loose arrangement with the programme but have been effective in raising awareness about the programme in the Spotlight Initiative districts.

**Key findings:**

- The programme responds to the needs of women and girls who are survivors of violence and harmful practices. It also caters for persons with disabilities including persons with albinism, sex workers and other key population.
- The programme is not designed to cater for the needs of boys and men, but boys and men are engaged as allies in the efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. Boys and men consulted, however, seem to have different expectations as what the programme could/should do for them. This is not a problem of design or implementation but of different expectations and it would be good to clarify with men and boys what the programme can realistically do for them, so that they remain engaged and committed.
- All stakeholders (EU, UN, CSO, government at national and district level as well a community structures) were extensively consulted during the design of the programme.
- The Spotlight Initiative team in Malawi has conducted an internal MTR to obtain feedback from beneficiaries and target groups to ensure these opinions are taken on board for the development of Phase 2. The recommendations of the MTR in terms of priorities for the different Pillars are relevant, as they provided a clear reflection of the issues encountered by girls, boys, men, women, and marginalised groups at district level, and have been taken on board for the design of Phase 2.

**4. Do all key stakeholders still demonstrate effective commitment (ownership)?**

- Very Good – Good
- Problems
- Serious deficiencies

The government signed up to the programme to show its commitment and support. A National Steering Committee (NSC) was established in October 2019 that was meant to “oversee the overall project implementation, provide strategic direction, review and decide on the recommendations made by the Gender Sector Working Group (GSWG) on changes related to the project implementation or document, and share information on policy and legal decisions affecting SGBV/HP response in Malawi”<sup>2</sup>. Despite its establishment, not much progress has been made to make the committee functional due to reasons of national politics, deep rooted values on the marginalized such as LGBQTI resulting in mixed reactions from the central government regarding the programme (see question 8 for more details).

The establishment of the NSC was within the period of political tension due to disputed 2019 Presidential elections which disrupted the operations of and diverted the attention of the government. The new government came into place in July 2020 and has been busy establishing itself. Joint efforts of the EUD and UN RC were made to reach out to the government and in particular the Secretary to the President and Cabinet (SPC) to allocate a co-chair so that meetings can be held. There have been mixed reactions from the central government regarding the programme, which may be a reason for the non-responsiveness to appoint a co-chair to the NSC. The mixed responses are related to disagreement on the language used by the programme related to LGBTQI, as well as their dissatisfaction with the

<sup>2</sup> Spotlight Initiative Programme (2018). Country Programme Document: Malawi. Page 36

proportion of resources allocated to the government. This lack of participation in the NSC has an implication on the sustainability of the interventions and political commitment for change in the management of SGBV, SRHR and Harmful Practices.

*“Due to the failure of the Steering Committee to meet to steer the program, country ownership is limited. Further, the program is establishing coordination structures outside the mainstream Government Coordination Structures. For example, the Gender, Youth and Sports Sector Working Group should have become the Steering Committee for the Programme under the leadership of Ministry of Gender. This would have allowed for Country Ownership.”* (Online survey comment RUNO)

While there are issues at the level of the NSC which affect country ownership, the MTA was able to observe continued commitment from the central government officials interviewed, in particular from the Ministry of Gender and Ministry of Local Government, both at central and district level.

At district level, the Council has provided an enabling environment through the hosting of the programme in the districts, providing policy guidance to the programme and supporting the work of the IPs through the Director of Planning and Development (DPD), District Gender Officer (DGO) and District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). The programme is working through the local government formal and informal structures. For the recruitment of CSOs in the districts there has been close collaboration with the district authorities. The expression of interest was launched through district authorities and proposals were submitted through the district offices. Concerns at district level are related to the lack of decision-making in the recruitment of the CSOs. However, the UN has specific regulations when recruiting CSO to ensure transparency and fairness. The non-involvement of the government is to ensure that there is no interference in the recruitment process.

Another concern at district level is perceived lack transfer of skills to the office of the District Gender Officer to help coordinate the programme. The District Coordinators are co-located at the office of the District Gender Officer and Social Welfare Officers with the aim to ensure ownership and strengthen capacity building. Capacity building of several district staff (child protection officers and case workers) is included across different Pillars. District officers interviewed as part of the MTA confirm they are engaged in the programme at both planning and implementation. However, they believe that the appointment of District Coordinator for the Spotlight Initiative is creating parallel systems. These opinions were also reflected by several government respondents to the online survey. The position of District Coordinator was put in place because of observations that the current structure already has a lot of tasks on their plate and would not have time to coordinate all the different activities and actors involved in the Spotlight Initiative activities. While this is appropriate, especially at the start of a new Initiative, the fact that these perceptions exist, indicate that there is dissatisfaction on this matter among district officials. It is important to address these perceptions by discussing how the role and responsibility of the District Coordinator could be absorbed by the District Council in the future and develop a capacity building strategy to achieve these objectives.

The EUD is committed to ensure the programme is successful. Joint meetings with the UN take place. The programme engages with the EU on communication and visibility to ensure adherence to their brand. The programme has also engaged with the EUD on digital campaigns. Typical quote on the support and collaboration that exists:

*“when they run a campaign, they engage us. Like the RC was featured in a campaign called “Stronger Together” that was being run by the EU. They also participated in a campaign called hashtag campaign. And also, during the 16 days activism, we did together what we called 16 days, 16 stories digital campaign. But also, they have highlighted most of our products, like we’ve uploaded a case*

*study or published a newsletter on their social media pages and also on their website” (Spotlight Initiative Team).*

The CSO Reference Group is committed to support the implementation of the programme in the role stipulated for them. The group input through the technical meetings but fail short on playing a more active advocacy role. Plans are underway to strengthen their capacity to undertake advocacy in Phase 2. The CSO Reference Group members complained of inadequate support in relation to resources for conducting their activities. However, documents reviewed show that the CSO Reference Group has a budget allocated to carry out activities and receives support for their meetings. There may be a need to manage the expectations and clarify on what is feasible within the programme.

The UN, starting with the RCO and following through to the different RUNOs engaged are all very much committed to the programme. This is witnessed in the additional resources that they are allocating to support the Spotlight Initiative (totalling USD 990,484), but also in the interviews.

### **Key findings:**

- The Government of Malawi has expressed its commitment to the Spotlight Initiative through signing the programme document, and its commitment is also observed at the level of the Ministry of Gender and Local Government. However, this commitment does not necessarily translate in country ownership as the platforms for ensuring this ownership and steering, i.e. the National Steering Committee are not yet active due to lack of engagement of the Secretary to the President and Cabinet (SPC).
- At district level, the Council hosts the programme in the districts and provides an enabling environment through the DPD. The Spotlight Initiative District Coordinator supports the implementation of the programme but there are concerns at the level of the District Gender Office that not sufficient capacity is built in terms of programme coordination. It is also unclear how the tasks of the District Coordinator will be assumed by the Council after the end of the programme.
- The EUD, UN agencies and the CSO reference group continue to demonstrate effective commitment to the programme implementation.

### **Recommendations:**

- The RCO, EUD and HoA should engage the Minister of Gender and Minister of Local Government to take an advocacy role on behalf of the programme with the SPC to ensure high level commitment is sustained. If the central government continues to avoid appointing a co-chair for the NSC, perhaps the Initiative should consider using existing mechanisms such as the Gender, Youth and Sports Sector Working Group as an alternative to the NSC.
- The Spotlight Initiative Core Team and RUNOs should consider how the tasks of the District Coordinator role will be handed over to the existing structures at District level after the end of the programme. It is recommended to develop a structured plan for capacity development related to planning and coordination of efforts on EVAWG for District Officers who will be involved in coordinating activities in the future.

<p><b>5A. Have all relevant circumstances and risks been taken into account to update the intervention logic?</b></p> <p><b>5B. Also, in the context of Covid-19?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Problems</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies</p>
<p><b>Prior to COVID-19</b></p> <p>The programme document and 2019 Annual report provide a Risk Management Matrix which carefully identified risks according to contextual, programmatic, institutional and fiduciary risks as follows:</p> <p><b>Contextual:</b> included political instability in the face of elections, harmful and inadequate social norms, limited access to SRHR of women and girls, and high turnover within institutions and service provision. These risks have indeed affected the programme, in particular the changeover of government which has led to political tensions and staff turnover. The identified mitigating measures of ensuring continued dialogue were appropriate.</p> <p><b>Programmatic:</b> access to modern technology and information sharing, limited capacities among national partners, in availability of services, inadequate translation of knowledge into transformative action, and technical and financial resources. Access to modern technology has become an important factor in particular in view of the COVID-19 pandemic (see below). Mitigating measures included the development of capacity strengthening strategies, a diversification of funding and ensuring a financial and sustainability plan is in place, as well as developing feasible financing strategies together with the government.</p> <p><b>Institutional:</b> national stakeholders unwilling to support CSOs, shrinking space for civil society action and hostility towards women’s rights defenders, political statements not translated into action, legislation not implemented, weak institutional and governance structures, lack of resources/funds, weak support to national statistical offices, and lack of funding and technical skills. As mitigating measures, efforts are made to strengthen women’s organizations, the programme is building the capacity of the national statistical office and that of the governance structures. The Spotlight Initiative Programme has created an opportunity for the CSO space to be widened with the contracting of CSOs as implementing partners who collaborate with the district councils and local governance structures. This is likely to strengthen the working relationship between the Government and CSOs. The Spotlight Initiative is also working to strengthen women’s rights defenders. Efforts are being made to strengthen the capacity of women’s groups through community dialogue sessions to facilitate relation building among women’s rights organizations. However, more can still be done to revitalise women’s rights groups and contribute to an enabling environment for the CSOs to operate.</p> <p><b>Fiduciary:</b> Disbursement of resources to small stakeholders (CSOs) and national IPs have the potential to provide incentives for diversionary activities. This risk was assessed as low and funding to grassroots CSO under Outcome 6 will be channelled through the UN Trust Fund to EVAWG as a mitigating measure. All IPs are taken through an orientation on resource management.</p> <p><b>As a result of COVID-19</b></p> <p>One public health risk factor not anticipated was any form of pandemic and possible effects this may have on the programme. The programme has experienced shocks with the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. This affected the implementation of some activities that required people to be in gatherings. It also affected the distribution or reallocation of resources to ensure effective response to negative impacts such as increase in child marriages, rape, defilement, teenage pregnancies and school dropouts</p>	

among others. Prior to the pandemic, the programme was encouraging girls to withdraw from forced marriages and to go back to school. However, schools were closed between April and October 2020. They were reopened amid an outcry on increased forced marriages, teenage pregnancies, and rape cases.

COVID-19 slowed down the progress, but activities did not stop. COVID-19 has also brought some opportunities to bring partners together. The programme responded in a unique way to avoid duplication and increase efficiency. The Spotlight Initiative joined efforts with the government through the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW), aligning its activities in the action plan through the Protection Cluster supported by UNICEF and the GBV Sub-Cluster supported by UNFPA. The Spotlight Initiative partnered with other key GBV actors through a joint UN Resilience Building Initiative, the joint Programme on Girls' Education, and NGOs such as Concern and Tithetse Nkhanza who contribute to a DFID funded GBV programme. COVID-19 has also brought in innovation with production of materials to disseminate or reach out to the masses (for more details see question 9).

COVID-19 has been a big test to the programme. Its COVID-19 response has taken into consideration various contexts and their possible risks. For each of the outcomes, relevant policy makers, policies and guidelines, strategies, required capacities, data requirements and CSOs and implementing partners were analysed. Formal and informal structures have been strengthened such as the Victim Support Units as well as the role of the Chiefs and religious leaders in increasing awareness on EVAWG and mentors for young women and girls. School based activities that included COVID-19 messages were relocated to communities through radios and school complaints boxes were placed in the community under the management and follow-up of the Community Victim Support Unit (CVSU). Adaptations also included online trainings; budget revisions for identified COVID 19 response activities; ensuring that SRHR commodities included test kits and PEP, capacity building for Service Delivery teams on Essential Services Package (ESP) in context of COVID-19 through the production of booklets on parental care and laws related to the protection of children against SGBV, HPs, including prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Key findings:**

- The risks to the programme and mitigating measures were well defined in the Risk Mitigation Plan.
- The programme has been responsive to emerging issues such as COVID-19 and is flexible to work with partners who show interest to contribute to the implementation of the programme.

**Recommendations:**

- It is recommended to review the Risk Management Matrix in preparation of Phase 2 to include lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**6. Are the indicators to measure results well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the objectives?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

Serious deficiencies

The Country Action Theory of Change (ToC) was developed taking into consideration the local context based on which the monitoring and evaluation framework was developed. Participants expressed satisfaction with the ToC and perceived that it addressed critical issues from the situation analysis. The intervention logic is linked to the ToC to present clear and well thought out understanding on how

planned actions are expected to lead to desired outcomes. The six programme outcomes are well linked to the root causes and drivers of violence against women and girls in Malawi. Specific objectives and activities were identified, indicators defined, and deliverables outlined. Some deliverables run across the objectives and pillars.

Programme indicators were taken from the global M&E framework which is aligned with the ToC. Interventions implemented under each pillar have well defined activities that feed into a particular indicator, making it easy to track progress. Programme indicators used in planning, are to be used in tracking progress during implementation to make corrective measures. Monitoring of the indicators helps the programme to assess the performance of each indicator.

Monthly reporting templates developed for the programme are used for monitoring. All IPs at district level feed into monthly reports that focus on progress achieved during that month and challenges encountered. The reports are shared with the Gender Technical Working Groups, the DPDs and district commissioners to ensure steady flow of information sharing. The reports are also shared with the community of practice. Action points are identified and where possible change effected.

*“... monitoring is done at different levels by the project team, sometimes we go in the field and monitor and evaluate what is happening, at some point, a team from UN Women came to monitor and to evaluate on our activities and this is where they gave us some advice for example where we had to change the approaches on how we were implementing our activities to address some specific obstacles or bottlenecks that lead to the successful outcome of the activities ... ”* (Implementing Partner).

To facilitate the monitoring, it is planned to use the UN INFO platform managed by the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat.

In addition to programme monitoring, the Spotlight Initiative is also contributing to improved data collection and reporting at national level through activities outlined in Pillar 5. As part of these interventions, standard data collection tools were developed to collect incident level data on SGBV/ HP/ SRHR as explained in this quote below:

*“The programme has capacitated a number of officers in terms of data collection. We actually developed the standard data collection tools, there are a number of tools that are used in various aspects to collect incident data. And what we actually did, was to come together and review all these data tools and come up with one that we think will be standard and will be used. So, it has gone through the vetting processes, and are yet to be finalized, but the most important thing that we have done under pillar five is to procure the machine that will be used to establish a data hub.”* (Spotlight Initiative Malawi Team).

As part of Pillar 5, the National Observatory Hub has been established at the National Statistics Office in Zomba to improve quality of SGBV prevalence and incidence data. This hub will receive data from all the min-hubs from SPL districts. At the time of this MTA the testing and retesting was completed and trainings on the data collection tools started. A data collection system has been digitized from the village level. A web-based application has been uploaded on tablets to capture data from the survivors, using unique identifiers to ensure confidentiality. From the village level data will be sent to the district Hubs. And the district hubs, data will be sorted before sending to the national observatory hub at the NSO. It is expected that the system will start in quarter one of 2021. The harmonized data management system will provide useful data at national level, which will also feed into the indicators of the Spotlight Initiative.

**Key findings:**

- The ToC was adequately adapted to the country context and the indicators selected are appropriate for monitoring progress against expected results. The programme has set up an effective monitoring system.
- The Spotlight Initiative is also contributing to improved data collection and reporting at national level through activities outlined in Pillar 5. As part of these interventions, standard data collection tools were developed to collect incident level data from the community level through to the national level on SGBV/ HP/ SRHR.

**Recommendation**

- The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team in collaboration with NSO, should facilitate the development of an information sharing policy to ensure data collected can be shared and used by relevant programmes and institutions.

**C. EFFICIENCY**

**7. Are the chosen implementation mechanisms (incl. choice of implementation modalities, entities and contractual arrangements) adequate for achieving the expected results?**

- Very Good – Good
- Problems
- Serious deficiencies

The implementation modalities include working through the government and civil society organisations as implementing partners. These modalities were perceived as appropriate by all stakeholders consulted. According to the revised budget, 40 per cent is implemented by CSO, while nine per cent is implemented by government partners and another nine per cent is delivered by consultancy services.

For the CSO IPs, in line with the Spotlight Initiative overall guidelines, a strategic decision was made to prioritise grassroots actors. This decision has affected the number of IPs recruited for the implementation of activities as they were contracted based on their existing areas of coverage (see Annex 6 for a list of IPs contracted). A joint call for proposals was issued which reduced the costs for recruitment, but this also delayed the recruitment of IPs and hence also the start of key activities. A careful and rigorous process was used to recruit the IPs for best fit to outcome and available capacities. Due diligence was carried out on all engaged whether receiving financial support or not. The programme adopted a partnership approach which offers capacity development opportunities to the recruited local organizations. The joint recruitment of IPs also meant that a joint capacity building plan was developed. Upon recruitment of the partners an orientation including training on project and financial management is done. The IPs were also formally introduced to District Councils and decentralization structures. All these orientations form part of building the capacity of the IPs. Most of the IPs have formal contractual arrangements with assigned RUNOs which monitor their activities. The partnership approach has successfully created a broad and diverse network among the UN agencies, implementing partners, government agencies, formal and informal structures.

While the NSC is not functional at the moment, the programme has provided spaces for RUNOs, IPs and community actors including beneficiaries to interact, exchange ideas and experiences. The RUNOs hold regular quarterly coordinating meetings by pillar through which updates, operational plans lessons and best practices are shared. In each district, IPs and district council hold regular Gender Technical Working Group (GTWG) meetings. The established Community of Practice (CoP) comprised of multi-

disciplinary/multisectoral teams (for example district officials, Spotlight Initiative Implementing partners, the District Coordinator, and the GBV Services Officer). The CoP meet every month to share on the implementation of the activities. It is Chaired by the Director of Planning and Development (DPD). The arrangement of the Community of Practice at district level is replicated at community level in some districts. The arrangement offers an opportunity for discussing technical matters but also non-technical matters such as financial issues.

The programme has also developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) on communication among District Coordinators, RUNOs and Implementing Partners which outlines the roles and responsibilities of the District Coordinators in relation to coordination, programme management, partnership management and capacity building. It further outlines that RUNOs should share information about their programme and interventions conducted by the different implementing partners to the District Coordinators. RUNOs and IPs should inform district coordinators about all activities they are planning to undertake prior to commencement, the Spotlight Initiative programme team should be included in all communication between the RUNOs and district coordinators, and all parties should use respectful communication.

The implementation mechanisms and modalities are well developed and offer the opportunity to knowledge transfer, experience sharing and personal relationships. However, without contradicting the implementation mechanisms and modalities, stakeholders have pointed to challenges arising from coordinating a large number of small-scale IPs. As mentioned before, the Spotlight Initiative has deliberately chosen to work with small grassroots organisations, which meant that it had to contract more IPs to ensure coverage of all implementation areas based on their available capacity. Across the six districts a total of 31 IPs have been contracted. IPs and government officials are concerned that resources are thinly spread on numerous small-scale interventions which may not bring value for money. In addition, the coordination of IPs with different levels of capacity is not always straightforward. Survey respondents from the Government, IPs and RUNOs have all mentioned that the engagement of several IPs in different stages or times of the year has led to problems of ensuring complementarity and synergy in the activities conducted.

*“The implementing partners from different RUNOs come to the district in different stages, this has affected the complementarity of project implementation and the synergy. RUNOs should ensure that the Implementation partners start the work on the ground at the same pace and ensure that they are speaking to each other in collaboration with government line ministries.”* (Online survey comment IP)

*“Implementing Partners are being engaged at different times of the year as observed to this far. This may have reduced impact of the programme as some critical interventions are not carried out concurrently or sequentially. Some of the activities under different pillars require complementarity or synergy and building upon each other.”* (Online survey comment Government)

*“Some implementing partners are not targeting the whole geographical area as others making complementarity of activities a challenge.”* (Online survey comment RUNO)

*“Different Implementing Partners under the RUNOs started implementing at different times making complementarity of efforts a challenge.”* (Online survey comment RUNO)

The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has tried to mitigate the risk of having IPs starting at different times by engaging all the IPs involved in activities at district level in the Communities of Practices, so information can be shared from one IP to the other.

From the government perspective, the total amount of funds allocated to the government is not sufficient. According to the original budget, nine per cent of the budget is allocated to the government,

however, as UN agencies use different implementation modalities, not all of this funding is actually received by the government. For example, UNDP uses the Direct Implementation Modality instead of the National Execution/Implementation. This means that UNDP assumes the responsibility as Implementing Partner on behalf of the government and has the technical and administrative capacity to assume the responsibility for mobilising and applying the inputs. Funds therefore allocated to the government under Pillar 2 (which represents 40% of the total funds allocated to the Government), are still to be used by the Government but the responsibility and accountability remains with the UNDP. The decision to use direct implementation was presented in the country programme document as a way to strengthen capacity of councils, CSOs and CBOs and to ensure sustainability and ownership of the initiatives introduced. A respondent to the online survey, and also corroborated in the interview, however, believes that this modality does not contribute to country ownership, neither to sustainability.

*“Due to application of Direct Implementation Modality and lack of country ownership of the program, Government involvement in delivery is limited and therefore Government continues its own programs related to SGBV in parallel.”* (Online survey comment RUNO)

**Key findings:**

- The programme has set up a unique arrangement of partnerships at national, subnational and community level that stakeholders find helpful in bringing together the different stakeholders and facilitate coordination of activities.
- The programme has contracted a large number of grassroots CSOs in line with the Spotlight Initiative guidelines through a joint call for proposals. These CSOs are implementing activities based on their geographic and technical capacities and a joint capacity development plan was developed. While this implementation modality is much appreciated, it has also caused challenges in terms of coordination and generation of synergies at district level. The programme has, however, identified mechanisms such as the Community of Practice to encourage learning and sharing among IPs.
- Government counterparts are of the opinion that not enough resources are allocated to the Government. While nine per cent of the overall budget is ‘delivered by the Government’, the RUNOs use different implementation modalities which mean that not all of these funds are actually managed by the Government counterparts.

**Recommendations:**

- The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review whether the Direct Implementation Modality is the best approach for strengthening the capacity of government counterparts or whether interventions which are implemented by Government counterparts should use the National Implementation modality instead.

<p><b>8. Do partner government and other partners in the country effectively steer the action? (Please consider Government, CSO and EU Delegation)</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good <input type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
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As detailed in question 4, the National Steering Committee (NSC) was established to provide the highest level of national coordination for policy direction, mobilize resources and prevention response. The NSC is supposed to guide and oversee the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative. According to the Country Programme Document, the Chief Secretary was supposed to co-chair the NSC, but this position has not yet been taken up by the current government and the NSC has therefore not been functional. Efforts are being made by the RC and the EUD to convince the government to appoint a Chairperson. Despite this lack of engagement at the highest level, the line ministries for the programme, i.e., the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare and Ministry of Local Government, have been very much engaged in steering the programme.

At national level, the Ministry of Local Government supports coordination by making sure that the principles and technical processes for the implementation of the decentralization policy are adhered to. However, the representatives interviewed and government respondents to the online survey expressed concerns about limited resources such as vehicles and fuel to facilitate coordination and monitor adherence.

The programme implementation is at district level where it collaborates with local government structures. The entry point at the district level is the District Commissioner who delegates to the DPD and works with the DGO and DSWO. IPs work with formal and informal community structures including community based CSOs. With the leadership of the DPD, the programme is delivered in a conducive environment. However, concerns were raised about the local government’s capacity to ensure sustainability of the activities in the future (see question 4). The programme has recruited six officers (District Coordinators) to coordinate the programme in each of the districts. Whilst the role of the District Coordinator is appreciated, representatives from the district level government believe that the creation of parallel structures is not advisable. Instead, they would have preferred to maintain the coordination of the activities within the District Commissioner’s Office. While this request is understandable, from the perspective of contributing to sustainability, it is not clear whether the local government would have the capacity to oversee and coordinate the activities of all the different implementing partners (see also question 13). The allocation of a District Coordinator therefore seems justified; however, it remains important to identify how the tasks and responsibilities under this position will be transferred to the District Gender Officers’ Office in the future to ensure sustainability. It is recommended that relevant council members are capacitated as part of a sustainability plan to be developed in Phase 2 (see question 15).

The participating officers at district level support the activities because they acknowledge the importance and relevance of the programme activities and the benefit these bring to the communities. They would like to be engaged meaningfully by assuming a more active role in the monitoring the implementation of programme activities rather than being invited to accompany programme officials. Planning their own visits to programme sites would give them more ownership and control. Whilst reports are shared with them by the Coordinators which is appreciated, it was stated that they do not have the opportunity to physically witness what is reported.

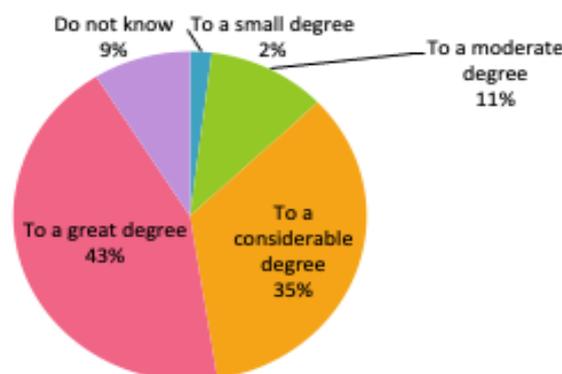
A Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG) was established to serve as a policy advocacy network and to facilitate coordination among the various CSOs, to mobilise CSOs and organise consultations with women’s organisations and networks, to propose coherence and consistency among the national, regional and global messages of the Spotlight Initiative and to influence lines of action at the national level in support of the Spotlight Initiative outcomes and outputs. The CSNRG is currently made up of 14 members (it used to be 15). The CRNRG has a seat in the NCS and in the technical committees. The CSNRG understand their role as

*“As the Civil Society National Reference Group, as outsiders, we come in as the bridge of the programme, with an external lens, in terms of trying to ensure the effectiveness and the efficiency of all the programming on the ground. We are supposed to be the voice of the people that are on the ground. Experts in the group support the actual implementation of the program, liaising with the Secretariat. We are the external players aiming at ensuring ownership of the program once it wears out”.*

Minutes of the CSNRG meetings indicate that the CSNRG has been fulfilling its role by discussing emerging issues, developing key messages for different types of stakeholders and raising issues of concern on behalf of the CSOs participating in the Spotlight Initiative, such as slow disbursement of funds to IPs and concerns that strict evaluation criteria limit the ability of small-scale grassroots organisations to qualify for grants. During the interviews, members of the CSNRG stated that the group only has limited resources to undertake its role and that it takes long for funding to be released. According to them, this limits their ability to respond promptly and affects the impact of their advocacy. These concerns were also raised in the meeting held in February 2020. UN representatives commenting on the draft report confirm they have provided financial support to the group to facilitate the conduct of meetings. In 2019 two physical meetings were held, in 2020 two physical meetings and one virtual meeting and three virtual meetings in 2021. The evaluation has not been able to verify if the claims of delays in release of funding are real, neither the extent to which these have affected the work of the CSNRG.

The CSOs contribute to a great degree to the steering the implementation of the programme as either implementing partners or community organizations. Figure 2 below shows that about 91 per cent steer the implementation through direct implementation, providing input and support to the programme through community of practice and participating in monthly meetings.

Figure 2. CSOs contribution to steering the implementation of the SI



Source: Online Survey, 2021

The EUD provides high level support to the programme. They remain committed to providing technical input when reports are shared with them. They observe that the programme is complex and may

require more time to be implemented, in particular on Pillar 1. Phase 2 may want to review some of the activities as well as the established targets. Also, a number of documents have been drafted and they expect these to be finalized by the end of Phase 1 and put into practice in Phase 2.

**Key findings:**

- The NSC has not been functional due to lack of engagement from the Secretary to the President and Cabinet. Nevertheless, national stakeholders are steering the programme, in particular representatives of the Ministry of Gender and Local Government. The use of existing structures at the district level and the leadership role of the DPD facilitate this process.
- The Spotlight Initiative District Coordinator supports the implementation of the programme but there are concerns at the level of the District Gender Office that not sufficient capacity is built in terms of programme coordination. It is also unclear how the tasks of the District Coordinator will be assumed by the Council after the end of the programme.
- The CSO Reference Group is contributing to steering the programme and playing the role as outlined in the CPD. The promptness of release of funding for this group may need to be reviewed to ensure they can play their advocacy role in an effective manner.
- CSOs are seen to actively participate in the steering of the programme through their participation in the community of practice and monthly meetings.

**Recommendations:**

- If following the recent efforts from the RC and the EUD, the government team does not provide a response and commitment to co-chair the NSC, perhaps the programme could consider engaging both the Ministers from the Ministry of Local Development and the Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare to co-chair the NSC.
- The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review the mechanisms for fund release or management for the CSNRG to ensure they have resources available as and when needed.

<p><b>9A. If there are delays, how important are they and what are the consequences? What are the reasons for these delays and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented? To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly? BEFORE COVID</b></p> <p><b>9B. What are the consequences of COVID 19? To what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented? To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly? AFTER COVID</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Problems</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies</p>
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**Important delays, reasons, and their consequences**

There was a delay in starting the programme for both internal and external reasons. Internally, delays were due to recruitment and contracting processes as well as adjusting to new ways of working. The recruitment of the IPs was delayed because as the Spotlight Initiative guidance encourages the recruitment of local CSOs who represent groups suffering from intersectional discrimination, RUNOs had to recruit additional partners and conduct a due diligence process. Some of the small scale CSOs had difficulties complying to the UN guidelines and more time was needed to invite others or engage the potential applicants. This meant that IPs were also delayed in taking up their positions and starting

activities in the districts. The recruitment of the Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat team was also delayed. The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat staff were fully recruited by early 2020. However, in the meantime the UN agencies did start to lay the foundation for the “Delivering as One” under the supervision of the RCO. An Inter-agency Core Team was established and tasked to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on communication and working modalities at district level. The SOP, approved in November 2019, helped in operationalizing the new way of working, relieving communication and coordination challenges (see also question 7). In addition, 14 respondents to the online survey mentioned delayed fund transfers to implementing partners as an important delay which has impacted on the delivery of activities. This is further explored under question 10.

Externally, the programme was affected by natural emergencies, the Presidential elections and deep-rooted values and social norms on young women’s rights to SRHR. The kick-off of the programme in Machinga and Nsanje was affected by Cyclone Idai in 2019, however, the programme made commendable adjustments to address potential social effects that put women and girls at risk of SGBV. The presidential elections in 2019 also caused disruptions due to political tensions and staff turnover, making travelling and holding public meetings unsafe. Furthermore, as outlined in the Risk Management Matrix, dealing with deep rooted values on the position of women and girls in the society is a challenge affecting decisions over harmful social norms and cultural practices as well as young women’s and girls’ rights to accessing SRHR services and requires time.

An acceleration plan was developed to ensure that planned results for Phase 1 could still be achieved despite the delays.

#### **Revised Plan, Corrective measures taken to address COVID-19**

Whilst the programme was still grappling with the factors that caused delays, the COVID-19 pandemic started. The programme was proactive in anticipating COVID-19's possible impact. Being a new pandemic both for Malawi and other countries, lessons from other countries and experiences were drawn to anticipate potential increases in VAWG and possible impact on the programme and the mitigation measures. A programme criticality (PC) was conducted to identify activities that were possible under the circumstances. Based on the assessment a response per pillar was determined without compromising on the programme guiding principle with particular emphasis on ‘leaving no one behind’. The COVID-19 response plan identified eight outputs across 5 pillars for which the activities could be carried out in the new context. For these outputs<sup>3</sup>, the activities were reviewed to ensure these adhered to the guidelines on protection against COVID-19. It was also agreed that the activities would be carried out in collaboration with District Health Officers to ensure the delivery of key awareness raising messages on COVID-19. Examples of the revised activities include community advocacy through multi-media programmes such as text messaging and radio programmes on SGBV messages, supporting community policy to rapidly identify child SGBV cases and referring them to relevant services, engaging men and boys through community-based radio programmes, support to Legal Aid service providers, CVSUs for shelters and re-purposed spaces such as churches or schools in the response to survivor safety measures during isolation and lock-down periods, etc.

The programme responded in a very unique way to avoid duplication and increase efficiency. It joined efforts with the government through the Ministry of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare (MoGCDSW), aligning its activities in the action plan through Protection Cluster supported by UNICEF and Sub-Cluster supported by UNFPA. The Spotlight Initiative also partnered with other GBV actors and

<sup>3</sup> Outputs 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.2 and 6.2

UN joint programmes<sup>4</sup> to ensure maximum impact and devise joint action on teenage pregnancies and child marriage. It also incorporated the Media Network in the response as a key resource for dissemination of messaging on SGBV, harmful practices (HPs) and SRHR. The Spotlight Initiative took an active role and led in the development of communication materials aimed at preventing SGBV at the community level under the Communication for Development (C4D) Platform. Materials produced were also disseminated through the EU website. Below is a quote on how the programme is reaching out to communities through the C4D platform:

*“... from the Spotlight Initiative, we work with community radios so that we reach the target audience, we are working with close to 14 community radio stations that are in the implementing districts so that the communities should feel that they are part of this and that the message is going to make a difference within themselves and also reaching out to those not in the implementing district”* (Spotlight Initiative Malawi Team).

To a large extent COVID-19 effects have been devastating, changed a way of working and to lesser extent have brought about opportunities. Response to COVID-19 has given opportunities for people to work with others or collaborate thereby improving the response. Negative impacts have been felt at programme implementation level. With COVID-19 preventive precautions physical meetings were suspended and the stakeholders including IPs felt mostly affected from exchange of experiences as corroborated in this quote from the MTR:

*“... challenges faced by the Spotlight Initiative team during the year- namely, travel restrictions due to COVID-19, which precluded M&E visits and greater engagement with district authorities”* (MTR Report, 2020).

Stakeholders in this MTA have reported increased number of defilement and rape cases during the time schools were closed due to the pandemic; many young girls were forced into marriages; boys forced to marry or go out look for employment; out of idleness boys and girls engaging in unprotected sexual activities.

*“Closing of schools due to COVID has brought so much chaos in our communities. Young people are getting married, girls are getting pregnant, and boys are doing crazy things in the name of finding money. [...] We have been going around in the communities in a van with a megaphone and talking to people about violence and especially parents to protect their children...no matter the weather but these messages need to go out because these [things] are not good”* (Community of Practice)

It has also been difficult to monitor the movements of girls and boys and it has therefore been difficult to avoid forced marriages:

*“COVID-19 has affected us so much and badly. When girls are in school, it is easy for the community members and mother groups to know who is not going to school and so visit the families or girls to inquire why one is no longer going to school. Now with closure of schools, you just do not know that the girl is no longer seen around. When you check, they tell you she went to stay with her brother ... it's very sad and depressing”* (IP)

In addition, there were challenges with not being able to have public gatherings and spread messages using drama, instead messages were being disseminated using the megaphone.

*“We have been greatly affected because we are unable to go to the public places and talk to people about violence using the megaphone. We cannot hold activities for awareness anymore because of*

<sup>4</sup> Such as PROPER, a joint UN Resilience Building Initiative, Tithetse Nkhanza (A DFID funded GBV Programme), Concern, and the Joint Programme on Girls' Education.

*the COVID restrictions. That however does not mean that we are not doing anything, we are now focusing on moving in households” (CSO key informant)*

*Out of schoolboys also said: “COVID has really disrupted our lives because now we cannot meet as often as we used to, and we can’t all be there. For example, those with disability cannot come and also could not come to this meeting because their parents will not allow them...There are a lot of issues happening, but we can’t go around as much anymore because of COVID” (FGD, Boys)*

In response to the effect of COVID-19, the Spotlight Initiative has also updated its acceleration plan to reflect COVID-19 and to address the emerging needs of increased teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

**Key findings:**

- Internal and external factors have caused delays in starting the implementation of programme activities. Late recruitment of IPs and delays in funds transfers have contributed to delays as IP had less time and not sufficient resources available to implement their activities. The programme has tried to address most delays in an adequate manner, as outlined by the mitigation measures in the Risk Management Matrix.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increased instances of VAWG, but the programme has been responsive to address these issues by changing its way of working and seizing new opportunities. A detailed response by pillar was developed, increasing efficiency and avoiding duplications and aligning the response to other initiatives and joint programmes led by government counterparts and RUNOs.

**Recommendations:**

- The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat should initiate dialogue on the “shadow pandemics” to address the rights violations in the areas of education and protection for girls, boys and young women caused by COVID-19 pandemic to effectively prepare for similar situations and therefore ease the negative impacts as experienced currently.

<p><b>10A. How effectively is the Initiative managed?</b></p> <p><b>10B. How effectively is the Programme managed? Are the management arrangements for the Initiative at national level adequate and appropriate?</b></p> <p><b>10C. How effectively is the Programme managed? Are the National Steering Committees functioning efficiently and in line with Spotlight principles?</b></p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Problems</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies</p>
<p>The programme has a management and coordination structure under the leadership and guidance, of the Resident Coordinator (RC). The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, hosted by the RCO, has the responsibility to provide programme oversight and coordination through consolidating reports, promoting agencies’ leadership, convening the NSC and overseeing implementation schedules, delivery, and budgets. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat consists of a programme coordinator, six district coordinators, a communication officer, M&amp;E officer and admin/finance associates. It also receives support from a technical coherence specialist who is seconded from UN Women. The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat provides technical coherence through ensuring that the programme is well aligned with the ToC, ensuring that all the components of the Spotlight Initiative are of high-quality, aligning activities with the UNDAF and the results matrix, adhering to known best practices, and supporting innovation. The Spotlight Initiative Core Team is made up of the Malawi Secretariat staff and</p>	

representatives from all the RUNOs. The Secretariat convenes the Core Team meetings and ensures the Initiative works together with the EUD, the UN Coordinating Team and the UN Gender Working Group.

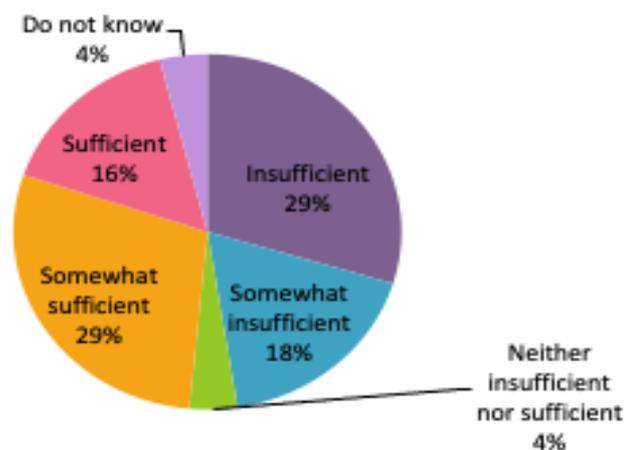
The programme delivery is supported by programme management allocations of 18 per cent of the total budget for Phase 1. The programme management costs are allocated depending on the needs and capacities of the RUNOs. This allocation is fixed, and the agencies try to make the best use of it, taking into consideration their other sources of funding.

The stakeholders expressed general satisfaction with the current programme management and coordination. Communication has particularly improved with the EUD. Reports are shared and invitations are extended for field missions.

*“The coordination in relation with the EU and Spotlight has improved. We are in weekly contact to exchange on activities. And they invite us to missions in the field to assess the progress. They show the reports like success stories, communication tools. So, I think there is a good communication at the technical level ... there is an attempt to move the dialogue beyond the technical level, ... bringing advocacy a stronger position... having like a regular interaction between the RC and head of cooperation and delegation together with key with ministers, ... that's something that that started but then was difficult to continue because of the circumstances ... there is an attempt to really go beyond technical discussion and having it at a higher level with more advocacy, political dialogue ...”*  
(KII EUD).

Concerns were however raised about available resources. Resources are budgeted for in the programme according to Pillars. The RUNOs stated that resources are adequate for the planned activities whilst the IPs felt resources are insufficient. Respondents to the online survey mentioned that funding for Pillars 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 was insufficient. Figure 3 below shows the perceptions of the stakeholders. Those who responded that the resources were insufficient were mostly IP from CSOs or government counterparts and reflects that while they are the main implementing partners, the financial resources channelled to them are perceived as insufficient.

Figure 3. Sufficiency of financial resources budgeted



Source: Online Survey, 2021

The feedback from IPs on lack of funding is also linked to the overall fund availability of the Spotlight Initiative. Up and until the 30th of September 2020, the Malawi programme had received 40 per cent of the funds that were budgeted for Phase 1 and had delivered 36 per cent of the budget for Phase 1,

including expenditure (28%) and commitments<sup>5</sup> (9%). The RUNOs had generally a similar level of delivery, with UN Women delivering 79 per cent of the funds received, UNICEF 83, UNFPA 86 and UNDP 97 per cent. When looking at the delivery against the Phase 1 budget, the proportion of funds delivered are UN Women 32 per cent, UNICEF 34, UNFPA 35 and UNDP 44 per cent. This delivery rate is not low taking into considerations the effects of the internal and external factors which affected programme delivery as was mentioned in question 9.

An analysis of the expenditure by budget line highlights 19 per cent of the funds available for transfers and grants to counterparts had been disbursed (see table 2 below). While this proportion seems low, the overall delivery of the programme was in line with the funds received. The second tranche of funds was first requested in May 2020 but as the country had not yet achieved the required threshold of 70% of expenditure of the first tranche, the request was not accepted. The country submitted a new request in September 2020 which required to go through the usual procedure of verification with the Multi Partner Trust Fund and the Executive Office of the Secretary General. A partial transfer was processed in mid-November 2020 because at the time the fund was low in cash and other countries also needed replenishments. Once the fund received a cash replenishment from the EU, it transferred the remaining amount by 30<sup>th</sup> of November. RUNOs reported that they obtained USD 1 million from other sources to cover the gap in funding but that it was unclear to them when to expect the second tranche of funding. This lack of clarity was a concern to all RUNOs, as expressed in the interviews and online survey, and has contributed to delays in fund disbursements to the IPs.

The EU transfers funds to the MPTF once it can demonstrate a region has reached 70% delivery of the previous cash instalment. This means that there is usually a time laps between the moment when countries reach 70% delivery individually and the region has collectively reported 70% expenditure to the MPTF who are then able to process the payment request with the EU. The Spotlight Secretariat indicated that cash has been managed in such a way that they can at least issue a partial replenishment temporarily to any programme. While the 70% threshold of expenditure seems appropriate on paper, in practice it means that delays caused in terms of proper justification of expenses in one country can negatively affect several other countries. Furthermore, while the Head of Agencies of RUNOs have agreed with the DSG that they will advance cash to their country programmes and have actually done so in Malawi, the effects of these arrangements still trickle down to the implementing partners who, in the case of Malawi, are often small grassroots organisation who do not always have reserves to pre-finance their activities.

**Table 3. Financial delivery by 30 September 2020**

UNDG budget lines	Spotlight Budget	RUNOs Expenditure	% expenditure vs budget
<b>1. Staff and other personnel</b>	1,783,313	1,056,157	59%
<b>2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials</b>	1,089,644	122,881	11%
<b>3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)</b>	1,504,050	402,831	27%
<b>4. Contractual services</b>	2,695,638	881,873	33%
<b>5. Travel</b>	1,102,385	335,666	30%

<sup>5</sup> Practices of recording commitments differ among the RUNOs. UNICEF, for example, does not include fund reservations and payroll commitments when calculating the commitments.

<b>6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts</b>	7,233,390	1,377,330	19%
<b>7. General Operating and other Direct Costs</b>	3,283,169	952,204	29%
<b>Total Direct Costs</b>	<b>18,691,589</b>	<b>5,128,942</b>	<b>27%</b>
<b>8. Indirect Support Costs (7%)</b>	1,308,411	372,095	28%
<b>TOTAL CP Budget / Expenditure</b>		<b>5,501,037</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>RUNOs Commitments</b>	<b>20,000,000</b>	<b>1,713,967</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>TOTAL CP Budget / Delivery</b>		<b>7,215,004</b>	<b>36%</b>

Finally, there are also multiple layers of internal and external reporting at district, regional, national and global level which create a high burden on IPs and RUNOs. IPs individually prepare monthly reports for the Spotlight Initiative District Coordinator and these are shared with the RUNO. Apart from submission of individual reports, they also contribute to a consolidated report at district level which is submitted to the Secretariat to the attention of the M&E officer who shares the consolidated reports of all the six districts to the RUNOs. The RUNOs also have to share the reports with their regional and head quarter offices. The different reporting lines for IPs as well as different processes for quality assurance among the RUNOs and the RCO turns reporting into a time consuming and labour-intensive process.

As mentioned in question 4 and 8, the NSC is currently not operational and therefore also not effectively overseeing the programme. The CSNRG is operational and has been playing its assigned role.

The relation with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat at global level is good. Key informants have indicated that the Spotlight Secretariat maintains a constructive relationship with the country team, and they usually get responses to their questions. Some RUNOs, however, indicated that they would appreciate receiving more accurate information from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat in particular related to funds disbursements.

#### Key findings:

- The management structure for the Malawi Spotlight Initiative is well designed, with general oversight by the RCO supported by the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat in collaboration with the Core Team, including representatives from the RUNOs. The management structure promotes coordination with adequate staff allocations at national and district level.
- The RUNOs had jointly delivered (including expenditure and commitments) 86 percent of the funds received by 30 September 2020. The second tranche of funding was received partially in mid-November 2020 and the remainder followed at the end of November 2020. In between RUNOs have prefinanced activities from other sources but were not able to transfer all necessary funds to IPs. Cash transfer issues arise from the fact that this is a global programme and that fund replenishments between the EU and the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat are managed by region and not by individual countries.
- Multiple processes for reporting as well as different reporting lines among RUNOs and the RCO make the reporting efforts time consuming and labour intensive.
- The NSC has not been operational and therefore the programme has not received strategic oversight. The CSNRG is operational and has been playing its assigned role.

- The support from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat at global level is constructive and welcomed, however, more accurate predictions about fund disbursements are requested.

**Recommendations:**

- Delays in fund disbursements from the global level to the country but also from the RUNOs to the IPs should be avoided as much as possible. It is important to anticipate when the RUNOs are nearing the 70% benchmark, so that cash requests can be prepared in advance and communicated timely with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat.
- The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and EU should review whether the agreement that replenishments to the funds are made once the region reaches 70% is appropriate. Delays caused in one country can negatively affect several other countries and these delays trickle down to the implementing partner who are often small civil society organisations with limited reserves.
- RCO, RUNOs and Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat to review if reporting processes and reporting timelines can be streamlined to reduce the workload for IPs and RUNOs.

**11. Are the chosen implementation and coordination mechanisms (a “new way of working”, in line with UN Reform) contributing to greater efficiency?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

Serious deficiencies

All the consulted stakeholders perceived the new way of working in line with UN Reform contributing to greater efficiency. The programme is building on the vast experiences, established relationships and collaborations with communities or target groups and structures.

Through the “Delivering as One Approach”, the programme is able to reach more people and meet diverse needs of the communities leading to greater efficiency. In the online survey, 86 per cent of participating UN representatives indicated that this closer collaboration among the UN agencies is contributing to greater efficiency. The approach is also helping break the culture of working in silos and helping to bring together various stakeholders who otherwise would have not been involved in the programme, in particular local CSO representing women’s rights organisations and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination. This involvement of a broader group of stakeholders including government agencies, traditional authorities, and grass-root organizations is conducive to national ownership. As (most) of the UN agencies are not implementers, this has also provided an opportunity to build national and district capacities through the engagement of implementing partners.

*“... what the UN reform is aiming at is looking at the UN working together as one ... the Spotlight Initiative is actually one of those programmes that we are using to operationalize the UN reform in terms of ensuring that the UN is a lot more effective and efficient. Spotlight is a programme born out of the UN reform... these four UN agencies have come together, work together, programme together, report together is really one way that we are using to show that the UN can come together deliver on results. If it works very well, it is one initiative that the UN globally will use to show that if we work together in an efficient way, it is a lot more beneficial to our member states ...” (UN Representative).*

The alignment of this programme to UN Reform provides conducive conditions for quality results, unleashing creativity and improving the programme delivery. The Core Team meets monthly, while there are also quarterly pillar coordination meetings to focus on progress of the pillar and strengthen

interlinkages. The online survey showed that the collaboration between the different stakeholders was largely rated positively, with more than 80 per cent rating the collaboration between the RC Office and RUNOs, the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat and RUNOs, the RC Office and CSO Reference Group, RUNOs and implementing partners as good or excellent.

The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Core Team have also developed an SOP for the management of fuel as part of the activities implemented in the districts. The SOP outlines that fuel cards are managed by the Spotlight Initiative Coordinator at district level and not by the driver of the respective RUNO agencies. The refuelling of vehicles needs approval from the Coordinator who will submit the signed report templates to the UNFPA on a monthly basis. UNFPA bills the respective RUNOs on a monthly basis, while payment to UNFPA is done on a quarterly basis. This is an example of how management of resources are pooled, and joint procedures and reporting were put in place to increase efficiency.

Having said this, several RUNOs in the online survey and the interviews have mentioned that this approach is not yet easy neither straightforward and that there are issues of communication and joint implement which still require improvements. This was also acknowledged in the October 2020 Core Team meeting, where the Malawi Secretariat expressed their appreciation for how the RUNOs are advancing the agenda of “Delivering as One” but also noted that there were still differing expectations and understanding on how to concretely deliver as one. The programme coordinator therefore proposed the development of a “Delivering as One” accountability framework that would serve as a monitoring and tracking mechanism, based on a set of key performance indicators. The proposal was appreciated by the Core Team and the accountability framework is under development. The MTA believes that this is a welcome approach as it will help clarify the expectations but also allow to monitor progress.

#### **Key findings:**

- The closer collaboration among UN agencies as part of the “Delivering as One Approach” is contributing to greater efficiency. The regular communication among the Core Team and the Pillar working groups, but also the pooling of resources, such as fuel, at the district level are examples which demonstrate greater effectiveness and efficiency.
- “Delivering as One”, however, remains a complex process but to address this the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat in discussion with the Core Team have decided to develop an accountability framework to outline more clearly what is expected under “Delivering as One” and also track progress against a set of key performance indicators.

#### **Recommendations:**

- RCO and Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team to implement the “Delivering as One” Accountability Framework and share it with other Spotlight Initiative countries as a good practice.

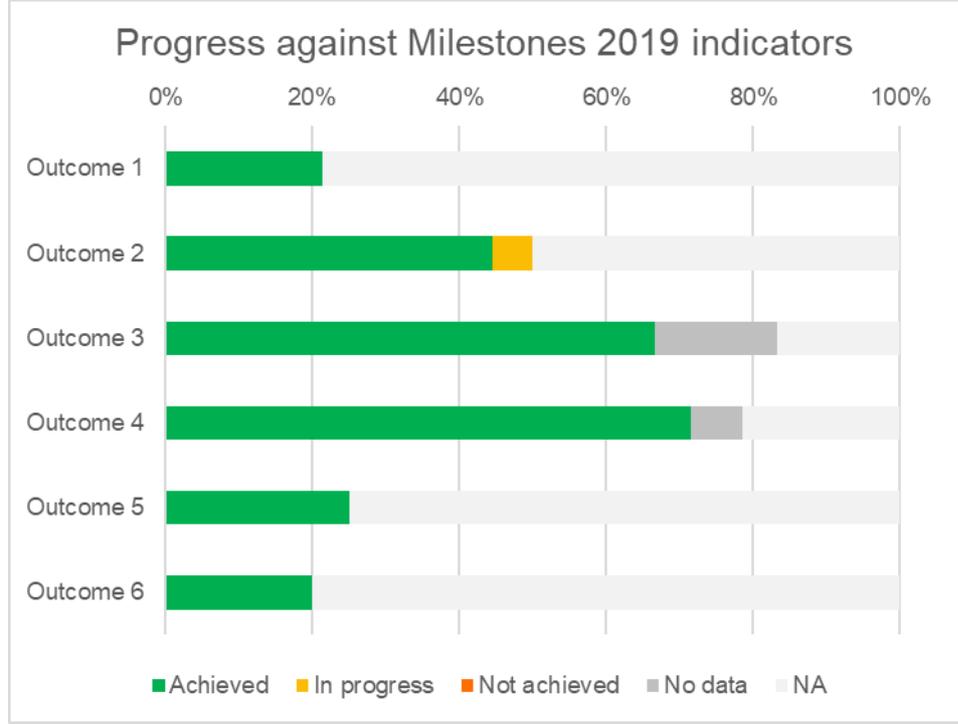
## D. EFFECTIVENESS

<p><b>12. Is the progress of each output conforming to workplan approved by OSC? Is the quality of outputs satisfactory? Are the outputs still likely to lead to the expected outcomes?</b></p>	<div style="background-color: #2E8B57; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good</div> <div style="background-color: #FF8C00; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Problems</div> <div style="background-color: #A52A2A; color: white; padding: 5px;"><input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies</div>
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Despite delays encountered at the beginning of the programme, the Spotlight Initiative Malawi programme has achieved many outputs and results across all six pillars. These outputs are still likely to contribute to the expected outcomes.

Data to assess progress against the milestones and targets were only available for 2019, as quantitative data for 2020 were still being collected in February 2021. An analysis of available data for 2019 indicates that despite the delays encountered at the start of the programme, good progress was made on all outcome areas, in particular on outcome areas 3 and 4. Several of the indicators on Outcome 1, 5 and 6 had not identified any changes in the indicators (milestones were the same as the baseline), hence no progress was measured (NA, or the light grey bar). Only one indicator under Outcome 2 was not fully achieved and 2 indicators (with several disaggregation levels) under Outcome 3 and 4 did not have data available (No data or dark grey bar). The figure below highlights that the programme has progressed well against the identified milestones, however, the ambitions for year one of the programme were set low. This is appropriate for the first year of implementation of such a complex programme. More details about the progress against the milestones per outcome and indicator are presented in Annex 4.

**Figure 4. Progress against 2019 milestones**



The key achievements, issues encountered and recommendations for each pillar are summarized in Table 4 below. These are based on the document review of annual and quarterly reports up and until June 2020 and complemented with additional information from the interviews. Regarding the quality of outputs delivered, beneficiaries were generally appreciative of the participatory programme

approach. Key informants from CSO highlighted the positive impact of awareness raising activities as well as the capacity building of local authorities, including the Malawi Police.

*“I’m very much satisfied that the project has achieved a milestone. Through the awareness campaigns that we have with the organisations that we work with in the districts, this has resulted in an increase in the number of cases being brought to the police station and being referred to hospitals. (...) There were instances where we received lessons from health personnel, from the police, from the hospitals. This to me is what satisfies me from the Spotlight initiative” . (CSO KII)*

The engagement and commitment of traditional leaders to stand up against sensitive, cultural issues such as harmful traditional practices and other forms of GBV is another proxy indicator for the quality of interventions. The assistance provided to survivors of violence, in particular as well the reintegration in schools, was also highlighted as an indicator of quality service delivery. The programme has also deliberately targeted the most marginalised and vulnerable across the different programme pillars, focusing on women and girls with disabilities, persons with albinism, female sex workers, girls and women with fistula, girls who were married off early or had early pregnancies.

**Table 4. Key achievements and obstacles per pillar**

Pillars	Key achievements in Phase I	Issues arising / recommendations for Phase II
<b>Outcome 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review of laws and policies to identify gaps and formulate key recommendations to strengthen 5 laws and 2 policies through several consultations with key actors.</li> <li>• Contributed to harmonization of child and gender related laws with the Constitution amendment act on age and definition of child</li> <li>• Significant changes have been made in the identification and pursuit of legal cases as part of a strategy to promote women's rights through the State v The Inspector General of Police and Others (Msundwe and Mbwatalika case)</li> <li>• Capacity development of community leaders to produce by laws and the development of the bylaws themselves in Nkhata-Bay, Machinga and Dowa</li> <li>• Development of 2 handbooks to enhance magistrate’s skills on how to interpret existing laws, traditions, cultural and religious practices as well as to guide the judiciary on how to effectively handle cases related to SGBV/HP, SRHR Administration of Justice in VAWG Handbook.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale up awareness raising on Gender-Related Laws for chiefs, community structures, communities and schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported the integration of EVAWG priorities in the Joint Sector Strategic Plan on Gender, Youth and Sports (2020-2024) and validation of the JSSP.</li> <li>• Development of a Gender and Disability analysis tool to help with the integration of gender, disability and SGBV into national policies, national, district and local development plans.</li> <li>• Development of an Annual Action Plan for Local Government to guide councils and district coordinators in monitoring milestones.</li> <li>• Development of a conceptual framework to harmonise the approach of working with Traditional Leaders. Engagement of 34 Paramount Chiefs and Senior Chiefs to establish the Chiefs Forums to harmonise the role of Chiefs in EVAWG in the context of COVID-19. Agreement on social accountability mechanisms was obtained and a plan for Traditional Leaders Social &amp; Community Mobilisation for COVID-19 was developed.</li> <li>• ICT assessment for key Government counterparts was conducted; to facilitate the continuation of Government’s work through online platforms in times of Covid-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID measures hindered the creation of Traditional Leaders' Coordination Platforms (Chiefs Forum at community level)</li> <li>• To effectively integrate SGBV, HP, disability and HIV in the DDP, the Local Government Data Requirement Guidelines needs to be updated. It is important to contribute to this review so that SGBV, HP, disability and HIV can be integrated and mainstreamed as part of the VAP and DDP processes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened capacity of the Gender Technical Working Groups (GTWG) and the different community structures including ADCs, VDCs, chief's forums, and magistrate courts personnel on child protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase capacity development and sensitization of chiefs to improve their response to VAWG</li> <li>Strengthen the capacities of ADCs and VDCs to lead the response to VAWG</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Male engagement:</b> Facilitated the design of the methodology and tools needed for the development of the National Male Engagement Strategy, which awaits validation. 33 Men and Boys Community Action Groups were established (11 chiefs' groups; 11 faith leaders' groups and 11 youth clubs); while 20 men and boys were supported to set up HeforShe clubs.</li> <li><b>Access to schools:</b> Contributed to development of sub-national programmes for in-school and out-of-school, including a school re-enrolment campaign targeting SGBV and HP survivors. Capacity building of teachers to provide academic guidance and psychosocial support to girls returning to school. Scholarship programme was rolled out. In 2019, 417 girls were awarded scholarships.</li> <li><b>Safe school interventions</b> were implemented, which include placing and following up of several complaint boxes and Girls Empowerment and Boys Transformation Trainings (for 807 learners in 2019). In 2020, 175 learners were equipped with skills to promote their personal safety and protection and another 598 community volunteers were empowered to intervene when they witness violence through the Empowerment and Transformation trainings. Plans were made to rehabilitate the girls' dormitories in seven secondary schools.</li> <li><b>Child protection:</b> Established 446 new community-based structures to enhance and facilitate child support services. As result, 42,000 children (aged 3 to 18) are accessing child protection support services; District level government officials involved in child protection services were equipped with knowledge of laws that create obligations and standards on child rights and child protection; In 2019, the programme strengthened the technical knowledge and skillset of police officers on child protection processes and principles, including the Safe Schools concept; In 2020, 1,815 adolescents were equipped by the police with knowledge on prevention of SGBV, child protection and access to school mechanisms for reporting violence.</li> <li><b>Increased knowledge:</b> Enhanced knowledge on gender and child related laws in the communities through legal literacy interventions conducted including airing of radio jingles, distribution of self-learning booklets and comic books. Over 5,000 students were reached with the literacy sessions, and close to 48,000 adolescents were reached with awareness messages; 924 people in school communities have increased knowledge on gender issues, reporting and referral pathways and child related laws; 200 traditional and religious leaders and 275 members of district mobilisation committees were mobilised to champion GBV prevention awareness campaigns at school and community level.</li> <li>Established 264 <i>Ifenso platforms</i><sup>6</sup> and built capacity of 9 community structures to undertake in and out of school empowerment support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Safe Space Mentorship project faced some challenges (such as lack of standards and guidelines to be used during the mentorship sessions) but these were resolved following a joint monitoring visit by RUNOs.</li> <li>Due to COVID-19, schools were closed from April to October 2020. The Safe School interventions were relocated to the community level, however, closure of schools has led to a further increase in early marriages as well as sexual violence.</li> <li>Boys and men have indicated that the programme is not focusing on their needs (see question 3). This is not the scope of the Spotlight Initiative and should be further clarified when working with boys and men, without alienating them to participate. Consider developing new interventions on male engagement, e.g. male mentors</li> <li>Some concerns were raised with the process of how girls are identified for the scholarship programme. Similar to the recommendations of the MTR, the MTA suggests clarifying the strategy for identifying beneficiaries of scholarships to ensure that girls withdrawn from marriage and pregnant</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup> Ifenso platforms are school and community -based empowerment and social accountability platforms for adolescent girls and boys. Through the platforms, girls and boys are empowered with gender-related information including prevention of SGBV and case reporting. Girls are also empowered to hold duty bearers accountable on gender-related issues and ensures that the voice of girls is heard in decisions at school level.

	<p>and supervision. . These platforms helped to increase knowledge of 4,567 adolescents on gender equality, GBV, HIV, child rights and protection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Safe Space Mentorship</b> project has a total of 420 mentors (60 in 2019 and 360 in 2020) participating in weekly sessions that enhance their knowledge and skills related to SGBV, HPs, SRHR, child protection, income generation, and other topics of relevance. The mentors are expected to run 6 monthly mentorship sessions targeting a total of 64,800 girls.</li> <li>• <b>Awareness raising on COVID-19</b>, including on the heightened risks of SGBV/HPs: 282 sensitisation campaigns reaching 182,924 households; 2000 IEC materials distributed; 30 peer educators trained, who in turn reached 276 households with key messaging; and 162 jingles aired on community radio stations.</li> </ul>	<p>teenagers and prioritised and community leaders are transparently involved in the identification.</p>
<p><b>Outcome 4</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity building on Essential Service Package (ESP)</b> for 170 front-line service providers to deliver integrated SRH/SGB/HP/HIV services, including social welfare officers, gender officers, health workers, police officers and magistrate (90 in 2019 and 80 in 2020); alignment of the One Stop Centre guidelines to the GBV essential health package guidelines; development of district specific plans to improve capacity on ESP; development of a specific module for Police on ESP in the police training curriculum, which was validated in 2020.</li> <li>• <b>Development of a capacity building programme for Mental Health and Psychosocial support for SGBV survivors.</b> The programme includes a baseline study on mental health needs and a training of trainer component. In 2020, 25 government staff were trained in Group Interpersonal Therapy to provide mental health and psychosocial support services to GBV survivors and 15 psychosocial counsellors were equipped and trained to provide support to SGBV survivors.</li> <li>• Roll out of the <b>RMNCAH score card</b> to facilitate the systematic collection of data on quality, accessibility and availability of SRH and SGBV services.</li> <li>• <b>Treatment of fistula patients:</b> In 2019, 31 patients received treatment as a result of the fistula awareness and mobilisation campaign. Ongoing capacity building of health officers on obstetric fistula including screening, basic treatment and referrals. In 2020, 5 fistula patients received surgery.</li> <li>• <b>Women and girls with disabilities:</b> In 2019, 150 young women and girls with disabilities were equipped with knowledge on SRHR and GBV, including on where to access services and facilitation of interaction with service providers to reduce stigma and address bottlenecks in access to services. In 2020, needs of 553 young women and girls with disabilities were assessed in relation to accessing SGBV and SRHR services and mobility aides were provided to 313, as well as sunscreen to 23 women and girls with albinism; health facilities were assessed in terms of their accessibility to persons with disabilities; 63 service providers have received a training on disability mainstreaming.</li> <li>• <b>Female sex workers:</b> capacity strengthening of 48 female sex worker network leaders on gender-related laws, their application and where to access SRHR and GBV services.</li> <li>• <b>Police officers and prosecutors:</b> capacity building of 160 police officers on SGBV knowledge; in 2019, 40 officers were supported to become criminal investigators with specialist subjects on SGBV and child protection, in 2020, another 49 officers commenced the same training. In addition, 40 prosecutors were also trained to become specialists on SGBV and HPs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19 has disrupted service provision leading to reduced number of court hearing sessions as a preventive measure for both complainants and service providers. In response, mobile courts are being rolled out to address these bottlenecks.</li> <li>• Concerns were raised by district authorities and community leaders that Women Judges Association in Malawi (WOJAM) could do more to inform traditional leaders of their plans, and to participate in district COPs, where they are currently largely absent.</li> <li>• Women and girls' economic empowerment interventions are being implemented moderately, but there is a high demand for this kind of support. The MTA, in alignment with the MTR, therefore, recommends scaling up women and girls' economic empowerment interventions in Phase 2.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Courthouses and case management:</b> examination of courthouse infrastructure in 6 districts to identify shortfalls and inform court rehabilitations. Facilitated improved case management and timely access to justice services. 95 cases were followed up in 6 districts of which 24 were concluded.</li> <li>● <b>Safe spaces and community-based service provision:</b> revamped and rehabilitated 50 Community Victim Support Unit (CVSU) as safe spaces. Training and reorientation of 514 CVSU committee members on child protection and GBV service provision. In 2020, 638 bicycles were provided to community-based service providers to provide services in hard-to-reach areas.</li> <li>● <b>Results achieved:</b> In 2020, 1,445 young women and adolescent girls were supported to access FP, STI, post abortion care, obstetric fistula, PEP, HIV and SGBV services; 33 cases of child marriage were followed up, of which 23 girls were withdrawn from marriage. 658 child survivors of SGBV and HPs received psychosocial services. 40 survivors of SGBV were equipped with entrepreneur skills and included in income generation programme as part of the recovery services</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Outcome 5</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development of a framework for mapping and assessing SGBV data and information management systems on SGBV and HPs. The outputs were included into the annual work plan of the NSO. In 2020, data collection tools on SGBV/HP/SRHR were created.</li> <li>● Revamping of the web based GBV Management Information System (GBV MIS) hosted by the MoGCDSW through a wide participatory review aiming at upgrading the system and allowing direct access to the Police. In 2020, the programme facilitated the roll-out and strengthening of the GBV MIS in all districts. 28 child protection workers were trained to fill monthly tracking baseline tool and GBV register.</li> <li>● Upgrading of the existing mobile data collection system RapidPro for the MoGCDSW and Police, and development of new system for the Judiciary using mobile phone technology. Development of dashboard to display collected data and improve monitoring and analysis of cases. Capacitation of several government officials on use of the new system.</li> <li>● Three polls on HP, quality of SGBV services and social norms were conducted using U-report. The findings are used to inform programming and awareness raising on key knowledge gaps and challenges with the community.</li> <li>● Literature review on SGBV, HP and SRHR was finalised to assess the quality of existing evidence and identifying gaps for the research agenda. The report highlighted that it is clear what the priority issues are but there is limited evidence on how to tackle the issues.</li> <li>● Contribution to SDG score card to be used by sectoral planners, programme implementers and statisticians to collect data and monitor performance in gender related SDGs.</li> <li>● Contribution to survey questions to WB Pulse Survey on COVID-19.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● RC could advocate for establishment of Data Governance Technical Working Group that would discuss SGBV data management issues more generally involving relevant government stakeholders and institutions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Outcome 6</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Safe Space mentors (pillar 3) raised awareness on benefits of girls' education through role modelling sessions with girls.</li> <li>● Awareness on SGBV and available services reaching 22,000 people through 16 days of activism campaign in 2019.</li> <li>● 400 students mobilised against rape and sexual harassment on campus in collaboration with the MoGCDSW and Bunda University Gender Activist Club. Male to male dialogue was held on rape and negative masculinity.</li> <li>● Malawi Police Service Women's Network empowered women and girls to demand their rights and report GBV incidents through community focused activities. This was a networking opportunity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community-based organisations foresee a challenge of being able to respond to cases when financial support from Spotlight Initiative is no longer there. They suggested that the Spotlight Initiative' supports them to generate income through opening a</li> </ul>

- Wives of traditional leaders were engaged to explore concepts on power and power imbalances, and they were empowered to use their positions to help GBV survivors. Action plans were developed, and they agreed to form alliances with wives of village heads.
- Traditional leaders were supported to lead GBV awareness campaigns reaching 1,166 community members. The leaders publicly condemned VAWG and committed to ending all HP in their communities together with their wives.
- Over 1,000 female faith leaders were mobilised to address harmful attitudes in their communities.
- Foundations were laid for a new generation of feminist movement. Participants represented LGBTQI community, female sex workers, women with disabilities, persons from gender equality movement and Young Female Network members. The first Young Feminist Network was launched by the GoM and UN to create a space for a new generation of women rights activists.
- Supported the launch of the African Women Leaders Network (Malawi Chapter) by inviting 350 women and girls from various sectors and groups. A chapter on GBV was established.
- 45 female sex workers and women living with HIV/AIDS benefitted from a TOT on community activism. They have reached 82 women with trainings on community advocacy.
- 3 community-based organisations and 1 disabled persons organisation were supported to form or reactivate 23 grassroots women organisations who will be engaged to promote activism and women rights at community level.

sustainable business that can generate money.

#### Key findings:

- Delays in the programme at the start have not influenced the achievement of output performance targets in 2019. Several indicators, however, did not envisage a change between the baseline and milestone for 2019, which is appropriate for the first year of a complex programme. Results were achieved across all six pillars with a strong focus on pillar 3 and 4.
- The progress towards outcome targets in the performance data from 2019 indicate that the programme outputs effectively contribute to reaching the planned outcomes. No quantitative data were available for 2020 during the MTA data collection to make a similar assessment of progress made in that year, however, progress against 2020 indicators will be available in the 2020 Annual Report.
- The participatory working approach, strong focus on awareness raising, capacity building of institutional actors and the successful engagement of traditional leaders and communities are proxy indicators for the quality of the output delivery.

#### Recommendations:

- Once the programme performance data are available, analyse the progress towards the 2020 milestones and indicator targets to identify interventions with substantial delay in order to identify strategies to accelerate progress in these areas.
- For specific recommendations on each Pillar, please see table 4 above.

<p><b>13. Is the absorption capacity of the Government, implementing partners or RUNOs an obstacle/bottleneck to ensuring that implementation is going according to plan?</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good <input type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>Findings from the online survey showed that there was no problem with the institutional and human capacity of either the government stakeholders, RUNOs or IPs. The capacity of small community based and grassroots organizations and women rights organisations was considered lowest but still good or excellent according to over 65 per cent of the respondents. Issues related to the institutional and human capacity of smaller IPs were mostly related to the heavy administration requirements from RUNOs which requires getting used to. Capacity building, however, is foreseen by the Spotlight Initiative through training but also participation in the Community of Practice at district level. However, key informants from community-based organisations mentioned that they would also appreciate more capacity building on administrative matters.</p> <p>Some concerns related to capacity were mentioned before in the report. These relate to the capacity of the District Councils to manage and coordinate the Spotlight Initiative interventions. As the district staff already have a full agenda, the Spotlight Initiative has opted to appoint a District Coordinator who will work closely with the district government officials. Government officials interviewed at district level believed that while this is appropriate, it is also important to discuss how the tasks of the District Coordinator could be taken over by the District Council in the future (see question 4 and 8).</p> <p>In terms of the capacity to execute funds, the opinions were more split, with generally more than 20 per cent of respondents indicating that the government stakeholders, RUNOs and IPs have had difficulties to execute funds. These difficulties were mostly related to delays in receiving funding which were mentioned by both IPs and RUNOs as a limiting factor to implement the activities according to the agreed work plans. This is linked to delays in receiving funds from the global Spotlight Initiative Secretariat (see question 10).</p> <p><b>Key findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The institutional and human capacity of government, RUNOs and IPs is considered adequate to implement the activities as outlined in the workplan. The capacity of IPs and RUNOs to execute funds has been affected by delays in receiving funding.</li> </ul>	

<p><b>14A. Has the Initiative’s implementation and results achievement gone according to workplan approved by OSC?</b></p> <p><b>14B. Are there any obstacles/bottlenecks/outstanding issues on the partners' or government side that are limiting the successful implementation and results achievement of the Initiative?</b></p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good <input type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p><b>Initiative’s implementation and results achievement according to workplan approved by OSC</b></p> <p>As mentioned in question 12, the implementation of the activities and results achieved to date are in likely to contribute to the reaching of planned outcomes and therefore also in line with the workplan approved by the OSC. The programme has put in place an acceleration plan to catch-up on lost time and performance in Phase 1. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic a response plan was put in place and the acceleration plan was also revised accordingly. Under each Pillar, there are selected activities to be carried out with or without revised budget.</p>	

*“... what we did was to come up with an acceleration plan to move quickly in terms of implementation and see some of these indicators move in that particular direction. And we have actually done that. We are consolidating all the progress that has been made in the different sectors. And I think based on the consolidation, that is when we will get to see how much progress we've done in terms of tracking the movement of those particular indicators. As stated, our main problem was with implementation, because we started late” (Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat).*

The acceleration plan is in line with the IPs desire to accelerate activities as they are conscious that there is not a lot of time to achieve results. However, some IPs were only contracted and introduced to the districts in July 2020.

*“... we need to scale up ... implement our activities with speed, we have a short period for implementing our activities and reach as many people as we can, only two years to go. It will not be good to come to a point where the programme comes to an end and other communities have not yet been reached” (IP interview)*

### **Obstacles/bottlenecks/outstanding issues on the partners' or government side that are limiting the successful implementation and results achievement of the Initiative**

The main bottlenecks affecting the successful implementation of the Initiative in Malawi were mentioned in various previous questions. They can be briefly summarized from the perspective of the different stakeholders:

#### **Government**

- Local government believes that parallel systems are created at the district level with the appointment of a District Coordinator. The MTA has demonstrated that this position is not a duplication of systems and the district coordinator is working closely with the district government officials. However, the fact that the perceptions exist and have been repeated in the interviews and the online survey indicate that there is dissatisfaction on this matter among District Councils. It is important to address these perceptions by discussing how the role and responsibility of the District Coordinator could be absorbed by the District Council in the future.
- Limited funds are available to the government to facilitate coordination.

#### **CSOs:**

- Delays in disbursements of funds to IPs affect delays in implementation (see question 10).
- Some implementing partners are engaged at different times of the year which may affect results because interventions are not carried out concurrently or sequentially to complement each other. The Spotlight Initiative has tried to mitigate the impact of this bottleneck by engaging the IPs in the Community of Practice and encourage sharing of information and practices.

#### **RUNOs:**

- Reporting system and lines are complex and time consuming (see question 10).
- There are challenges with the capacity of grassroots organizations, however, these capacity gaps are being addressed as part of Pillar 6.

#### **Key findings:**

- The acceleration plan is adequately prioritizing efforts to achieve the expected results for Phase 1, taking into consideration the delays encountered at the start as well as in relation to COVID-19.

- Several bottlenecks affect the effectiveness of the programme, these are mainly linked to different expectations related to coordination at the district level, delays in funds disbursement and time-consuming reporting requirements.

**Recommendations:**

- Spotlight Initiative Core Team to consider transferring the role and responsibility of the District Coordinator gradually to the District Council as part of the sustainability plan. This transfer should be jointly discussed and accompanied by a capacity building strategy.

## E. SUSTAINABILITY

**15. Is sufficient capacity being built so that local actors (particularly CSOs, the women’s movement and groups representing women and girls that face intersecting forms of discrimination) will be able to manage the process by the end of the Initiative without continued dependence on international expertise?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

Serious deficiencies

A sustainability plan has not yet been developed but is planned for Phase 2. The programme document does not have a specific section on sustainability but identifies several actions which will contribute to sustainability. These include provision of pro bono mobile legal services to SGBV victims from the Legal Aid Bureau, the Malawi Law Society and Women Judges Association of Malawi, capacity building of Councils, CSOs and community-based organisations to manage funds and report on results, capacity building of government officers, CSOs and community-based organisations in the provision of integrated essential services for GBV, capacity building of the NSO to institutionalise VAWG, SGBV, HP and SRHR data collection and analysis, avoiding the creating of new parallel structures but use existing government coordination and governance structures, such as the Gender Sector Working Group as the technical advisory body to the NSC.

The strategy for sustainability proposed in the country programme document builds mostly on the strengthening of capacities of government counterparts, CSOs and community-based organisations. Capacity building activities have been conducted, including training on gender, GBV, human rights, SRHR, frontline service providers, GBV survivors, community volunteers (child protection officers, social welfare assistance, community development assistants etc) and district officials. This has enabled community members and other stakeholders to be more knowledgeable and responsive to VAWG. In the online survey, respondents were also generally in agreement that capacity of central (63%) and local government (70%), civil society organisations (73%) and community-based and grassroots organisations (65%) is being strengthened in a sufficient manner so that these actors can take over the management of the process by the end of the Initiative

There are, however, contradictory comments in the online survey as to whether the approach used by the programme is leading to sustainability. While UN and IPs find that the approach used is likely to contribute to sustainability as it is very participatory, gender transformative and involves all relevant stakeholders, several government representatives but also a UN representative find that the programme is not yet doing enough to ensure sustainability of the systems put in place (such as the District Coordinators).

*“It calls for participation of diverse group while this is very good for ownership and sustainability, the drawback is the coordination challenge.”* (Online survey comment UN)

*“100 community youth volunteers have been trained in Empowerment Transformation Training with the aim of helping in training participants on the skills that they can use to end violence as well as changing mindset of men towards women in fighting against GBV also for sustainability of the project.”* (Online survey comment IP)

*“Unfortunately, government agencies are not fully involved as key players. There are seemingly parallel structures instead of using the existing structures that would ensure sustainability of outcomes beyond the programme life cycle”.* (Online survey comment Government)

*“Direct Implementation Modality has reduced Government Stakeholder participation and support. This puts the sustainability of program at stake.” (Online survey comment RUNO)*

Hence, while the programme in Malawi is contributing to strengthening the capacity of actors to take forward the processes initiated by the Initiative, more work is still needed to ensure that all stakeholders are feel fully empowered to do so. In Phase 2, a sustainability plan should be developed in a participatory way and consider a pathway to transfer responsibilities from the District Coordinator to the District Gender Officer’s office accompanied by a capacity building strategy. It is also recommended to review whether the Direct Implementation Modality (see question 7) is effectively contributing to capacity building of government counterparts or whether it is reducing their ownership and participation.

**Key findings:**

- The Country Programme Document aimed to contribute to sustainability primarily by strengthening the capacity of government counterparts, CSOs and community structures. This capacity building is taking place and more than 60 per cent of respondents to the online survey believe that sufficient capacity is being billed for these stakeholders to continue the processes started by the Spotlight Initiative.
- Opinions on whether the Spotlight Initiative is effectively contributing to sustainability are split. While most UN representatives and IPs find that the approach used is contributing to sustainability as it is very participatory, gender transformative and involves all relevant stakeholders, several government representatives but also a UN representative find that the programme is not yet doing enough to ensure sustainability of the systems put in place.

**Recommendations:**

- The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should consider how the tasks of the District Coordinator role will be handed over to the existing structures at District level after the end of the programme. It is recommended to develop a structured plan for capacity development related to planning and coordination of efforts on EVAWG for District Officers who will be involved in coordinating activities in the future.
- The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review whether the Direct Implementation Modality is the best approach for strengthening the capacity of government counterparts or whether interventions which are implemented by Government counterparts should use the National Implementation modality instead.

**Additional questions: Is the programme identifying and disseminating good practices in the country, between countries?**

Implementing partners compile good practices and share through their reports to their RUNOs and share the same at TWG meetings. These are compiled in the annual reports. At MTA, FGDs corroborated by IPs and other stakeholders, the following were identified as examples of best practices:

**Best Practice/Case Study 1 on community practice:**

Ntaja is a large trading area located in Machinga district. It is under Paramount Chief Kawinga, who has the reputation of serving his community. Ntaja like many parts of rural Malawi is being affected by cultural and religious beliefs that make it “okay” to violate rights of women, girls and young people. In order to help protect the vulnerable a group of volunteers came together to help resolve issues of

violence. This group is comprised of a passionate child protection officer, a member of a local Village Savings Loan (VSL), youth mentors, community security committee and the Paramount Chief. This group forms what is called Community of Practice. However, they didn't always work together.

*"We were working separately but we all have one thing in common. We were helping people who have experienced violence. Then we called for a meeting to discuss how we can work together."*

The group was formed. Together they form a strong network that works together in cohesion. When the Child protection officer has a case, he will involve all the members of the group. The security team is there dealing with the perpetrator, the youth mentors to counsel, the VSL to provide economic empowerment and the Paramount Chief to enforce. The 'A' team. The group however acknowledges that they wouldn't be able to do their work without a visionary leader.

*"Paramount Kawinga is the one who keeps up going to be honest. There is no other chief who is passionate about ending violence like him and he gives us great support. This week he went around the community in a van and megaphone spreading the message on violence...himself, in the rain. He is absolutely extra ordinary"*

They say when a leader leads his people follow, Paramount Kawinga is truly living this. In a discussion with a village headman, he said

*"If the big man starts and you see him running, what will you do? You run with him...I mean why not? He is showing us a great example of a good leader"*

#### **Best Practice Case Study 2 on barbershop toolkits:**

Another group that is doing great work in the area is the Barbershop toolkit. No, they do not go around cutting people's hair. It is a forum where Men talk;

*"We call it the Barbershop because a Barbershop is where men talk freely with their peers and also when they come out of a Barbershop, they have changed appearance"*

This group is more casual but has great success stories. The members in the group are comprised of men from small business, local bicycle taxi, religious leaders and community leaders. A member of the group would just spark a conversation amongst his fellow friends and as they all discuss he would provide some wisdom on the matter.

*"After that discussion you will see someone walk up to you later and ask for more help or say that what I said during the discussion has really changed his family"*

This shows that there is power in community working with communities. It takes away the hard lines and allows for easy flow of dialogue and a visionary leader is the icing on the cake

## F. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. PROGRAMME DESIGN:

- MTA Q1: Does the action align to the principles of the Spotlight Initiative as listed in the Spotlight Initiative Fund TORs?
- MTA Q3: Does the action presently respond to the needs of the target groups / end beneficiaries? Are the necessary consultations taking place with key stakeholders?  
MTA Q5: Have all relevant circumstances and risks been taken into account?
- MTA Q6: Are the indicators to measure results well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the objectives?
- Add Relevance: Is the programme adapted to the present institutional, human and financial capacities of the partner government
- Add Relevance: Are there any complementarity issues with other ongoing/planned action(s) (including Capacity Development) managed by donors that need to be addressed? Are other programmes and donor funds aimed at similar objectives coordinated with Spotlight? Is government coordinating the different inputs?

### Main findings:

1. The programme adheres to the Spotlight Initiative guiding principles, in particular those related to promoting interventions which are gender responsive and transformative and in line with human rights principles such as leaving no one behind. It focuses particularly on people with disabilities, LGBTQI, elderly, people with albinism and survivors of GBV, amongst others. Some survey respondents indicated that Chiefs and religious leaders are not sufficiently engaged, but this could not be corroborated by the document review. Government officials mentioned that the principle of “Interventions ensure state and multilateral institutions are primary partners in programme implementation and developing longer-term financial sustainability” is not yet fully realised. Document review confirmed that the Initiative has put measures in place to realise this principle through the mainstreaming of SGBV, HP and disability in the District Development Plans, however, factors outside of their control have delayed the full realisation of these principles.
2. The programme responds to the needs of women and girls who are survivors of violence and harmful practices. It also caters for persons with disabilities including persons with albinism, sex workers and other key population. The programme is not designed to cater for the needs of boys and men, but boys and men are engaged as allies in the efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls. Boys and men consulted, however, seem to have different expectations as what the programme could/should do for them. This is not a problem of design or implementation but of different expectations and it would be good to clarify with men and boys what the programme can realistically do for them, so that they remain engaged and committed.
3. All stakeholders (EU, UN, CSO, government at national and district level as well a community structures) were extensively consulted during the design of the programme. The Spotlight Initiative team in Malawi has conducted an internal MTR to obtain feedback from beneficiaries and target groups to ensure these opinions are taken on board for the development of Phase 2.
4. The risks to the programme and mitigating measures were well defined in the Risk Mitigation Plan. The programme has been responsive to emerging issues such as COVID-19 and is flexible

to work with partners who show interest to contribute to the implementation of the programme.

5. The ToC has been adequately adapted to the country context and the indicators selected are appropriate for monitoring progress against expected results. The programme has set up an effective monitoring system. The Spotlight Initiative is also contributing to improved data collection and reporting at national level through activities outlined in Pillar 5. As part of these interventions, standard data collection tools were developed to collect incident level data from the community level through to the national level on SGBV/ HP/ SRHR. .

**Recommendations:**

- a) During Phase 2, follow up on the review of the Local Government Data Requirement Guidelines and continue to support the integration and mainstreaming of SGBV, HP, disability as part of the Village Action Plan and District Development Plan processes.
- b) Prior to Phase 2, it is recommended to review the Risk Management Matrix in preparation of Phase 2 to include lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- c) During Phase 2, the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team in collaboration with NSO, should facilitate the development of an information sharing policy to ensure data collected can be shared and used by relevant programmes and institutions.

**2. GOVERNANCE:**

- MTA Q4: Do all key stakeholders still demonstrate effective commitment (ownership)?
- MTA Q8: Do partner government and other partners (CSO and EUD) in the country effectively steer the action?
- MTA Q10: Are the National Steering Committees functioning efficiently and in line with Spotlight principles?

**Main findings:**

1. The Government of Malawi has expressed its commitment to the Spotlight Initiative through signing the country programme document, and its commitment is also observed at the level of the Ministry of Gender and Local Government. However, this commitment does not necessarily translate in country ownership as the platforms for ensuring this ownership and steering, i.e. the National Steering Committee are not yet active due to lack of engagement of the Secretary to the President and Cabinet (SPC).
2. The National Steering Committee has not been functional due to lack of engagement from the Secretary to the President and Cabinet. Nevertheless, national stakeholders are steering the programme, in particular representatives of the Ministry of Gender and Local Government. The use of existing structures at the district level and the leadership role of the DPD facilitate this process.
3. At district level, the Council hosts the programme in the districts and provides an enabling environment through the DPD. The Spotlight Initiative District Coordinator supports the implementation of the programme but there are concerns at the level of the District Gender Office that not sufficient capacity is built in terms of programme coordination. It is unclear how the tasks of the District Coordinator will be assumed by the Council after the end of the programme.

4. The EUD, UN agencies continue to demonstrate effective commitment and actively contribute to steering programme implementation.
5. The CSO Reference Group is contributing to steering the programme and playing the role as outlined in the CPD. The promptness of release of funding for this group may need to be reviewed to ensure they can play their advocacy role in an effective manner. CSOs are seen to actively participate in the steering of the programme through their participation in the community of practice and monthly meetings.

**Recommendations:**

- a) During Phase 2, the RCO, EUD and HoA should engage the Minister of Gender and Minister of Local Government to take an advocacy role on behalf of the programme with the SPC to ensure high level commitment is sustained. If the central government continues to avoid appointing a co-chair for the NSC, perhaps the Initiative should consider using existing mechanisms such as the Gender, Youth and Sports Sector Working Group as an alternative to the NSC.
- b) During Phase 2, the Spotlight Initiative Core Team should consider how the tasks of the District Coordinator role will be handed over to the existing structures at District level after the end of the programme. It is recommended to develop a structured plan for capacity development related to planning and coordination of efforts on EVAWG for District Officers who will be involved in coordinating activities in the future.
- c) Prior to Phase 2, the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review the mechanisms for fund release or management for the CSNRG to ensure they have resources available as and when needed.

**3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT:**

- MTA Q2: Are the Initiative's deliverables aligned with the UN agencies' mandate and priorities? Are the right UN agencies involved? Are programmes implemented in line with the UN System reform?
- MTA Q7: Are the chosen implementation mechanisms (incl. choice of implementation modalities, entities and contractual arrangements) adequate for achieving the expected results?
- MTA Q10: How effectively is the Initiative managed? How effectively is the Programme managed? Are the management arrangements for the Initiative at national level adequate and appropriate? [*are staffing levels appropriate?*]
- MTA Q11: Are the chosen implementation and coordination mechanisms (a "new way of working", in line with UN Reform) contributing to greater efficiency?
- *Add Efficiency: Are the resources budgeted for (as well as the resources made available) sufficient for the planned actions (no over or underfunding?) [are the 18% allocated for programme management sufficient]? Is the programme generating additional resources? If so, how much (in % of total budget)*

**Main findings:**

1. The involved UN agencies (UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women and UNFPA) have complimentary experience and expertise that give them a strong capacity to implement the programme. Based on their individual capacity and the portfolio each one has accumulated, the right RUNOs with right skill mix are involved. Stakeholders are generally satisfied with how the programme is adhering to the UN Reform principles.
2. The programme has set up a unique arrangement of partnerships at national, subnational and community level that stakeholders find helpful in bringing together the different stakeholders and facilitate coordination of activities.

3. The programme has contracted a large number of grassroots CSOs in line with the Spotlight Initiative guidelines through a joint call for proposals. These CSOs are implementing activities based on their geographic and technical capacities and a joint capacity development plan was developed. While this implementation modality is much appreciated, it has also caused challenges in terms of coordination and generation of synergies at district level. The programme has, however, identified mechanisms such as the Community of Practice to encourage learning and sharing among IPs.
4. Government counterparts are of the opinion that not enough resources are allocated to the Government. While nine per cent of the overall budget is 'delivered by the Government', the RUNOs use different implementation modalities which mean that not all of these funds are actually managed by the Government counterparts.
5. The management structure for the Malawi Spotlight Initiative is well designed, with general oversight by the RCO supported by the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat in collaboration with the Core Team, including representatives from the RUNOs. The management structure promotes coordination with adequate staff allocations at national and district level.
6. The RUNOs had jointly delivered (including expenditure and commitments) 86 percent of the funds received by 30 September 2020. The second tranche of funding was received partially in mid-November 2020 and the remainder followed at the end of November 2020. In between RUNOs have prefinanced activities from other sources but were not able to transfer all necessary funds to IPs. Cash transfer issues arise from the fact that this is a global programme and that fund replenishments between the EU and the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat are managed by region and not by individual countries.
7. Multiple processes for reporting as well as different reporting lines among RUNOs and the RCO make the reporting efforts time consuming and labour intensive.
8. The support from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat at global level is welcomed, however, more accurate predictions about fund disbursements are necessary.
9. The closer collaboration among UN agencies as part of the "Delivering as One Approach" is contributing to greater efficiency. The regular communication among the Core Team and the Pillar working groups, but also the pooling of resources, such as fuel, at the district level are examples which demonstrate greater effectiveness and efficiency. "Delivering as One", however, remains a complex process but to address this the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat in discussion with the Core Team have developed an accountability framework to outline more clearly what is expected under "Delivering as One" and to track progress against a set of key performance indicators.

**Recommendations:**

- a) In Phase 2, the Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review whether the Direct Implementation Modality is the best approach for strengthening the capacity of government counterparts or whether interventions which are implemented by Government counterparts should use the National Implementation modality instead.
- b) Delays in fund disbursements from the global level to the country but also from the RUNOs to the IPs should be avoided as much as possible. The Spotlight Initiative Core Team should review and anticipate when the RUNOs are nearing the 70% benchmark, so that cash requests can be prepared in advance and communicated timely with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. RUNOs

should be prepared to cover gaps in cash for up to three months, based on previous experiences.

- c) The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and EU should review whether the agreement that replenishments to the funds are only made once all the countries in the region reach 70% is appropriate. Especially in a region as Africa where there are large differences in expenditure rates among the participating countries.
- d) During Phase 2, RCO, RUNOs and Spotlight Initiative Malawi Secretariat to review if reporting processes and reporting timelines can be streamlined to reduce the workload for IPs and RUNOs.
- e) During Phase 2, RCO and Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team to implement the Accountability Framework and share it with other Spotlight Initiative countries as a good practice.

#### 4. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS:

- MTA Q5/9: If there are delays, how important are they and what are the consequences? What are the reasons for these delays and to what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented? To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly?
- MTA Q5/9: What are the consequences of COVID 19? To what extent have appropriate corrective measures been implemented? To what extent has the planning been revised accordingly?
- MTA Q12: Is the progress of each output conforming to workplan approved by OSC? Is the quality of outputs satisfactory? Are the outputs still likely to lead to the expected outcomes?
- MTA Q13: Is the absorption capacity of the Government, CSO and RUNOs an obstacle/bottleneck to ensuring that implementation is going according to plan?
- MTA Q14: Has the Initiative's implementation and results achievement gone according to workplan approved by OSC? Are there any obstacles/bottlenecks/outstanding issues on the partners' or government side that are limiting the implementation and results achievement of the Initiative?
- MTA Q15: Is sufficient capacity being built so that local actors will be able to manage the process by the end of the Initiative without continued dependence on international expertise?

#### Main findings:

1. Internal and external factors have caused delays in starting the implementation of programme activities. Late recruitment of IPs and delays in funds transfers have contributed to delays as IP had less time and not sufficient resources available to implement their activities. The programme has tried to address most delays in an adequate manner, as outlined by the mitigation measures in the Risk Management Matrix.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused increased instances of VAWG, but the programme has been responsive to address these issues by changing its way of working and seizing new opportunities. A detailed response by pillar was developed, increasing efficiency, avoiding duplications and aligning the response to other initiatives and joint programmes led by government counterparts and RUNOs.
3. Delays in the programme at the start have not influenced the achievement of output performance targets in 2019. Several indicators, however, did not envisage a change between

the baseline and milestone for 2019, which is appropriate for the first year of a complex programme. Results were achieved across all six pillars with a strong focus on pillar 3 and 4. The progress towards outcome targets in the performance data from 2019 indicate that the programme outputs effectively contribute to reaching the planned outcomes. No quantitative data were available for 2020 during the MTA data collection to make a similar assessment of progress made in that year, however, progress against 2020 indicators will be available in the 2020 Annual Report.

4. The participatory working approach, strong focus on awareness raising, capacity building of institutional actors and the successful engagement of traditional leaders and communities are proxy indicators for the quality of the output delivery.
5. The institutional and human capacity of government, RUNOs and IPs is considered adequate to implement the activities as outlined in the workplan. The capacity of IPs and RUNOs to execute funds has been affected by delays in receiving funding.
6. The acceleration plan is adequately prioritizing efforts to achieve the expected results for Phase 1, taking into consideration the delays encountered at the start as well as in relation to COVID-19. Several bottlenecks affect the effectiveness of the programme, these are mainly linked to different expectations related to coordination at the district level, delays in funds disbursement and time-consuming reporting requirements.
7. The Country Programme Document aimed to contribute to sustainability primarily by strengthening the capacity of government counterparts, CSOs and community structures. This capacity building is taking place and more than 60 per cent of respondents to the online survey believe that sufficient capacity is being billed for these stakeholders to continue the processes started by the Spotlight Initiative.
8. Opinions on whether the Spotlight Initiative is effectively contributing to sustainability are split. While most UN representatives and IPs find that the approach used is contributing to sustainability as it is very participatory, gender transformative and involves all relevant stakeholders, several government representatives but also a UN representative find that the programme is not yet doing enough to ensure sustainability of the systems put in place.

**Recommendations:**

- a) The Malawi Spotlight Initiative Secretariat should initiate dialogue on the “shadow pandemics” to address the rights violations in the areas of education and protection for girls, boys and young women caused by COVID-19 pandemic to effectively prepare for similar situations and therefore ease the negative impacts as experienced currently.
- b) Once the programme performance data are available, analyse the progress towards the 2020 milestones and indicator targets to identify interventions with substantial delay in order to identify strategies to accelerate progress in these areas.
- c) For specific recommendations on each Pillar, please see table 4 above.
- d) The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should consider how the tasks of the District Coordinator role will be handed over to the existing structures at District level after the end of the programme. It is recommended to develop a structured plan for capacity development related to planning and coordination of efforts on EVAWG for District Officers who will be involved in coordinating activities in the future.

- e) The Spotlight Initiative Malawi Core Team should review whether the Direct Implementation Modality is the best approach for strengthening the capacity of government counterparts or whether interventions which are implemented by Government counterparts should use the National Implementation modality instead.

## G. ANNEXES

### ANNEX 1. DOCUMENTS ANALYSED

Sources of Information: List all documents analysed	
Spotlight programme documents	Availability
Country Programming document as approved by OSC	✓
Country Budget as approved by the OSC (may also include revised budget)	✓
Spotlight Country Programme Snapshot	✓
Inception report	✓
Annual report/s	✓
Annex A Country Report (included in the Annual Report)	✓
Ad hoc (2nd Tranche) report (may also include provisional narrative report – 2 pager)	✓
Spotlight Initiative financial information on the <a href="#">MPTF Gateway</a>	✓
Knowledge management workplan	✓
National CSO Reference Group workplan	✓
CSO Reference Group Bios	✓
Communication workplan	✓
Stories directly from the <a href="#">Calendar</a>	✓
<b>Other documents</b>	
SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE MALAWI JOINT MONITORING REPORT_final	
Concept Note_MTR and Phase II Planning_V2	
Consolidated September report.	
Core team meeting minutes - 9 Oct 2020_Draft	
CSNRG Meeting report 1st November 2019 (1)	
CSNRG Planning and Coordination Meeting Report Minutes 2020_	
Data Collection Tools and Methodology for Phase II Planning_v4	
DRAFT_Scale Up Strategy_14 Dec	
Fund Tors - Description of the Action Spotlight Initiative Rider II	
Link to the virtual library	
MACOHA SUSTAINABILITY PLAN	
Malawi Spotlight BUDGET 3 Dec OSC FINAL clean	
Malawi Spotlight Country PROGRAMME DOCUMENT 6 Dec FINAL OSC	
MTR Draft Report_v2	

Quarter 3 Pillar Coordination Meetings_Proposed Agenda
SEPTEMBER Spotlight Initiative Challenges Report
Spotlight Initiative HOA Updates_October
20200526Pillar 3 RUNO Coordination Meeting_
Pillar 1 RUNO Coordination Meeting Template
Pillar 2 Update May 2020
Pillar 4 RUNO Coordination Presentation Q3 29072020

## ANNEX 2. LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

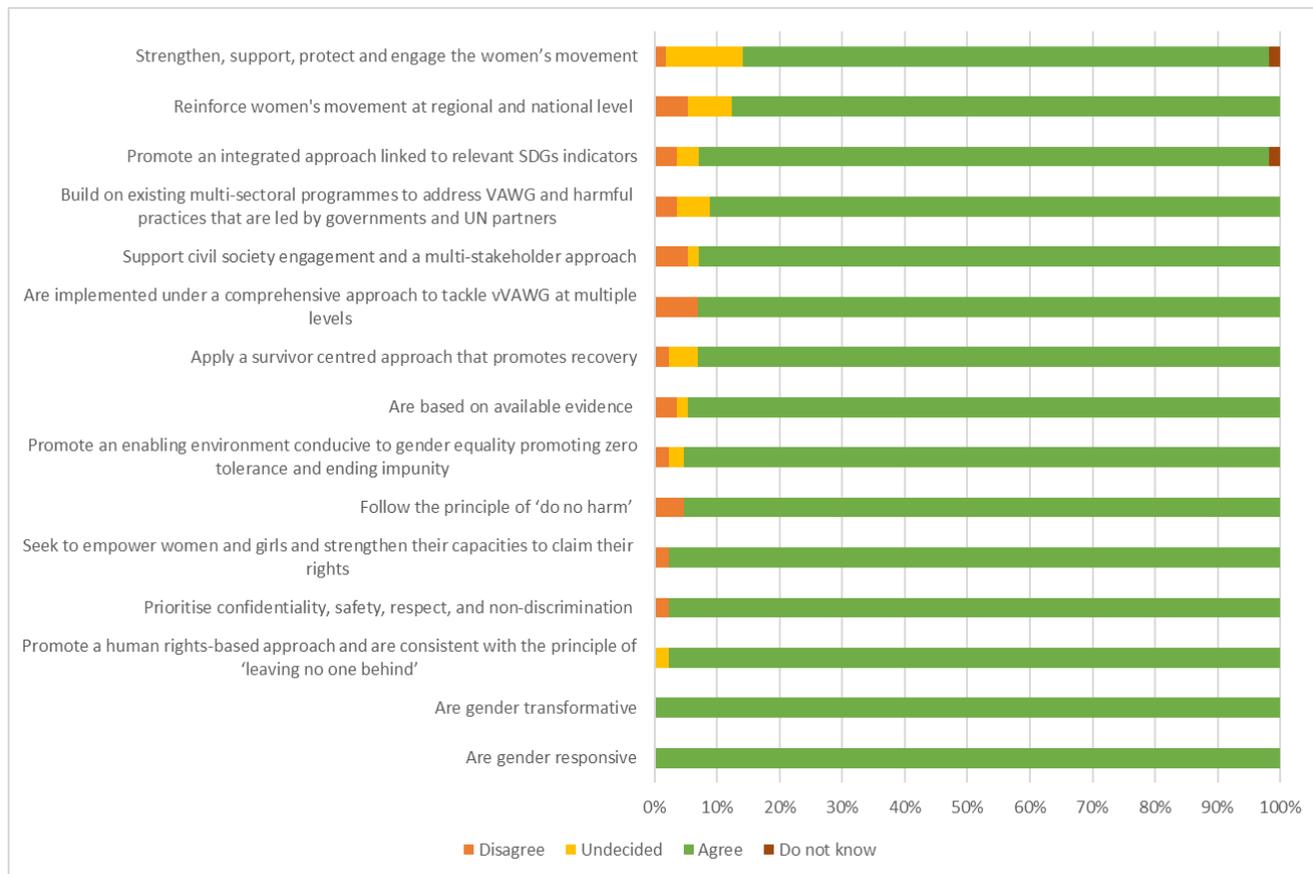
Stakeholder group	Institution / organisation	Name	Position
UN	Spotlight Initiative Secretariat	Teemar Kidane Joy Karim Getrude Chitika Nomsa Taulo	Spotlight Initiative Programme Coordinator Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Technical Coherence Specialist Communication Officer
UN	UNICEF	Gyda Koren Heinrich Mutsinzi	Spotlight Initiative Focal Point Education Specialist
UN	UNFPA	Won Young Hong	Country Representative
UN	UNFPA	Beatrice Kumwenda	Spotlight Initiative Focal Point
Government	Ministry of Gender	Ronald Phiri	Chief Gender Officer
Government	Ministry of Local Government	Mr W.V. Kayira	Chief Planner
IP	Media Network	Alex Banda	Spotlight Initiative Media Network Chairperson
UN	Spotlight Initiative	Diana Nyirenda	Dowa District Coordinator
EU	EU Delegation	Juliette Rubenstein Michele Crimella Ivo HOEFKENS	Spotlight Initiative Focal Point Head of Social Services Head of Cooperation
CSO	CSO Reference Group	Esmie Tembenu	Chairperson
CSO	CSO Reference Group	Viwemi Louis	Vice Chairperson
	UNICEF	Rudolf Schwenk	Country Representative
IP	NOYD	Habib Kalumo	M&E Officer
UN	RC	Maria Torres	Resident Coordinator
UN	UN Women	Clara Anyangwe	Country Representative
Government	Judiciary	Ben Mbvundula	Focal Point
Government	District Council	Kenneth Mwakhwawa	Machinga DPD
Government	District Council	Loveness Silungwe	Dowa DPD
IP	MACOHA	Mr Manjale	Programme Manager
IP	FOCESE	Christie Banda Dalitso Kachiwala	Executive Director Programme Manager
CSO	CSO Reference Group	Esmie Tembenu	Chairperson
UN	Spotlight Initiative	Mercy Mlenga	District Coordinator

Government	Law Commission	Gill Msiska	Principal Civic Education Officer
IP	GENET	Taonga Kaliwo	Project Manager
UN	UNDP	Juliet Sibale	Spotlight Initiative Focal Point
Government	Ministry of Education	Grace Mulima	Deputy Director Responsible for Girls Education

Sources of Information: List of persons interviewed in FGD			
Group Name	District	Name	Contact
Malomo DP CBO/ Sopani Umodzi CBO	Ntchisi	Magret Yalaka Clara Joseph Dominick Ngoma Mlita Mwale Frolence Misha Edith Chikasauka	Can be obtained upon request
Ifenso Tingathe (Dowa 2 FP School) - Girls	Dowa	Juliana Tembo Eunice Manda Alinafe Golo Cecilia Msakambewa Zeliphar Zamadia Chistrina Clemence Angella Demison	Can be obtained upon request
Ifenso Tingathe (Dowa 2 FP School) - Boys	Dowa	Chiwanda Wayile Kamwatso Fabiano Obvious Nkhoma Benedict Mtsitsi	Can be obtained upon request
Community Practice	Machinga	Shakira Nicks Mpinganjira Wilapi Akyini Jangiya Chimenya Catherine Jonathan Nkhoma Jaba Kimu Thokozani Nkhoma Paramount Kawinga	Can be obtained upon request
Barbershop	Machinga	Bayard Awali White Mbalame Rabson Anafi Almex Hussen Evance Katete Misheck Mkumbadzala	Can be obtained upon request

## ANNEX 3. ALIGNMENT TO THE SPOTLIGHT PRINCIPLES

The graph below summarises the results from the online survey in relation to the adherence to the Spotlight principles:



## ANNEX 4. RECOMMENDATIONS OF MTR

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Following an analysis of the findings, the following recommendations are made under each pillar:

### **A. PILLAR 1 (LAWS AND POLICIES)**

- Scale up awareness raising on Gender-Related Laws for chiefs, community structures, communities and schools.
- Consider support to communities to develop by-laws- this can be done in consultation with key partners on whether this would be an effective intervention.

### **B. PILLAR 2 (STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS)**

- Increase capacity development and sensitization of chiefs to improve their response to VaWG
- Strengthen the capacities of ADCs and VDCs to lead the response to VaWG
- Build capacity of community structures on GRL, case management and ethics.

### **C. PILLAR 3 (PREVENTION)**

- Scale up male engagement activities to all districts and TAs
- Consider developing new interventions on male engagement, e.g. male mentors
- Review and strengthen the strategy for identifying beneficiaries of scholarships to prioritise girls withdrawn from marriage and pregnant teenagers, and improve collaboration with community leaders and other interventions to facilitate their identification
- Increase the number of female mentors
- Scale up advocacy initiatives on general GBV issues and gender-related laws among girls in schools
- Scale up activities involving chiefs' spouses

### **D. PILLAR 4 (SERVICES)**

- Scale women economic empowerment activities
- Increase coverage of mobile courts to include marginalised populations
- Ensure mobile courts IP participates in the community of practice and keep chiefs informed of their activities
- Build capacity of all SI stakeholders on ethical considerations in handling GBV survivors

### **E. PILLAR 6 (CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS/WOMEN'S MOVEMENT)**

- Utilise and strengthen existing women's groups rather than creating parallel structures - eg Mother Groups – to ensure sustainability

## ANNEX 5. MTA M&E ANALYSIS: MALAWI

Indicator level	Indicator #	Disaggregation	Year 1 Milestone
<b>OUTCOME 1: Legislative and policy frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans.</b>			
Outcome	Indicator 1.1 Proportion of target countries with laws and policies on VAWG/HP that adequately respond to the rights of all women and girls, including exercise/access to SRHR, and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies' recommendations	None	Achieved
Outcome	Indicator 1.2 National/and/or sub-national evidence-based, costed and funded action plans and M&E frameworks on VAWG/HP that respond to the rights of all women and girls and are developed in a participatory manner are in place	National	Achieved
		Sub-National	NA
Output	Indicator 1.1.1 Number of new and/or strengthened laws and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination developed that respond to the rights of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards	None	NA
Output	Indicator 1.1.5 Number of Parliamentarians and staff of human rights institutions with strengthened capacities to advocate for, draft new and/or strengthen existing legislation and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination and implement the same, within the last year	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA
Output	Indicator 1.1.6 Number of assessments completed on pending topics and strategic litigation implemented by women's rights advocates, within the last year	None	NA
Output	Indicator 1.2.1 Number of evidence-based national and/or sub-national action plans on ending VAWG developed that respond to the rights of all women and girls, have M&E frameworks and proposed budgets within the last year	National	Achieved
		Sub-National	NA
Output		Men	NA
		Women	NA

	Indicator 1.2.2 Number of key government officials with strengthened capacities to draft and costed action plans on ending VAWG and accompanying M&E frameworks, within the last year.	Total	NA
Output	Indicator 1.2.3 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to draft and costed action plans on ending VAWG and accompanying M&E frameworks	None	NA
<b>OUTCOME 2: National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including in other sectors</b>			
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator 2.2 Percentage of national budget being allocated to the prevention and elimination of all forms of VAWG/HP</b>	None	<b>Achieved</b>
<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Indicator 2.3 Is VAWG/HP integrated into 6 other sectors development plans, in line with globally agreed standards? "Other Sectors": health, social services, education, justice, security, culture.</b>	None	<b>Achieved</b>
Output	Indicator 2.1.3 Number of strategies, new plans and programmes of other relevant sectors (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture) that integrate efforts to combat VAWG developed in line with international HR standards, within the last year.	None	<b>In progress</b>
Output	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, within the last year.	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA
Output	Indicator 2.1.8 Number of key government officials with strengthened capacities to integrate efforts to combat VAWG into the development plans of other sectors, within the last year	Men	<b>Achieved</b>
		Women	<b>Achieved</b>
		Total	<b>Achieved</b>
Output	Indicator 2.1.9 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to support the integration of ending VAWG into the development plans of other sectors	None	NA
Output	Indicator 2.2.1 Proportion of supported multi- stakeholder VAWG coordination mechanisms established at the highest level and/or strengthened, and are composed of relevant stakeholders, with a clear mandate and governance structure and with annual work plans, within the last year.	None	<b>Achieved</b>

Output	Indicator 2.2.2 Proportion of national and sub-national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 2.2.4 Number of meetings of national and/or sub-national multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms, within the last year	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 2.3.1 Proportion of current dedicated and multisectoral programmes developed that include proposed allocations of funds to end VAWG, within the last year.	None	NA
Output	Indicator 2.3.3 Number of key government officials with greater knowledge, capacities and tools on gender responsive budgeting to end VAWG, within the last year	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA
Output	Indicator 2.3.4 Number of women's rights advocates with greater knowledge and capacities on gender-responsive budgeting to end VAWG	None	NA
<b>OUTCOME 3: Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviors change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices.</b>			
Outcome	<b>Indicator 3.2</b> <b>a) Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or girl to FGM (in areas where FGM takes place).</b> <b>b) Percentage of people who think it is justifiable to subject a woman or girl child marriage</b>	FGM	No data
		Child marriage	No data
Output	Indicator 3.1.2 Number of young women and girls, young men and boys who participate in either/both in- and out-of school programmes that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and exercise of rights, including reproductive rights,1within the last year.	Girls and Boys	Achieved
		Girls	Achieved
		Boys	Achieved
Output	Indicator 3.2.2 Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, within the last year.	Boys	Achieved
		Girls	Achieved
		Men	Achieved
		Women	Achieved

		Total	Achieved
Output	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	None	NA
Output	Indicator 3.2.6 Number of networks of men and boys developed and/or strengthened to advocate against VAWG and stand for promoting gender equitable values and behaviours during the past year	None	NA
<b>OUTCOME 4: Women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices use available, accessible and quality essential services including for long term recovery from violence</b>			
Outcome	Indicator 4.1 Number of women including those facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination experiencing physical or sexual violence who seek help	Girls	Achieved
		Women	Achieved
Outcome	Indicator 4.2 a) Number of VAWG cases reported to the police, b) the 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)	None	No data
Output	Indicator 4.1.2 Number of women and girls with access to programmes developed to integrate VAWG response into SRH, education and migration services	Girls	Achieved
		Women	Achieved
Output	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 for women and girls subject to violence.	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 4.1.4 Number of government service providers who have increased knowledge and capacities to deliver quality and coordinated essential services to women and girl survivors of violence, within the last year	Men	Achieved
		Women	Achieved
		Total	Achieved
Output	Indicator 4.1.6 Number of government service providers who have increased knowledge and capacities to better integrate VAWG response into sexual and reproductive health, education and migration services, within the last year.	Men	Achieved
		Women	Achieved
		Total	Achieved

Output	Indicator 4.2.1 Number of women and girl survivors of violence that have increased a) knowledge of and b) access to quality essential services, within the last 12 months	Girls	Achieved
		Women	Achieved
<b>OUTCOME 5: Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes.</b>			
Outcome	Indicator 5.1 Globally comparable data on the prevalence (and incidence, where appropriate) of VAWG/HP collected over time	Prevalence	Achieved
		Incidence	Achieved
Outcome	Indicator 5.3 National statistics related to VAWG/HP incidence and prevalence are disaggregated by income, sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 5.1.1 Number of National Statistical Offices that have developed/adapted and contextualized methods and standards at national level to produce prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 5.1.3 Number of National Statistical Officers who have enhanced capacities to produce data on the prevalence of VAWG/HP, and incidence where appropriate, within the last year	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA
Output	Indicator 5.1.4 Number Government Personnel from different sectors, including service providers, with enhanced capacities to COLLECT prevalence and/or incidence data, including qualitative data, on VAWG in line with international and regional standards	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA
Output	Indicator 5.1.5 Number of women's rights advocates with strengthened capacities to collect prevalence and/or incidence data, and qualitative data, on VAWG	None	NA
Output	Indicator 5.2.1 Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making, within the past 12 months	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 5.2.3 Number of government personnel, including service providers, from different sectors with strengthened capacities on analysis and dissemination of prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG, within the last year	Men	NA
		Women	NA
		Total	NA

Output	Indicator 5.2.4 Number of women’s rights advocates with strengthened capacities on analysis and dissemination of prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG, within the last year	None	NA
<b>OUTCOME 6 - Women's rights groups and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and EVAWG</b>			
Outcome	<b>Indicator 6.1 Number of women’s rights organizations, autonomous social movements and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization that have increased their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate for EVAWG</b>	None	NA
Outcome	<b>Indicator 6.2 Was there an increased use of social accountability mechanisms by civil society in order to monitor and engage in EVAWG efforts</b>	None	NA
Output	Indicator 6.1.2 Number of official dialogues about ending VAWG with relevant government authorities that include the full participation of women’s rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.	None	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.1.4 Number of women’s rights groups, networks and relevant CSOs with strengthened capacities to network, partner and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at local, national, regional and global levels, within the last year	None	NA
Output	Indicator 6.2.1 Number of supported women’s right groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy around ending VAWG, within the last year	None	NA

## ANNEX 6. LIST OF IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

### List of Spotlight Initiative - Implementing Partners

Name of Organization	RUNOs	Pillar
AMREF Health	UNFPA	Pillar 3
Goal Malawi	UNFPA	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
PACHI	UNICEF	Pillar 3
UJAMMA Pamodzi	UNICEF	Pillar 3
Save the Children	UNICEF	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
Malawi Police Services	UNICEF	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
Malawi Law Commission	UNICEF	Pillar 3
Emmanuel International/MAWODF	UN Women	Pillar 4
CRECCOM	UN Women	Pillar 3
FOYODE	UN Women	Pillar 3
CADECOM	UN Women	Pillar 4
NGO Gender Network	UN Women	Pillar 6
NANES	UNDP	Women Rights Groups
CAVWOC	UNDP	Women Rights Groups
WOJAM	UN Women	Pillar 4
PLAN Malawi	UNDP / UN Women	Pillar 1 and Pillar 2
OSSEDI	UN Women	Pillar 1 and Pillar 4
Citizen Alliance	UN Women/ UNDP	Pillar 2
DIM	UNFPA	Pillar 3
GENET	UNFPA/ UN Women	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
GJU	UN Women	Pillar 4
NSO	UNDP	Pillar 5
FSWA	UN Women	Pillar 6
FOESE	UN Women	Pillar 2, Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
MHRRC		Pillar 6
CCJP	UN Women	Pillar 1
Machinga District Council	UNDP/ UNFPA	Pillar 2 and Pillar 4

Action Aid	UNFPA	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
NYADE	UNFPA	Pillar 3 and Pillar 4
Social Welfare Police	UNFPA	Pillar 4
GBV Services	UNFPA	Pillar 4
Mzimba Community Radio	UN Women	Pillar 6
MACOHA	UN Women	Pillar 6