

Spotlight Mid-term Assessment Report using ROM review

Type of ROM review **Projects and Programmes**
Project title *Guyana Spotlight Initiative to End Violence Against Women and Girls*
Project reference
EU Delegation in charge. *Guyana*

Key information				
Domain (instrument)	Region			
DAC Sector	Human and Social Development: « Gender Equality »			
Zone Benefitting from the Action	Guyana			
Type of Project/Programme	Geographic			
Geographic Implementation	Single country			
Contracting Party	SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE			
EU Contribution	USD 3,700,000			
Project Implementation Dates	Start Date	January 1, 2020	End Date	December 31, 2023
ROM Expert(s) Name(s)	Candice Ramessar; Clotilde Charlot			
Field Phase	Start Date	April 2022	End Date	June 2022

Scoring overview: <div>Green (good)</div> <div>Orange (problems)</div> <div>Red (serious deficiencies)</div>						
	<div></div>		<div></div>		<div></div>	
Relevance	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Effectiveness	7	8	9			
	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>			
Efficiency	10	11	12			
	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>			
Sustainability	13					
	<div></div>					

Persons interviewed and surveyed	Interviews/FGD	Survey
EU Delegation	1	n/a
RCO	0	5
Partner Country Government	2	1
UN Agencies	4	10
CSO Reference Group	2	3
Implementing Partners	4	10
Programme Coordination and Implementation Unit/Country Team	1	4
Final Beneficiaries	3 FGDs	n/a
Formerly Working for IP		2
Other/Write in	0	3

Key documents ¹	Number
Essential Documents	10
Other Documents	22

¹ Please consult Annex 1 for details on essential documents and other documents.

List of Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSE	Comprehensive Sexual Education
CSNRG	Civil Society National Reference Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EU	European Union
EVAWG	Ending Violence Against Women and Girls
FBO	Faith Based Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GAB	Gender Affairs Bureau
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GTWG	Gender Technical Working Group
GWHLES	Guyana Women's Health and Life Experiences Survey
GWLI	Guyana Women's Leadership Institute
HDI	Human Development Index
HFLE	Health and Family Life Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMC	Inter-Ministerial Committee
IP	Implementation Partner
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
JPS	Joint Programme Secretariat
KII	Key Informants Interview
LGBT	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender
LGBTQI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Queer Intersex
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MAB	Men's Affairs Bureau
NDC	Neighborhood Democratic Council
NSC	National Steering Committee
RDC	Regional Democratic Council
RGAC	Regional Gender Action Committees
RUNO	Recipient UN Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WAB	Women's Affairs Bureau
WHLES	Women's Health and Life Experiences Survey
WHO	World Health Organization

A. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Purpose and Objectives of the Mid-term Assessment (MTA):

The purpose of this mid-term assessment (MTA) of the Guyana Spotlight Initiative (SI) is to assess the performance of the country programme in achieving its objectives and in implementing the new ways of working towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The timing of the MTA coincides with the completion of Phase I of the programme.

The specific objectives of the MTA are i.) to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the country programme based on the set of evaluative questions defined under the methodology agreed upon for the evaluation; and ii) to formulate relevant recommendations aimed at improving subsequent implementation of the programme's interventions.

As per the Terms of Reference, the MTA uses the Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) methodology of the European Union (EU), which ensures 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 Initiative Secretariat. The 13 questions are grouped by Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability, which correspond to the main headings of the report.

In keeping with the ROM methodology, the following criteria are used for grading the questions:

Table 1. Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions

Qualitative	Grading reference table for criteria and monitoring questions
Good/very good	The situation is considered satisfactory, but there may be room for improvement. Recommendations are useful, but not vital to the project or programme.
Problems identified and small improvements needed	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.
Serious problems identified and major adjustments needed	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.
Unable to assess	MTA questions could not be answered because relevant performance monitoring data were not available

Context of the Guyana Spotlight Initiative

Guyana is a party to several international conventions, with obligations relating for the provision and protection of rights for women, children and persons living with disabilities. The conventions include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of The Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

While Guyana's Constitution states that all forms of discrimination against women based on their sex is illegal, there remains a need to translate this law through subsidiary legislation and action. Overall, further reforms are required to translate policy and law into practice, in particular enforcement of the law, to meet the needs of victims/survivors in a timely way irrespective of where survivors live. This is both for the prevention and the response to acts of family violence.

Some strides have been made on the legislative and policy fronts. Applicable laws are the Married Persons Property Act (1995, amended in 2014), the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1995), the Domestic Violence Act (1996), the Prevention of Discrimination Act (1997), the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act (1997), the Representation of the Peoples Act (2001), the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act (2005), the Protection of Children Act, 2009, the Childcare and Protection Agency Act 2009, the Persons with Disability Act (2010), the Right of Persons in Common Law Union (Amendment) Act (2012); and the Sexual Offences Act (2010, amended 2013).

The National Plan of Action for the implementation of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Acts (2014-2017) has been developed by the Ministry of Social Protection, under the guidance of the National Task Force on Sexual and Domestic Violence. The formal adoption of the National Plan of Action is pending. A separate National Plan of Action for addressing the Domestic Violence Action Plan is yet to be developed. The National Task Force on Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence remains non-functional; and the National Domestic Violence Act needs to be operationalized.

The main national administrative institution in Guyana for gender equality is the Gender Affairs Bureau which was created in 2016 in a conglomeration of the Men's and Women's Affairs Bureaus. The Bureau is housed in the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MHSSS) and has responsibility for the mainstreaming of gender in national policies and institutions. It established Inter-Ministerial Committees (IMC's), Gender Focal Points (GFP's) and the Regional Gender Action Committees (RGAC's) with responsibilities for gender-centred initiatives to accomplish its mandate.

Guyana also has a Women and Gender Equality Commission, one of the 5 constitutional rights commissions provided for under the revised 2003 constitution. It replaced the Presidential Advisory body called the National Commission on Women created in 1990. The Women and Gender Equality Commission addresses gender issues, promotes the advancement of women in society and investigates and makes recommendations to the Parliament.

The Guyana Spotlight Initiative

The Spotlight Initiative was planned to be implemented over a three-year period (January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2023) and seeks to tackle the structural causes of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in the country with a special focus on efforts to prevent and reduce family violence, which refers to acts of abuse and aggression in family or close-knit relationships. The expected direct and indirect beneficiaries of the programme are as follows:

Table 2. Expected Project Beneficiaries for 2021

Beneficiaries	Direct for 2021	Indirect for 2021	Comments
Women (18 yrs. and above)	1,451	170,417	An estimation of one third of the total population for the target regions were used to determine the total girls as indirect beneficiaries whilst two thirds were used to determine the women.
Girls (5-17)	473	85,208	
Men (18 yrs. and above)	737	164,286	
Boys (5-17 yrs.)	326	82,143	An estimation of one third of the total population for the target regions were used to determine the total boys as indirect beneficiaries whilst two thirds were used to determine the men.
Total	2,987	502,054	

In Guyana, the Spotlight Initiative approach to VAWG is one that views VAWG as a major public health and development issue; a range of interventions seek to change and influence laws and policies, individual behaviour, and wider social norms. Efforts were made to strengthen institutions that serve girls and women and improve the delivery of essential services to them to eliminate VAWG and continue to support the national response to address GBV issues by forging strategic partnerships with the Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MHSSS) as well as partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs) that are instrumental in implementing the programme in the communities.

The launch ceremony was conducted virtually and brought together several high-level officials, including, the President of Guyana, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), the Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Union (EU) as well as the Minister of Human Services and Social Security and the Chief Justice, along with several other senior government officials, representatives of the UN agencies operating in the country, members of the Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG), and several other Guyanese women leaders.

The programme commencement and implementation were delayed and interrupted by two major national events. Firstly, though the country had a national election in March of 2020, the new government was not sworn in until August 2020 due to several challenges to the elections results and a national recount of votes. Secondly, severe flooding in several regions of Guyana led to the declaration of a national disaster which affected activities in those regions and diverted national resources to the emergency responses. The Spotlight Initiative was officially launched on October 31, 2020, after the official signing of the Country Programme Document (CPD) between the Government of Guyana and the UN which took place on October 23, 2020.

Four Recipient United Nations (UN) Organisations (RUNOs), UN Women (UNWOMEN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) are working with the Government of Guyana and civil society organisations (CSOs) to implement the programme. Another four agencies, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Pan-American Health Organization/ World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), and the United Nations AIDS(UNAIDS) are also involved as Associated Agencies (AA) in the implementation of specific interventions under the different pillars.

The Spotlight initiative implemented under six pillars.

- **Pillar 1** addresses legislative and policy framework in line with international human rights standards on all forms of violence against women and girls.
- **Pillar 2** focuses on building national and sub-national systems and institutions to plan, fund, and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls;
- **Pillar 3** is directed at gender inequitable social norms, attitudes, and behaviours change at the community and individual levels;
- **Pillar 4** focuses on responsive services for women and girls to use available, accessible, acceptable, and quality essential services, including for long term recovery from violence;
- **Pillar 5** seeks to deliver quality, disaggregated, and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and girls in line with international standards to inform laws, policies, and programmes; and

- **Pillar 6** gives prominence to women's rights groups, autonomous social movements, and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization.

Geographically, the programme covers four of the 10 administrative regions: Regions 4 and 6 on the Coastlands and Regions 1 and 7 in the hinterland mostly inhabited by Guyana's Indigenous Peoples communities.

The programme had a national focus and community-level interventions. All the target areas are rural and hinterland. Pillars 3 and 4 in the programme was implemented in the following selected regions, indigenous villages and National Democratic Councils²:

- **Region 1:** Matthews Ridge and Baramita
- **Region 4:** Mon Repos-Lusignan (East Coast Demerara) and Diamond/Golden Grove (East Bank Demerara)
- **Region 6:** Central New Amsterdam: Angoy's Avenue and Port Mourant-Tain
- **Region 7:** Batavia and Waramadong

Methodological approach used

The MTA involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This included an online survey, key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), site visits, and document reviews that included narrative reports, financial and monitoring data.

Online survey – There were a total of 38 respondents with 20 completed responses and 18 incomplete responses. Initially, the responses to the online survey suffered from delays and low rate of response, however, after several reminders the response rate increased. The 18 incomplete responses were assessed in details and two of those were deemed sufficiently filled out to be considered for the quantitative analysis. The remainder 16 were used mostly for qualitative data sources. The identified gender of the respondents were 20 females at 79 percent, 6 males at 16 percent and 2 undisclosed at 5 percent. The respondents were further broken-down by stakeholder groups with RUNOs and IP with 10 respondents each, RCO with 5, the Spotlight Team with 4, CS-NRG and Other with 3 each, Former IP with 2; and finally, Government department with 1. Among the RUNOs, 3 were from UN Women and UNDP each and 4 from UNICEF.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) - A total of 30 key informants from these seven different groupings participated in the KIIs with several interviews including multiple persons EUD (2), the UNICEF (3), UNWOMEN (3), Merundoi (4), and the CSNRG (5 Persons in 2 interviews).

Information was collected through key informant interviews (KII) from:

- two Ministries of the Government of Guyana (GoG)
- two local government
- four Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that are implementing partners (IPs)
- Four Recipient United Nations Organisations (RUNOs)
- the Programme Coordination and Implementation Unit (PCIU)

² National Democratic Councils (NDC) are a form of local governance in Guyana that consist of several villages of which a council is elected who manages the governance of the villages and delivery of some local services.

- the European Union Delegation (EUD) to
- the UN Resident Coordinator Office (RCO)
- Beneficiaries
- the CS-NRG.

The interviews were conducted using a combination of virtual by Zoom and face-to-face. Face-to-face was used mainly for persons outside of the capital, Georgetown, either through KII or focus group discussion. All interviews were recorded (with participants consent) for note taking purposes and then transcribed for the analysis.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) - A total of three focus group discussions took place covering key groups of beneficiaries, including: survivors of domestic violence, domestic violence advocates, and women advocates.

Site Visits – Site visits planned for the Amerindian villages of Waramadong and Baramita in Region One did not occur due to difficulty arranging the logistics of reaching the villages in alignment with the MTA schedule. The schedule for the site visits were interrupted.

Document review – A total of 32 programme documents were reviewed. These included the country programme document, inception report, the 2020 annual report and annexes the COVID-19 Response Plan and the 2021 progress report up to August 31, 2021 and the 2021 annual report (January – December 2021) (See Annex 1).

Analysis – The analysis consists of the triangulation of the online survey results and findings from the document review, interviews and focus group discussions to answer the assessment questions. Consequently, multiple sources of information are used to confirm assertions presented in this report.

Limitations and mitigation measures:

Data Collection Constraints: The data collection for this MTA occurred in the post-COVID period and during several surges of the virus. This limited the data collection to mainly virtual engagements. Though participants were given the choice of in-person or online most persons opted for the online interviews. Virtual data collection is limited as it does not adequately allow for the reading of body language and prompts based on facial expressions. Culturally, Guyanese speak with their facial expressions as much as their words. Also, bandwidth challenges made the flow of the discussions challenging in some instances.

Key Informant Interviews: The busy schedules of the governmental partners accounted for the low response from the governmental agencies with only two key informants agreeing to be interviewed. The lack of the availability of the governmental partners impacted the totality of the government's perspective in the report.

Two of the four RUNOs were represented by several representatives. Two were represented by a single representative. The RUNOs were represented at the highest level with the Country Representative of two of the RUNOs participating in the interviews. There was low response from the CSNRG with 5 persons from the group partaking in the focus group response.

Focus Group Discussions: The number of FGDs completed (4) was less than the planned number (8). There was low response from the project committees (Gender Technical, National Steering Committees), who were targeted for the FGDs.

Online Survey: The response to the online survey suffered from both delayed and low rate of response initially. The survey received a total of 38 responses of which 20 were complete and 18 incomplete; 2

incomplete responses were considered complete for more than 95 percent and therefore considered for the quantitative analysis, the remainder 16 were used only for qualitative analysis.

B. RELEVANCE

<p>1.Does the action align to the principles of the Spotlight Initiative as listed in the Spotlight Initiative Fund TORs?</p>	<div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Problems </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies </div>
<p>Use of Consultative Approach/Participation in Design</p> <p>In order to ensure alignment with the guiding principles of the Spotlight Initiative, the design of the Guyana country programme engaged in a broad range of consultations with various groups of stakeholders including the RUNOs and associated UN agencies, the EUD, officials from the central, regional and local branches of the government, representatives of local and national CSOs, women’s political parties and organisations, indigenous communities, trade unions, survivors and other groups to be targeted by the programme’s interventions. As outlined in the Country Programme Document (CPD), several rounds of consultations were convened for the programme formulation, including “<i>a vast cross-section of hundreds of stakeholders who contributed insights and analysis of the problem of VAWG in Guyana</i>”.</p> <p>Respondents to the online survey agreed that key stakeholder groups were involved in the design of the programme, although not necessarily to the same extent. On one hand, the UN agencies, the EUD and the central, regional and local branches of the Government of Guyana are believed to have been more involved, while, on the other hand, men older than 25, adolescent girls and young women and adolescent boys and young men were seen as having been less involved in the programme’s design (see Annex 4).</p> <p>Participants in the KIIs from key stakeholders’ groups also acknowledged that the programme design involved a wide cross section of Guyanese including those belonging to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of the society. However, there is a consensus that in the design phase indigenous peoples and hinterland residents may have been excluded due to time and budget constraints.</p> <p>Participation in Implementation</p> <p>As for the extent of the involvement of the different groups of stakeholders in the programme’s implementation, KII participants expressed divergent views. While participants from the RUNOs believed that the most vulnerable populations of Guyana are involved, IP informants voiced concerns that more could be done to address the needs of the indigenous population, the hinterland residents and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transsexual Queer Intersex (LGBTQI) and better integrate them in the programme activities. Some of those informants also believed that there was a need for the programme to involve men - men who are the victims and those who are perpetrators of violence, in its interventions. While pillar 3 includes activities focusing on the engagement of men, interviews indicated that very few key informants are aware of this approach. These concerns led to the questioning of whether the principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ was fully applied in the programme’s implementation. As one KII noted there are members of the LGBTQI population even in the target areas that are not captured in the programme activities.</p> <p>Most key informants and respondents to the online survey believed that while Indigenous People communities and hinterland residents were not sufficiently included during the design of the programme, they have been more involved in the implementation of activities, but some believed that even more can be done.</p> <p>Integration of the 15 Spotlight Principles</p>	

A review of the project documents indicated that the programmes and interventions have been designed using the Human Rights Based Approach. The interventions are clearly gender responsive and seek to empower the capacity of women and girls to claim their rights. Beneficiaries in focus group discussions were aware of the survivor-centric approach and used it in their activities. The RUNOs as part of their general programme safeguarding and “Do No Harm” principles are actively mainstreaming the Human Rights Based Approach across the interventions.

The responses to the online survey also indicate that the Guyana programme is aligned with the Spotlight Initiative principles as can be seen in the graph provided in [Annex 3](#) of this report. Overall, there is a solid agreement among respondents that the principles are generally well incorporated into the programme design. The three principles for which agreement was higher are that the Initiative: i) follows the principle of ‘do no harm’ (86 percent in agreement); ii) promotes an enabling environment conducive to gender equality (86 percent); and iii) prioritises confidentiality, safety, respect, and non-discrimination (86 percent). Respondents were generally also convinced that the interventions are gender responsive (82 percent) and empower women and girls to strengthen their capacity and claim their rights (82 percent); Inversely, the principles for which agreement was lower include: i) reinforce women’s movement at regional and national level (55 percent); ii) strengthen, support, protect and engage the women’s movement (64 percent); and iii) apply a survivor centred approach that promotes recovery (64 percent).

The online survey confirmed the perception of inclusivity of the actions of the programme. When asked about whether marginalised groups benefitted, most online survey respondents (82 percent) felt marginalised and vulnerable groups were able to benefit from Spotlight Initiative with only 5 percent feeling that this is not the case and 13 percent having no knowledge.

Methods used by the programme to bolster inclusivity included inviting and including individuals from CSOs that do not traditionally focus on VAWG as members of the CS-NRG. These CSOs included those working primarily on issues related to youth empowerment and other social issues. Members of the main religious groups in the country were also co-opted and involved in some of the activities. Another strategy was to have individual members of the CS-NRG that in their individual capacity are involved in work with other sub-sections of beneficiaries. For example, members of the Women’s Commission who sit on the CS-NRG. These women are also representative of other sectors (private sector and business community) and religious groups.

Key findings:

- The design of the Guyana programme used a participatory process that involved extensive consultations with key stakeholder groups namely the government, the UN community, and civil society, guided by experts in the prevention and the response to VAWG with knowledge of and familiarity with the situation in the country.
- Though hinterland and indigenous persons were not extensively included during the design phase, efforts were made to address the inclusion of these groups in the implementation of the programme activities.
- The Spotlight Principles are being mainstreamed by all stakeholders in the implementation of the programme activities. However, many key informants expressed concern that the principle of “leaving no one behind” was not fully incorporated into the programme activities with groups such as the LGBTQI population, men, and men representative organizations continue to be excluded as beneficiaries from programme interventions.

Recommendations:

1. The present initiatives that address the inclusion of hinterland and rural areas should be continued and expanded to ensure that the principles of leaving no one behind are fully integrated, so that these areas can benefit in a more meaningful way from the programme's activities. It is important that the expansion of these activities are done in close consultation and coordination with the newly constituted NTC Executive Committee as well as other donors providing support in this area to avoid overlap and duplication.
2. For Phase II, consider including programme interventions tailored to the LGBTQI population, and scale up interventions targeting men, and men representative organizations.

2A. Are the Initiative's deliverables aligned with the UN agencies' mandate, priorities and expertise? Are the right UN agencies involved?
2B. Are programmes implemented in line with the UN System reform?

☒ Very Good – Good

☐ Problems

☐ Serious deficiencies

Are the Initiative's deliverables aligned with the UN agencies' mandate, priorities and expertise? Are the right UN agencies involved?

Guyana has a well-established UN footprint with most of the major UN agencies and those that are participating in the programming, having a physical office in the country³. The Guyana offices of the RUNO agencies are country specific with responsibilities for Guyana solely except UNICEF which is also responsible for Suriname. UN WOMEN does not have an office in Guyana and is implementing its programme from its multi-country office based in Barbados which also serves Guyana, however, a UN Women officer is now based in the UN House in Guyana. In the selection of RUNOS to participate in the Spotlight Initiative, the RCO sought to "balance the efficiency and effectiveness" of the applicable agencies to determine which ones would be best placed to oversee implementation of the country programme, based on the RUNO's programmatic focal areas. Based on the assessment of the country documents, the mandate, expertise, and priorities of the RUNOs engaged in the Spotlight Initiative, it can be concluded that the RUNOs participating in the programme are relevant and appropriate to deliver the outputs of the Spotlight Initiative in the country.

Four UN agencies involved in the Spotlight initiative in Guyana– UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, and UN Women-, participate in the various pillars as follows:

Table 3. Mandate and Priorities of the RUNOs

RUNOs	Mandate, Expertise, Priorities and Responsibilities in Guyana's Spotlight Initiative
UNICEF	UNICEF aims to protect children's rights in the country and ensure that their basic needs are met in a way that they can reach their full potential. UNICEF focuses on i) protecting children, especially the most vulnerable ones against all forms of violence and

³ UN agencies with in-country offices in Guyana includes UN, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNECSO, FAO, PAHO, etc. These offices have a long history in Guyana some for more than 40 years.

	<p>exploitation; ii) and promoting the equal rights of women and girls as well as their full participation in all walks of life.</p> <p>As part of its joint country programmes, UNICEF has led work on family violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence and corporal punishment covering prevention, treatment and response. The agency has also worked on legislative and policy reform, service delivery and standard development. UNICEF also works on social norms to address behavioural change and addresses harmful practices through communication for development. Given this expertise, the agency is well placed to lead on Pillar 1 (Laws and Policies) and Pillar 2 (Institutions) and contribute support to activities of Pillars 3 and 6.</p>
UN Women	<p>UN Women has researched the root causes of GBV and family violence in Guyana and the Caribbean overall. It has supported the development of policies and legislation. The agency has strong technical expertise in gender-based violence prevention and response and promotes achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and sustainable development in the country. It is therefore appropriate that the agency is responsible for Pillar 3 (Prevention) and Pillar 6 (Women's Movement and Civil Society).</p>
UNFPA	<p>UNFPA has provided high-level policy engagement, analysis, and advice on population and development matters, emphasizing gender and human rights dimensions, with a particular focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, including Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. The agency has also supported the development of frameworks and national analyses on adolescents and adolescent pregnancies. .</p> <p>The agency is responsible for leading on the activities for Pillar 4 (Essential Services), which is appropriate according to its expertise. UNFPA also provides support to activities implemented under Pillar 3 (Prevention) and Pillar 5 (Data) as part of its efforts to develop a GBV Information Management System for GBV case management.</p>
UNDP	<p>UNDP's work towards its overarching mandate of promoting sustainable human development focuses on four main areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance, environment and energy, and crisis prevention and recovery. It has done this in the country by providing strategic advice on gender policy and gender based violence; but also through planning, monitoring and evaluation of gender equality and progress against ending violence against women and girls. In this light, the agency is well positioned to lead the activities planned under Pillar 5: Data.</p>

Reviews of the programme documents found that the RUNOs delegation of responsibilities in the programme are a match with their expertise and established programmatic focus. The division of labour and distribution of financial resources among the four RUNOs and the associated agencies are presented in the Table 4 below. It has been observed that the from the associated agencies listed, PAHO has been most actively involved.

Table 4. Agreed Division of Labour for the Spotlight Initiative

Outcome / Pillar	Lead Agency	Focus of Activities	Participating Agencies	Percentage of Budget
1. Laws and Policies	UNICEF	Provide support to develop legislative and policy frameworks and associated plans,	UNDP, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS	3%

		based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of violence against women and girls.		
2. Institutions	UNICEF	Provide technical and capacity building support to government, CSOs, and the private sector to build institutional capacity. Additionally, to address behavioural change, the office has invested in research on social norms and a strategy to address harmful practices with Communication for Development (C4D).	UNDP, PAHO	6%
3. Prevention	UN WOMEN	Transformative/comprehensive prevention strategies/programmes that address harmful gender norms.	UNICEF, IOM, UNFPA	27%
4. Services	UNFPA	Assess and assist national government and agencies in providing quality and coordinated essential service to female survivors of violence.	UNAIDS, PAHO	39%
5. Data	UNDP	Assess data capacity gap; work with the national statistical agency to develop and operationalise a data collection system to collect, analyse and disseminate data to inform evidence-based decision making.	IOM, UNAIDS, PAHO, UNFPA	7%
6. Women's Movement	UN Women	Provide technical assistance, capacity strengthening including in leadership and M&E, to the Women's Movement and Civil Society Networks and to support the functioning of the CSO NRG.	UNDP	13%

Are programmes implemented in line with the UN System reform?

The Spotlight Initiative Programme by design is positioned to promote the use of inter-agency tools for collaboration. The Programme Coordination Unit of the Spotlight Initiative programme, the RCO office, and the RUNOs are based in the UN House compound in Guyana.

The review of the programme's documents and the KIIs indicate that the programme is implemented in line with the UN System reform. The RUNOs and the RCO have employed a coordination effort that lends toward a holistic approach. The fact that all the agencies are present in Guyana and housed together in the UN House has contributed to increased joint coordination.

KIIs have also confirmed the coordinating role of the Resident Coordinator's office in coordinating not only the UN agencies but also national stakeholders and the EU Delegation as an example of the principle in action. The UN System Reform principles were also employed in the COVID response plan developed by the Guyana programme.

According to Interviews with KIIs, the new UN reform is being met with praises while recognising the need for further improvements. One such KI described the new UN reform as:

"...I think the UN reform brought some positive results, in the sense that the RC is much more able to coordinate the runoffs in a way that this is not like a fierce internal competition among the agencies.... I think before the UN reform this would have been more difficult. So that's a positive aspect."

While another KI said:

"I've noticed, like the strong commitment to the UN reform, and for the rules working together as one and delivering as one, although there's still more work to be done there, but I think they're doing very well in that in that regard."

Key findings:

- The Guyana Spotlight Initiative has put together a framework that has facilitated joint programming and collaboration among the RUNOs, while avoiding duplications across the Pillars in alignment with the "One UN" reform agenda. There have been no reports of the process not working and leading to delays or duplication of efforts.
- Review of the project documents and KII provided evidence of the technical capacity of the RUNOs to implement the Spotlight Initiative programme in Guyana and their assigned pillars.

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 design of the Guyana Spotlight Initiative suffered from a lack of baseline data and consultations which were confined to the coastal areas and Region 4 according to KIIs of RUNOs, IPs and local government. However, this lack of baseline data was addressed by a national survey on VAWG which was conducted for the first time in Guyana. The Guyana Women's Health and Life Experiences Survey (GWHLES) was undertaken by the Government of Guyana with the support of UNDP, UN Women, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Global Women's Institute (GWI), the George Washington University (GWU), and the University of Guyana (UG). It provided much needed information about the magnitude, the frequency and severity, associated factors, circumstances, and consequences of different types of VAWG including family violence. The survey filled an important information void on the target groups and beneficiaries. However, KIIs and project documents indicate that there is still a need for further baseline data, especially qualitative data, on factors such as those that inhibit victims from accessing services.

Regarding consultations, examination of the project documents and KIIs confirmed that whilst there were extensive consultations during the project design phase they were mainly confined to the coastal areas of Guyana. The vast majority of the online survey respondents (79 percent) concluded that the relevant stakeholders were consulted for the Spotlight Initiative in the design phase. Most KIIs agree with the conclusions of the online survey with some caveats of consultations during the design phase (as mentioned in Q1). Some KIIs found the consultative process to be exhaustive.

However, further probing of the consultations during the design phase unearthed that whilst consultations were indeed extensive, they were limited in geographical scope. There were limited consultations outside of the coastal areas of Guyana during the design phase. This concentration on the coastal areas was attributed to time and financial constraints (RUNOs KIIs). The non-involvement of hinterland areas in consultations in the design means that the programme may not have taken into account all the considerations of the end users and beneficiaries in the design of the programme. This is important especially in Guyana because of its centre-periphery pattern of development, hinterland areas are less developed than coastal areas and suffer for differential access to governmental and social services

including GBV services. In addition, the main social and demographic beneficiary group that would have been most impacted from the limited consultations during the design phase, are the indigenous population who are the majority population in the hinterland areas and are considered among the vulnerable populations of Guyana. The Guyana Organization for Indigenous Peoples was, however, included in the initial consultations during programme design.

The consultations in the coastal areas involved a wide range of stakeholders, including, among others, CSOs, institutions that serve survivors, and survivors. The design relied on a good understanding of most target group's needs though limited in geographic scope. According to a Key Informant:

"I think we have reached out to everyone during the design phase. And that I must praise the EU, but also, of course, the implementing partner that is the UN and the RUNOs. "

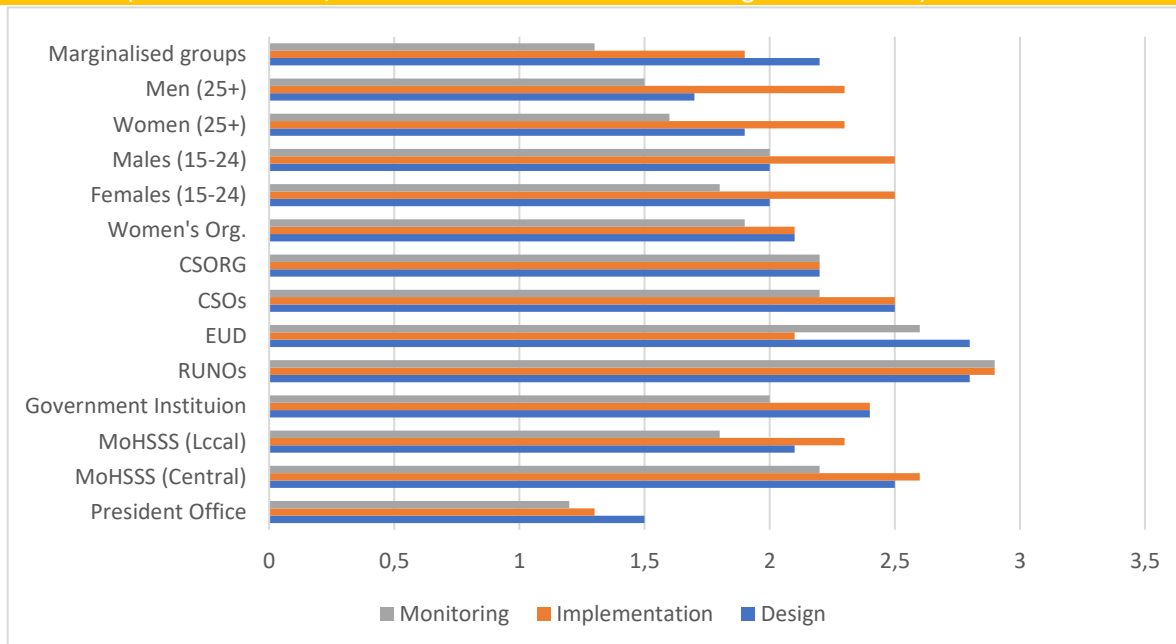
In addition to the indigenous population there are other groups that may not have had their realities reflected in the design phase and have been affected by the "coastal consultations". One KII identified gays and lesbians in hinterland locations as one such group. Consultations were held with the LGBTQI+ population and representative groups in Georgetown. IPs reported challenges of implementing programme activities in hinterland areas due to unanticipated higher costs of accessing the areas and socio-cultural characteristics of the population which were not accounted for in the design of the activities. Consultations and inclusion of hinterland and indigenous population beneficiaries are being carried out during the implementation phase. For example, UNFPA has undertaken the Readiness Assessment for GBV Essential Services Package, under Pillar 4, in two coastal regions (Region 4 and 6) and in two hinterland regions (Regions 1 and 7).

However, the perception among informants consulted is that the LGBTQIA+ community is not actively involved in the implementation of the programme. They have benefited from the refurbishing of safe spaces for survivors under Pillar 4, and members of the community have participated in the GBV services mappings and referral pathways, but as no activity was solely directed to this group. According to the PCU, applications from this group to the call for proposals were not successful due to not meeting the stated requirements and this may have contributed to the perception that the Initiative does not directly cater for this community.

Figure 1 below provides a snapshot of beneficiary groups participation in the various stages of the Spotlight Initiative programme in Guyana.

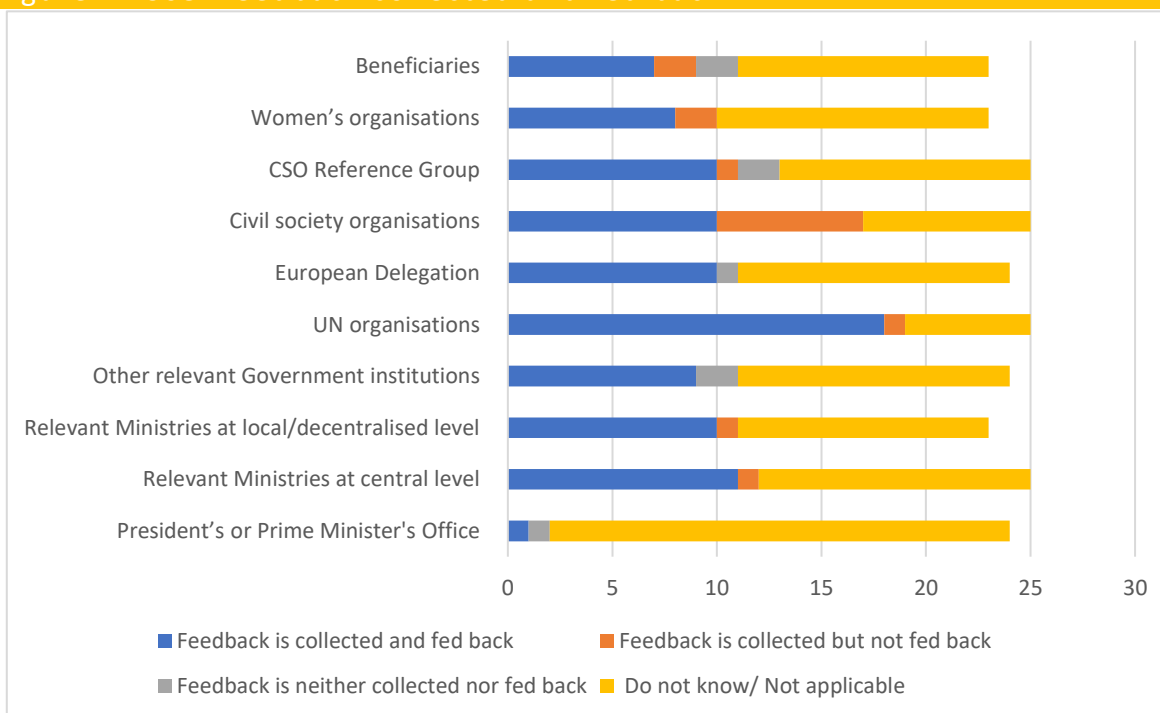
Figure 1. Average extent of involvement of beneficiary groups in the Spotlight

Initiative (1 = Not at all, 2 = Somewhat and 3 = To a great extent)



The online survey results (Figure 2 below) indicated that user feedback has been collected and fed back during the implementation phase. KIIs interviews with CSOs, government officials, and beneficiaries did not result in the same findings. In fact, the EUD asserted that their suggestions were not always fully taken on board, especially during the design phase regarding reporting mechanisms and constitution of the National Steering Committee (NSC). Most online survey respondents also felt user feedback was collected, however the extent that feedback is fed back is limited or non-existent. The RUNOs generally indicated that user feedback was collected, however, a large proportion of respondents were also not able to provide a response. In the KIIs few examples were provided as to how feedback is collected and fed back to different stakeholders.

Figure 2. User feedback collected and fed back



Key findings:

- Guyana's Spotlight Initiative conducted a consultative process in the design phase that involved a broad range of stakeholders, including, CSOs, institutions serving survivors, and survivors but did not involve hinterland residents and indigenous populations only to a limited extent.
- The findings from the consultations that informed the design of the Guyana programme provided the Spotlight Initiative team with a good understanding of the target group's needs but would have been limiting since it captured the needs and perspectives of Georgetown, the capital city and the coastal regions. The exclusion of the hinterland regions is significant in a country where there is differential access to governance and social services between the coast and hinterlands. In addition, the indigenous populations which occupy the hinterland areas have distinct cultural and social characteristics. Whilst the inclusion of hinterland regions is addressed in the implementation phase, IPS are facing challenges of unanticipated costs (to access areas) and adapting activities to the socio-cultural factors of the indigenous populations.
- Many respondents to the online survey felt that their feedback is being collected and fed back into the programme design. However, the responses in the interviews indicated a mixed view on this with one key stakeholder responding that their views were not necessarily taken into consideration in the design and implementation phase.
- Most stakeholders (IPs, CSNRG and the EU) are of the opinion that more should be done to include the hinterland areas, indigenous populations and the LGBTQIA+ (in general and especially those in the hinterland areas).

Recommendations:

3. For Phase II, the programme should consider consulting with the hinterland regions and sub populations (Indigenous Populations and LGBTQIA+) to identify whether they can be more effectively involved and reached through existing activities. In the case of the LGBTQIA+, the PCU should review why their applications to the call for proposals were not successful and review whether tailored capacity building would be appropriate to ensure they can meet the stated requirements.
4. The programme should consider developing a formal mechanism for collecting feedback on the programme activities. A semi-grievance mechanism of the project is recommended to capture feedback especially from beneficiaries.

4. Do all key stakeholders still demonstrate effective commitment (ownership) and deliver accordingly?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Very Good – Good
<input type="checkbox"/>	Problems
<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious deficiencies

Key informants interviewed from the different stakeholder groups during the MTA confirmed their commitment to the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana.

Government

The strong partnerships established by the Spotlight Initiative with several government and state institutions are critical for realizing national ownership of the programme and political buy-in for the sustainability of the on-going efforts to end violence against women and girls. The MOHSSS, in its role

as the principal government partner for Spotlight in Guyana is instrumental in the implementation of several pillars, especially pillars 1, 4 and 5. Additionally, the Minister serves as one of the Co-chairs of the NSC and represents the highest level of government engagement in the programme. MoHSSS provided and continues to provide pertinent guidance and support to the activities under Pillars 1, 3, 4, and 5 ensuring alignment with government priorities.

Several other Ministries play a direct role in executing the Guyana Spotlight Initiative: The Ministry of Education facilitates Pillar 3 activities, geared at promoting all the VAWG prevention efforts targeting students. The Ministry of Home Affairs and the Guyana Police Force participate in training geared at equipping Police officers with the skills necessary to effectively respond to cases of GBV under pillar 4. Given that health care workers are among the first responder groups in VAWG and a provider of essential services, the Ministry of Health is engaged under pillar 4 to support the training of health care providers. . Lastly, key partnerships were established among Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs)⁴, Neighbourhood Democratic Councils, Amerindian Village Councils and Community Development Councils to prevent and respond to VAWG in all target Regions.

The majority of those interviewed expressed the view that the government was integrally involved in leading the programme. As explained by one key informant the government took the reins of the programme as soon as it took office with the MHSSS leading the initiative.

There is the view among a minority of the informants that whilst the MoHSSS has shown commitment to the programme, there are some challenges with the management of the programme from their end. As one KII explained; *‘the MoHSSS can be very inaccessible’*.

The MoHSSS grappled with the recruitment and retainment of staff to work on the programme activities. The former coordinator of the Spotlight Initiative desk/office at the MoHSSS describes her task as enormous as she was a “one-woman operation”. She was no longer in her position by the end of the MTA. Some stakeholders have cited the lack of ministry personnel assigned to the programme as an indication of a lack, or at best, of weak capacity to steer the programme.

At the local government levels, the key informants interviewed indicated that they are fully committed to the programme. Though working on a programme of this nature is new to them, they have expressed the urgency to address GBV and VAWG in Guyana and in their regions as the reason for their full commitment.

Civil Society IPs

Guyana Spotlight Initiative established partnerships with nine (9) CSOs as Implementing Partners. These CSOs were either woman-led, woman rights/feminist organizations, or both. The CSOs engaged by the programme are ChildLink Inc., Blossom Inc., Youth Challenge Guyana, Help and Shelter, Red Thread, Merundoi Incorporated, St. Francis Community Developers, Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association, and Guyana Women Miners Organization.

The CSOs participated in the programme as follows:

⁴ The Regional Democratic Councils (RDCs) correspond to the supreme local government organ in each of Guyana’s 10 regions with responsibility for the overall management and administration of the region. The Councilors are elected at the same time as the members of the National Assembly at Regional Elections.

CSO IPs	Type	Area of focus	Funds awarded US\$ (2020-2021)	Pillars	RUNOs
Blossom Inc.	National	Child Protection; Trauma support; Sexual Assault Survivors, Sexual Offences & judicial support	40,000	3	UNICEF
ChildLink Inc.	National	Children's rights, Sexual Assault Survivors, Sexual Offences & judicial support.	45,573.40	4	UNFPA
Youth Challenge Guyana	Local/ Grassroots	Skill building in leadership and conflict resolution	58,000	3	UNICEF
Help and Shelter	National	Women's rights; Children's Rights; and Domestic Violence, Services & Advocacy	75,242	3, 4	UN Women
Red Thread	Local/ Grassroots	Women's Rights; Domestic Violence, Some Sexual Assault, Advocacy & Services	33,599	6	UN Women
Merundoi Incorporated	Local/ Grassroots	Behavior change/education	56,952	3	UN Women
St. Francis Community Developers	Local/ Grassroots	Families & children at risk	59,467	4	UNFPA
Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association	National	Sexual & Reproductive Health Services and GBV services; Reproductive Rights	62,042	4	UNFPA
Guyana Women Miners Organization	Local/ Grassroots	Human trafficking; Women Rights; Gender-based violence; Child Protection, Healthcare.	27,000	4, 6	UNFPA & UN Women

Four representatives of the CSO implementing partners and four members of the CS-NRG were interviewed. All of them reiterated their commitment to the Spotlight Initiative and ending VAWG. However, there was some frustration expressed by the IPs about the management of the programme. Particularly frustrating was what they considered "consultation fatigue" and delays in the disbursement of funds affecting the implementation of their programme activities. The IPs are passionate and dedicated to their work and the impact of the activities they are implementing. They are also confident in their ability to implement their activities. Some do recognise the difficulties of working with other local CSOs and governmental authorities while others openly discussed the challenges associated with what they perceive as their own lack of agency, and weaknesses in terms of organizational capacity. They also expressed some level of dissatisfaction with the sharing of information and decision making in the programme. One CSO

felt that the implementation problems plaguing the Spotlight Initiative were reflective of wider problems inherent to the Guyanese society including divisiveness and lack of social cohesion.

CS-NRG

The interim CSNG group for Guyana initially comprised sixteen (16) members, including representation from vulnerable segments of the population such as the Venezuelan migrants and refugee population, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI) community, persons with disabilities (PWD), sex workers, indigenous women and girls, rural and hinterland communities, women's rights organizations, and women's grassroots organizations.

In April 2020, after the Call for Nominations to the CSNRG, the permanent CSNRG was officially established. Throughout the selection process, the Guyana programme ensured that the composition of the CSNRG would represent populations that face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination to ensure that no one is left behind. One member subsequently resigned, and three (3) additional CSOs representing indigenous populations and faith-based organizations were added, following recommendations from the new Government to improve inclusion and diversity. This brings the total number of members to eighteen (18) at the end of the reporting period.

The CS-NRG members interviewed for the MTA expressed their commitment to the programme. They are of the view that the programme partners, including the national government, are committed to the programme. Many have also cited the personal involvement and investment of the Minister of the MHSSS as an indication of government's commitment. They are of the opinion that the Minister is a champion for both the programme and GBV.

RUNOs

The RUNOs involved with the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana are committed to the delivery of the programme's activities and to comply with the One-UN approach, as much as possible. There are differences across agencies in the way they operate that at times can be a source of problems. For instance, procurement and getting funds to partners continues to be a challenge despite the joint calls for proposals. All the RUNO representatives that were interviewed appeared to be committed to continue delivering the Spotlight Initiative activities. One informant did express the view that there are some unique challenges to working in Guyana and the RUNOs are making the necessary adjustments to ensure that the programme's objectives are effectively met.

RUNOs also conveyed that they suffer from having only one staff fully committed to the programme. In many cases the RUNOs staff split their time between the Spotlight Initiative and other programmes (see also MTA question 9).

EU Delegation

The EUD is a member of the National Steering Committee (NSC), and they participate in the Committee's meetings. The EUD delegation is fully committed to the programme and is invested in the impacts on VAWG and GBV in Guyana. The officer with responsibility for the programme has experience working with the RUNOs in Guyana and in hinterland communities. She is very knowledgeable of the local programmatic landscape. The EUD did express some concerns about the sustainability of the programme activities after the Spotlight Initiative funding has ended. They are of the opinion that more needs to be done in demonstrating local ownership in a tangible way.

“...we are very, very happy that the programme is well carried out by the government in terms of involvement, political backing, visibility and communication. All this is good. But when I speak about domestic revenue mobilisation, I also think about financial resources, budget coming in...”

The EU would also like to see more unpacked information coming from the RC and the RUNOs in the form of specific reports or updates besides the regular reporting which is often very comprehensive. There are some added concerns by the delegation that the EU is not as visible as it should be in the activities of the programme. As stated during the assessment interview:

“The EU is very much often forgotten. The Spotlight Initiative is perceived by the population, by the stakeholders, also by the beneficiaries as a UN programme funded by the UN.”

Key findings:

- The Government of Guyana is committed to the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana. Despite the late start due to an elections crisis the government has demonstrated sustained commitment to the programme through providing leadership in several areas and the participation of governmental agencies in several pillars.
- The RUNOs have shown a continued commitment to the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana. They have leveraged their institutional history of working in Guyana to manoeuvre the programmatic landscape of Guyana.
- The IPs are passionate and dedicated to their work and the impact of the activities they are implementing. They are confident in their ability to implement their activities, however, also recognize the difficulties of working with other local CSOs and governmental authorities and some also acknowledge their own lack of agency, and weaknesses in terms of organizational capacity.
- The EUD expressed their general satisfaction with the focus of the implementation and the achievements thus far while acknowledging the need for more inclusion in the implementation, unpacked reports of programme activities, tangible demonstration of sustainability, and more visibility as the donor of the programme.
- The IPs, local government and CS-NRG are fully committed to the programme. However, the processes of the programme should be improved and revised after consultations and feedback from these groups to quell their frustrations.

Recommendations:

5. Ensure the sustained government's commitment through assistance in addressing the issues of acquiring and retaining the necessary human resources to assist the government agencies in their implementation of programme activities and achieving responsiveness.
6. Issues of the inclusion of all programme stakeholders' views and providing feedback can be improved to ensure continued commitment to the programme by all stakeholders. In preparing for Phase 2, the views of all the partners, including the EUD, should be taken into consideration unless not possible and duly justified.

5. Is the programme Theory of Change well developed? Are the indicators to measure results well defined and relevant to measure the achievement of the objectives?

☐ Very Good – Good

☒ Problems

☐ Serious deficiencies

The Theory of Change

The Spotlight Initiative in Guyana is driven by an all-embracing Theory of Change. In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana embraced the participatory monitoring and evaluation approach and executed its monitoring missions following the guiding principles. The proposed activities in the Country Programme Document (CPD) are in alignment with the Theory of Change (ToC) and are logical. However, this conclusion is based on a theoretical review of the ToC. The views of the stakeholders of the programme on the ToC were mixed across groups and even within groups. The RUNOs are among those who are most aware of the existence of the ToC. Outside of the RUNOs IPs reported being aware of the ToC but are not using it or are completely unaware of it. The beneficiaries were mainly unaware of the ToC. The majority of the RUNOs are of the opinion that the ToC is not well developed and suffered from a lack of evidenced based design of the activities due to the unavailability of baseline data and consultations outside of Georgetown and Region 4. Among the RUNOS the perception on whether the ToC was well developed ranged from being outright faulty, those who accepted it as the best the programme can do, and those who are using it as is and found it useful.

Most of the Key Informants outside of the RUNOs have either not seen the ToC, are aware of its existence but have not looked at it, or only seen it very recently.

Results framework

Several issues were raised in the interviews related to the results framework. Among these issues were the overly ambitious targets given the duration of the programme, the effects of COVID 19 on the schedule and achievement of the targets, the derailment of the schedule and its effects on the targets because of the late start due to the political crisis in Guyana, and the inability to match the indicators to Guyana's programme activities. There were mixed views among the RUNOs on the applicability of the global indicators as proposed by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. "This is Guyana", a common saying in Guyana was the response from both RUNOs and IPs regarding the transferability of the global indicators to the local context. Several Key Informants were of the view that the unique challenges of Guyana (governance, social cohesion issues including racial conflicts, core-periphery pattern of development and geographic disparities, bureaucratic government processes, government effectiveness etc.) presented unique challenges for the implementation of the programme. Whilst Caribbean countries do have issues with implementation of development programmes, these problems are compounded in Guyana by the factors listed above. The core-periphery development⁵ nature of Guyana in particular presented challenges to Implementation Partners (IPs) as they found that getting to hinterland areas was time-consuming, expensive, and presented several socio-cultural challenges. A key informant expressed the frustrations of development practitioners in Guyana as follows:

⁵ Core-periphery pattern of development describes a pattern of development where there is part of the country that is well developed and a centralization of governance and social services and a larger surrounding area that is undeveloped and suffers from lack of government and social services. In Guyana's case the coastland and Georgetown is the core with the hinterland being the periphery. For example, the majority of Guyana poor are in rural and hinterland areas.

“It was not evidence-based, because we don't have the information here, nobody has ever really collected it nationally. The evidence is only piecemeal. And more particularly collected in the capital, which speaks to region four. So, it was like matching apples and oranges to link it to the hinterland.”

Most of the RUNOs believed the results framework was not well developed. One Key Informant stated: “It was not very well developed, and we still have to use it for planning purposes. It was more of a top-down approach.”

The programme has been collecting data for the indicators at the outcome levels for the year 2020 and 2021. Some RUNO's have been using the outcome indicators but several RUNOs were not able to use the indicators and instead provide an explanation of what they have done. In 2021, a Baseline Assessment was conducted to bridge information gaps in the results framework and establish a baseline for agreed indicators. Despite the usefulness of the baseline assessment and a subsequent adjustment of the M&E framework to align it to the Guyana context, KIIs still expressed discomfort with the M&E framework.

Key findings:

- The Theories of Change presented in the CPD for the six pillars of the Guyana programme are relevant to the programme and the proposed activities. However Key Informants have found that ToCs are difficult to adapt to the actual Guyana situation. This was also compounded that during the design of activities there was no baseline data and some key target groups were excluded during the design consultations. Some stakeholders, in particular RUNOs, continue to work with the ToC and make it transferrable to the national context.
- The Guyana Spotlight Initiative Programme used the Spotlight Initiative's global indicators to inform their results framework. The RUNOs and the PCU expressed concerns about the ambition of the indicators in the Guyanese context especially in light of the late start, the short programme's duration and the specific challenges facing the implementation of any such intervention in Guyana.
- The global indicators were not fully transferable to the local context (this was the case especially for hinterland region activities) making it difficult to measure the indicators effectively.

Recommendations:

7. Another review of the programmes targets for outputs and outcomes should be done with the relevant stakeholders to discuss what amendments can be made to reflect more realistic milestones and targets in light of the local circumstances.
8. More appropriate output and outcome indicators relevant to the Guyanese context should be developed and added to the results matrix. If some of the global indicators cannot be measured, proxy indicators should be identified.

<p>6A. BEFORE COVID-19: Have all relevant circumstances and risks been taken into account to update the intervention logic? 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?</p> <p>6B. AFTER COVID-19: 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?</p>	<div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Problems </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies </div>
<p>Before COVID-19</p> <p>The Guyana Spotlight Initiative launch, and implementation were delayed due to a prolonged electoral crisis that lasted for over five months (March/2020 – August/2020) and rendered governmental endorsement and signoff impossible. The programme therefore started in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Guyana’s Spotlight Initiative programme did not therefore have a pre-COVID-19 period.</p> <p>The Risk Assessment Matrix of the Country Programme was very detailed and covered several risks in four different areas. Some of the risk included: contextual risks - political uncertainty, natural disasters; programmatic risks - delays, perceptions of male marginalization due to exclusion from the programme activities and institutional risks - weak institutional and governance systems for data collection and delays in decision- making response across line agencies and ministries. The programme could not and did not envision the impacts of an unprecedented pandemic.</p> <p>COVID-19 Impact</p> <p>The Guyana programme began during the period the country was experiencing the pandemic and after delays for protracted national political crises. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the implementation of the programme negatively despite the innovations to address the new normal. Particularly affected were the target areas in the hinterland regions and outside of Georgetown where internet access was unavailable or limited to the beneficiaries and target population. The disruptions caused by working in the new normal made it critical to revisit the results matrix and adjust the targets accordingly. Since the programme began during the COVID period it was able to capture the risks posed in its risk framework.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic required a change of focus and thus, modifications were required to the work plan and budget. In Guyana, the adjustment in 2020 included pivoting to remote implementation where possible resulting in a reduction in capacity to get things done. The core-periphery pattern of development of the country compounded the COVID-19 impacts. Whist Georgetown and Region 4 stakeholders had the infrastructure to continue to work virtually and remotely in the implementation of activities, this was not necessarily the case for stakeholders outside of Georgetown. As one moves further away from the City and Region 4, internet access capacity diminishes leading to lack of infrastructure to conduct remote and tele-work. Even in Region 4 and Georgetown bandwidth and other challenge exist for internet services. The governmental agencies did - for the most part - have the infrastructure (internet access and equipment) to implement programme activities but faced challenges of a newly installed administration that required time to become familiar with the programme.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic placed a severe strain on programme execution. Lockdowns restricted physical access to communities resulting in delayed implementation. Physical access to communities especially those communities that lack the relevant technological access to utilize the alternative virtual platforms for engagement in programme implementation were disproportionately affected. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded the pre-existing issues of working in remote hinterland and some rural communities. These communities are difficult to access physically (taking as much as a day or several days of travel) or to</p>	

establish communication links with due to the absence of internet and phones. The communities therefore had very little experience of working remotely and did not have the equipment nor infrastructure to facilitate it. In addition, some communities took the initiative to institute their own lockdowns and restrictions of outsiders. Whilst for all of Guyana, there was a learning curve for the new normal that COVID-19 necessitated, the curve would have been much longer for hinterland regions and rural communities. Another challenge posed to working remotely is that many of the rural and hinterland communities suffer from lower levels of educational attainment and literacy including technological literacy. There were also socio-cultural factors such as being comfortable discussing issues such as GBV with unfamiliar persons and using technological devices.

As one Key Informant explained:

“.... the challenges that we faced were unique, I think, because it's an indigenous community that's remote.... So, the behavioural challenges don't change whether it's COVID or not. The people are generally shy. And low literacy rates in the area that we're working. Many other people are low literate and there was a cross-section of people who do not speak English.”

In response to the challenges posed by COVID-19 to the programme implementation and addressing GBV in Guyana, there was a reformulation of the budget and programming to reflect the new challenges of reaching project beneficiaries. Towards this end, programming was revised to the value of US\$534,800 to support CSO driven activities, so as to enable CSOs to directly reach the intended beneficiaries. This reformulation utilized a consultative approach with the EU delegation, CSNRG and RUNOs working together. The reformulation included the signing of awards to CSO under a non-competitive window easing the normal requirements for funding and allowing greater access to essential services to survivors of GBV in Guyana.

After COVID-19

The inception report of the programme added COVID-19 as a new risk to the programme activities and noted as mitigation measures to the Baseline Assessment (work around for collecting the baseline data). In KIIs the stakeholders (RUNOs, EU, IPs, CSOs, Government) agreed that the programme, like the rest of the Guyanese society adjusted well to the new challenges posed by the pandemic. Guyanese ingenuity of making something out of nothing was applied especially by the IPs. For example, in the absence of computers cellular phones and WhatsApp became a tool of social organization with rural and hinterland communities. In some cases where structural issues such as regional inequalities in access to internet and telecommunications were insurmountable, IPS reported those as the areas where the pandemic had the most impact. KIIs pointed out the use of telephones and internet outside of Georgetown areas was an innovation in of itself as a response to COVID-19.

Key findings:

- The risk assessment matrix developed for the Guyana programme at the time of its design identified several risks (contextual, programmatic, institutional, and fiduciary). The risks identified pre-COVID-19 were detailed and applicable and captured most of the associated risks across the four risk areas of the programme. The only risk the programme did not capture was climatic risks.
- The risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic was added as a new risk to the inception report. The risks posed by the pandemic to programme implementation were amplified for hinterland and rural communities because of difference in technological literacy, availability of equipment and access to internet and telecommunication services.

- The Guyana programme adjusted well to the COVID-19 pandemic by making several modifications to the way it worked to continue operating despite the challenges of both the pandemic and the massive floods in some regions of the country.

Recommendations:

9. The programme should use the lessons learnt from Phase 1 and refine the programme risks and associated mitigation measures. It should involve the IPs and the local CSOs in the development of nuanced mitigation measures that reflect all the on-ground considerations for both contextual and programmatic risks.
10. Prior to Phase 2, there is a need to review the mitigating measures proposed in the risk assessment matrix and the integration of measures to address some of the contextual risks such as social cohesion issues. The lack of climate risks should also be addressed in the Risk Management Matrix.

C. EFFECTIVENESS

**7. To what extent has progress towards output targets been achieved?
Is the quality of the outputs satisfactory?**

Very Good – Good

Problems

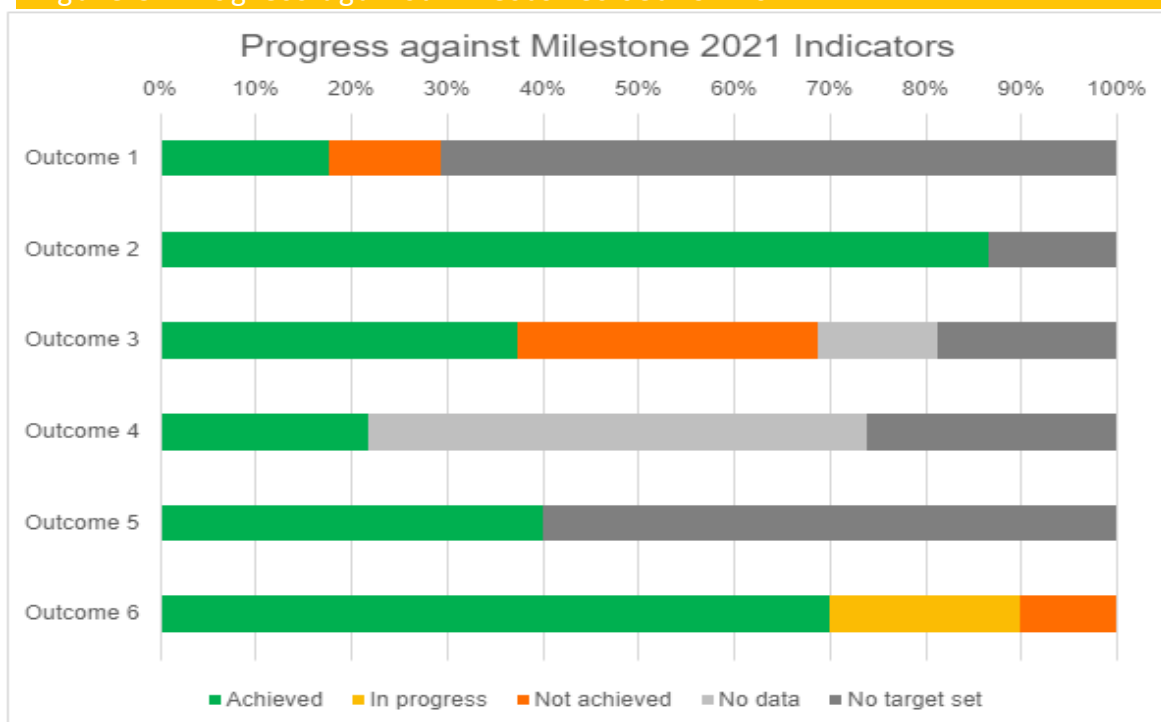
Serious deficiencies

Achievement of outputs against the approved work plan

The Spotlight Initiative in Guyana monitors and reports on 40 output indicators for six outcomes. The breakdown per pillar is as follows Outcome 1: 10 Output indicators, Outcome 2: 10 Output indicators, Outcome 3: 12 Output indicators, Outcome 4: 12 Output indicators, Outcome 5: 9 Output indicators and Outcome 6: 7 Outcome indicators. Progress in achieving the set targets is not fully in line with the approved work plan due to the unprecedented delays in 2020 and other factors affecting full implementation in 2021.

The progress against the milestones set for 2021 is displayed below. There were several indicators for which either no milestone was set, or the milestone was 0 and also several indicators for which no data had been collected. The fact that no milestones were set for several indicators is linked to the fact that no baseline data was available at the start of the Initiative and the results framework will be updated in 2022 to include the baseline and subsequently also relevant targets.

Figure 3. Progress against milestones set for 2021



The figure above highlights that good progress was made in Outcome 2 with over 90 percent of milestones achieved, followed by Outcome 6 with just over 55 percent of milestones achieved for 2021. The other Outcomes have not achieved the 50 percent mark with Outcome 4 having the lowest achievement at approx. 25 percent. For Outcome 4, it should be noted that many of the indicators did not have any data available and that the 21 national indicators for this outcome are not captured by the SMART platform. For Outcome 3 several of the milestones set had not been achieved.

When comparing the data from the results framework with the implementation progress reported by the country team in their latest report, we observe a mismatch (see table 6) which is explained by the PCU as a result of how some of the indicators are formulated and therefore measured. For example, getting the developed legislations tabled in the national parliament and passing of the draft legislations takes time and while the activity may be undertaken, the milestone may not yet have been achieved because of delays in getting the outputs discussed or agreed by other stakeholders. Several delays have affected achieving the set milestones; including the lingering effects of COVID-19 (the effects were still being felt during another surge at the time of the conduct of the MTA), the national floods and divergence of stakeholder's attention to flood response and emergency relief and general slow response of governance mechanisms.

Table 6. Implementation Progress Guyana Spotlight Programme

Spotlight Initiative - Outcome areas Implementation progress as of December 31, 2021.

Pillar	Progress Rate
Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework	83%
Outcome 2: Institutions	31%
Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change	28%
Outcome 4: Quality Services	20%
Outcome 5: Data	46%
Outcome 6: Women's Movement	8%
TOTAL	24%

Table 6 above highlights that while a lot of efforts have been made in Outcome 1, the results obtained are not commensurate because of the delays in achieving the milestone which is often out of the control sphere of the programme. Overall, as a result of delays and disruptions mentioned in MTA question 6, the programme has made overall implementation progress of 24 percent.

RUNOs were most familiar with the M&E framework and outputs and outcomes across pillars. IPs knowledge varied but the majority tend to be knowledgeable of the outputs and outcomes of the pillar of their involvement. Many have reported not seeing or merely glancing at the results matrix.

Is the quality of outputs satisfactory?

KIIs and beneficiaries were generally satisfied with the outputs. Key informants from different groups, including RUNOs, Governmental partners, IPs and beneficiaries, pointed to several areas where they think the project is making an impact and the outputs are satisfactory. Output 1 and the legislative accomplishments were lauded across the board by KIIs. As stated by one key informant:

".... legislation is moving ahead. I think it was like eight years in terms of implementation right now. That is headed by UNICEF. And they're supposed to be drafting-a bill soon coming out of the recommendations. So, the legislation aspect, I think has been moving ahead quite nicely".

Other KIIs have pointed to the support given to CSOs to increase their participation in the project as another highlight of the project as it allowed to reach more beneficiaries and survivors of GBV. The project beneficiaries that were interviewed spoke of the difference the project has made in terms of changing the perceptions of men in their communities and the response of local police personnel.

One of the outputs of the programme that stakeholders across the board referred to as a tangible measure of the success of the programme is the GBV App. This App, developed under Outcome 4, is to be used to support delivery of information to GBV survivors and persons at risk of GBV on available GBV support services as well as where to access such services. The GBV App, through a panic button feature, will also support the linkage of GBV survivors and persons at risk of GBV to access assistance from the police as well as psychosocial and other forms of support from the 914 GBV Hotline unit within the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security. KIs reported government ownership of the App and the alignment with other emergency mechanisms in Guyana as a success and leap for GBV survivors accessing assistance. Beneficiaries have reported that they have either used the App or know someone who did, and it has worked and delivered.

The EU was generally satisfied with the outputs but did mention that their involvement was initially often minimized, and the branding and visibility of the Initiative at the start excluded them leading to the impression that it was a UN project. This has, however, been addressed with the RCs and has resulted in a higher visibility for the EU. The EU also expressed some concern about the sustainability of the output activities and their impacts.

Key findings:

- The programme's progress, measured in terms of implementation and achievement of milestones for the output indicators is lagging behind the planned work plan due to several contextual factors that affected programme implementation. The finalisation of some activities is also delayed due to bureaucratic processes such as the ascension of legislation in the national parliament, which explains the difference in progress of implementation (as measured by the activities implemented) versus progress of the results framework (as measured by achieving the milestones).
- The RUNOs and governmental agencies had most awareness of the M&E framework. The IPs and the beneficiaries were either not aware or only aware of their specific activity or pillars.
- The EU was generally satisfied with the outputs and the initial concerns around lack of visibility in the communication and knowledge products has been addressed.

Recommendations:

11. The PCU with the involvement of other relevant stakeholders such as IPs and the government should meet to analyse the bottlenecks to progress in the achievement of the milestones, develop response and mitigating mechanisms and adjust the milestones and targets accordingly.
12. The PCU should increase its sensitization and awareness efforts on the results matrix to ensure that all stakeholders are knowledgeable on it and its associated timelines. The implications for not achieving the outputs in the assigned timeframe should be stressed.

8. Are the outputs still likely to lead to the expected outcomes? To what extent has progress towards the outcome targets been achieved?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good
	<input type="checkbox"/> Problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies

As shown in Figure 3 and discussed as well in the previous question, progress was made across all outcomes, however, in most outcomes it remained well below the 50 percent mark. Progress, as measured by the indicators, was mostly achieved in outcomes 2 and 6. In this section we look at what has been achieved so far and whether the outputs are still expected to lead to the expected outcomes.

Table 7. Key achievements per Pillar

Outcome	Key achievements in Phase I
Outcome 1	<p><u>Policies and Legislation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two (2) sets of comprehensive research were completed to support the strengthening of evidence-based reporting through policy and legislative review on Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Act to better safeguard against VAWAG. The Family Violence Bill of 2021 was drafted with a view to rendering further support to efforts to protect survivors in cases involving domestic violence through the granting of a protection order; and providing the police with powers of arrest where a domestic violence offence occurs. The partnership for the legal and policy work for a new bill for harassment was agreed upon, which will cover sexual harassment.
Outcome 2	<p><u>Institutional strengthening</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic partnership was established with the University of Guyana to conduct institutional training on GBV. This led to the development of a course titled "Resilience against and Disruption of Gender-Based Violence" for service providers, policymakers and others who will lead GBV and response approaches. Preliminary work was completed on the costed national plans of action on GBV by the MoHSSS. With the development of the plan, it is anticipated that there will be greater emphasis on GBV prevention and response through adequate budgeting and planning for services. The MoHSSS requested support for the development of a strategic plan based on their lead role in preventing and responding to violence and to guide their own internal planning needs on GBV and GBV related elements. Fifty (50) adolescent girls in alternative care were targeted through the MoHSSS' Story Board Initiative and received creative writing skills along with functional literacy training to develop stories about their challenges and how they surmounted them.

<p>Outcome 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and norms change Tool kits and manuals were developed to address the behaviour of men and boys in Indigenous communities. • A diversity, equality, and inclusion policy were drafted for the Guyana Football Federation and the Guyana Cricket Board by Merundoi. The policy includes standards on dealing with sexual harassment, bullying, exploitation and abuse with steps for handling cases. • Merundoi also developed a tool kit for faith-based leaders to challenge the perception that GBV and VAWG is a natural part of relationships and to create safe spaces for survivors to seek help and support. • Merundoi created 5 public service announcements (PSAs), aired on local and community radio stations. Two of these PSAs were translated into nine Amerindian Languages namely Wapishan, Macushi, Carib, Arawak, Arecuna, Akawaio, Wai, Patamona, Warrau) for broadcast on the 8 Community radio stations across Guyana. This allowed for better communication of the GBV messages to the indigenous groups in the hinterland regions of Guyana in their own languages. • Four (4) CSOs were engaged to raise awareness on GBV, health, education, referrals, and the justice system through targeted interventions which are specific to their locations. These interventions included hosting radio and TV Programs, poster competitions, online training of shopkeepers and meeting in small groups to provide information reaching over 2,000 persons. Awareness sessions in region 6 led to a significant increase in demands for social services in that region. • In Baramita, the CSO partner used the native Carib language to encourage a local campaign to reduce substance abuse and develop a safer lifestyle. The campaign is titled “Efe Taka Mata Kopa”, which means “Change It Up”. Its aim is to inspire and educate the community on alternative behaviours to keep the community safe and free from GBV.
<p>Outcome 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of Essential Services Support to the establishment of two Child Advocacy Centres (CAC) in Region 6 to provide psycho-social support for children who were victims of sexual abuse and their families. As of December 2021, 159 cases were reported and addressed. As a result of this intervention, 16 officers were trained in best practices when engaging pre-school and teenaged child sexual abuse victims; strategies for stakeholders to support each other in gathering evidence for convictions; and the importance of peer reviews for the multi-disciplinary team (MDT) – which is comprised of CSOs, Police, CPA, DPP, and Health Sector • Support was provided to 11 CSOs for the delivery of GBV-related services as part of the COVID response plan. This included the provision of psychosocial support to 116 women and girls, particularly adolescent girls, and teen mothers as well as the training of 33 community personnel such as pharmacists and shop owners to aid efforts to share GBV referral information within targeted communities. Staff and workers in emergency and essential services sector were trained to disseminate IEC products, assist vulnerable populations in accessing direct referral assistance as well as supported to enhance their own understanding/knowledge of the various forms of GBV. • A Readiness Assessment for the strengthening of the GBV Essential Services Package in Guyana (in line with international standards) was completed in 2021 to review existing services and to identify gaps in essential services delivery in Spotlight target regions (Regions 4 & 6 (costal) and Regions 1 & 7 (hinterland)). • In strengthening essential services, two hundred and eighty (280) Police Officers were trained in GBV in support of strengthening the delivery of GBV essential services. Training was done using a training manual developed by UNFPA under the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security COPSQUAD2000 Initiative and delivered through training sessions conducted with support from the Spotlight Initiative program. • The Legal Pro Bono 500 Initiative was launched by the MoHSSS in partnership with the Guyana Bar Association and the UN Spotlight Initiative. Through this Initiative, the members of the

	<p>Guyana Bar Association have committed to providing pro-bono legal services for five hundred (500) GBV survivors per year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with the MoHSSS and the Spotlight Initiative, GBV App called iMatter.gy was developed and launched. The iMatter.gy App serves as a central online portal for members of the public, providing current information on GBV essential services, laws and policies, information, and resources on various forms of GBV in Guyana, as well as linkage to the national 914 GBV Hotline service. • Guyana Spotlight Initiative supported the procurement of telecommunications equipment to enable the operations of the 914 GBV Hotline service. Through this partnership, GBV-related services, access to at-risk youth populations for enhanced prevention/ protection from GBV, and GBV referral services have been strengthened. As a result of this intervention, indicators 4.1.2.2 and 4.1.2.2 were achieved. • Guyana Spotlight Initiative supported the procurement of equipment (tablets and phones) to enable CSO partners to support delivery of GBV related services as part of support under COVID-19 response. • Guyana Spotlight Initiative supported the procurement of furniture and equipment for shelters/safe spaces to support the Government and CSOs in the provision of GBV services. From the items handed over by UNFPA to the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, the Ministry formally handed over to a well-known LGBTQ NGO [SASOD] a number of items to support the operations of SASOD's safe space for the LGBTQ community. Items were also procured for the shelter facility managed by a well-known NGO [Help & Shelter]. As a result of this intervention, the following has been achieved:
Outcome 5	<p>Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Baseline study to support the availability of quality, globally comparable data on VAWG was completed. • To support the collection of data on VAWG, ten (10) virtual and in-person workshops were conducted one hundred and twenty-two (122) participants from across varying agencies and ministries were trained in GBV data collection, analysis, and use. • Additionally, fifty-five (55) tablets were procured for distribution to key stakeholders to strengthen data collection in Health, Social Services, Judiciary and Law Enforcement sectors. • A qualitative analysis of the experiences, in relation to VAWG, of survivors and perspective of key stakeholders in Guyana was completed.
Outcome 6	<p>Supporting the women's movement and CSOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help & Shelter and Red Thread developed questionnaires for health centres and police stations, aimed at developing social public accountability mechanisms for public institutions to improve the advocacy efforts and the prevention of VAWG. • A consultant was engaged to strengthen the Technical & Operational Capacities of CSOs. The consultant mapped registered and unregistered CSOs who work on ending violence against women and girls. The mapping covered the institutional dimensions of (i) governance, (ii) implementation, (iii) program management and (iv) capacity gaps. Additionally, an analysis of the CSOs in relation to their suitability and capacity to engage in activities under Pillar 6 was conducted, and a training needs assessment was conducted where the CSOs identified their capacity needs.

Source: 2021 Narrative Progress Report

Despite the many factors discussed in the previous sections, namely, delays in getting the activities off the ground (see context), including the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the national floods, the Guyana programme has made progress towards achieving its expected outputs and outcomes.

Klls expressed satisfaction with the programme progress towards outcomes with the caveat of "given the national and local circumstances". They were also confident that the outputs will lead to the associated

outcomes, but the programme may require more time to achieve the targets. RUNOs identified the work done under outcome 1 as completely revolutionizing the legal landscape of Guyana for survivors and victims of GBV and gender equality in the country. Furthermore, the reported government ownership of the GBV App and alignment with other emergency mechanisms is also seen as a success and leap for GBV survivors accessing assistance.

Key findings:

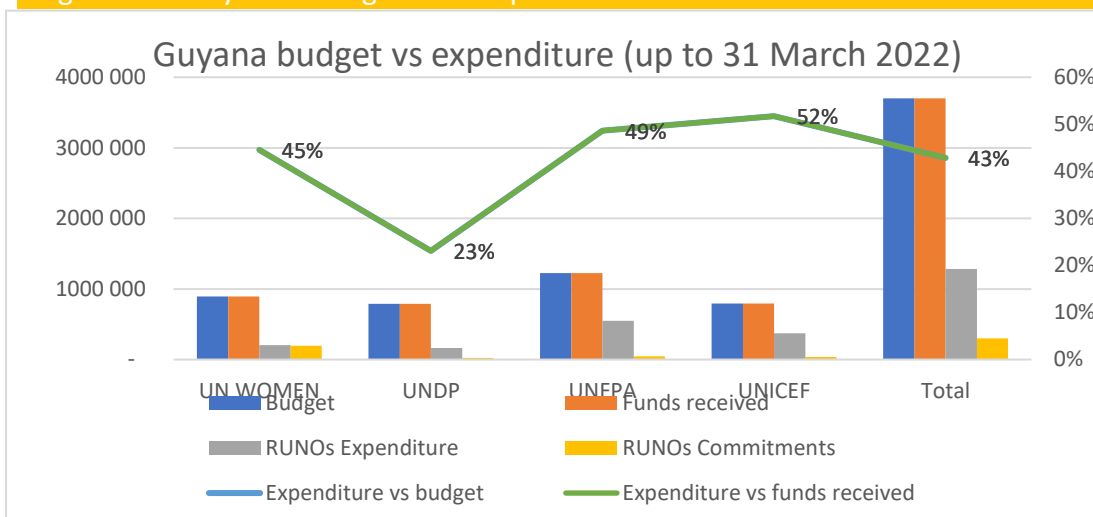
- There is indication that progress has been made by the Guyana programme on achieving expected outcome targets though stymied by the COVID-19 pandemic, national floods and the prolonged general elections.
- The desk review of the programme documents indicate that progress is being made towards the outcome targets and milestones. The outputs are in sync with the expected outcomes and will contribute to the necessary outcomes. The KIs and direct beneficiaries also confirmed that progress is being made towards the outcomes and pointed to the legislations outcomes as well as the GBV App linked to the dedicated 914 GBV Hotline as game changing.
- Some of the outcome's indicators are delayed due to the timeframe posed for achieving the targets being unrealistic and does not reflect known obstacles of working in Guyana such as challenges of working in hinterland areas or getting legislation passed in parliament.

Recommendations:

13. A reassessment of the planned activities under each pillar should be done to determine whether the timeframe for the target's achievement is realistic or if changes should be made. This reassessment should be a collaborative effort between all project stakeholders.
14. Modifications to the results matrix should consider all local factors that can affect project outputs such as bureaucratic processes delays.
15. Create awareness and sensitization of the results framework and reinforce the required participatory approach that is necessary.

<p>9A. Is the absorption capacity of the Government, implementing partners or RUNOs an obstacle/bottleneck to ensuring that implementation is going according to plan?</p> <p>9B. 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?</p>	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good </div> <div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problems </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies </div>
<p>Budget execution</p> <p>The financial data up to March 31, 2022, shows that only 43 percent of the budget for Phase I had been spent or committed, as opposed to the expected 70 per cent at the time of the mid-term assessment (Figure 4).</p>	

Figure 4. Guyana budget vs. expenditure



The amount spent and committed by the RUNOs varied between 52 % (UNICEF) and 23% (UNDP)⁶. The remaining two RUNOs UNFPA and UNWOMEN expended 49 % and 45% respectively. As explained in earlier sections the delay of the implementation of the programme by the two national events led to a slow rate of implementation of activities. Some of the lead activities being delayed would have led to the lower rates of expenditure for some of the RUNOs. According to the RUNOs, the program implementation and expenditure was especially stymied by the inability to procure the necessary human resources.

Table 8 provides a further analysis of the expenditure of the programme according to budget categories. As is expected many budget categories are below the 50 % and 70% milestone, except for contractual services which have almost reached 100%. There is strong overspending in the budget category of Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture at 447 %⁷.

The low disbursement in the category of staff and personal is surprising as only 16% was spent so far and is for a large majority allocated to the PCU. According to key informants, the actual costs for filling vacancies has been lower than budgeted for as UN Volunteers were used instead of Regional Coordinators. At the same time, however, RUNOs complain that not enough resources are made available for staff and personnel. The other budget line expenditures are in line with the general spending trend, except for supplies, commodities and materials where only 1% was spent thus far.

Table 8. Expenditure by budget line by 31 March 2022

BUDGET CATEGORIES	GUYANA		
	Spotlight Initiative Budget	RUNOs Expenditure	% expenditure vs budget
1. Staff and other personnel	490 073	80 828	16%
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	68 159	679	1%
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	10 000	44 740	447%
4. Contractual services	513 400	500 753	98%
5.Travel	77 348	40 358	52%
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	2 031 000	486 324	24%

7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	267 964	62 288	23%
Total Direct Costs	3 457 944	1 215 970	35%
8. Indirect Support Costs (7%)	242 056	69 332	29%
TOTAL CP Budget / Expenditure	3 700 000	1 285 302	35%
RUNOs Commitments		300 765	8%
TOTAL CP Budget / Delivery	3,700,000	1 586 067	43%

Source: MPTF Gateway on the Spotlight Initiative, provided by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat

Absorption capacity and other obstacles limiting successful implementation of programme

RUNOs

The RUNOs expenditure was a low of 23 % to a high of 52 %. KIIS with RUNOs have identified some factors that may have contributed to their absorption levels. The recurring issue of being able to procure and retain the necessary human resources was stated. In addition, many RUNOs have identified inadequate levels of staff for programme implementation. The inadequate level of human resources is also reflected in spending on human resources which represents only 16% of the budget which is available for staff and personnel. Active personnel working on the Spotlight Initiative are sub dividing their time with other programmes and responsibilities.

A review of the budget highlights that beside the staff for the PCU (funded from the UNDP budget), the RUNOs have in fact not budgeted for a lot of human resources; given restrictions highlighted in the design phase that RUNOs were mandated to follow. UN Women budgeted for 1.2 full time equivalents and UNFPA budgeted for 2.3 full time equivalent including one full time UN Volunteer. UNICEF does not seem to have budgeted for staff and personnel cost according to the Guyana final budget and workplan received from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat.

The third factor identified was delays in governmental approvals and signoffs since the programme is under the direct supervision of the Minister of the MoHSSS and her direct approval is required for all collaborative efforts with the government.

IPs

The IPs are confident that they have the absorptive capacity for the implementation of the programme activities and expenditure and the filtering of resources to smaller CSO (the approach of the programme to be inclusive and reach groups with limited capacity). However, IPs identified delays in disbursements, lengthy procurement processes and requirements because of the new collaborative approach by the UN⁸. They have attributed lengthy delays in the disbursement of funds which affected the timely implementation of their sub-projects and expenditure. The financial analysis above (see table 8) also confirms this reality as thus far only 24 percent of funds have been disbursed to IPs and counterparts. As one KII stated:

⁶ UNDP also manages the Programme Management budget which is used by different agencies and more difficult to accelerate.

⁷ Programme revisions were granted for the revised budgetary amounts

⁸ IPS indicated that they have worked with a RUNO prior and did not experience the delays experienced under the SI attributing to the UN Reform Approach.

“Our main challenge was the timely disbursement of the funds. It was never timely, and then you're almost kind of forced to accomplish the labour in the same timeframe. So that was a huge challenge. That was our biggest challenge, then the other one really was COVID, we had delay some of our implementation because the communities closed down because of COVID. Other than that, we had no other issues. We didn't have issues, engaging the community, or planning the sessions or anything like that.”

There was also the opinion that the budget allocated to the CSOs is limited. As one Key Informant explained:

“I'll tell you my opinion I think the budget is sort of a limiting factor for the number of organisations Spotlight wants to work with. For the nature of the results, that they may be looking for, you're trying to do plenty, you're trying to stretch \$5,000.”

Government

Government partners in Guyana experienced challenges in implementing their partnership activities in a timely manner. The Government partners were plagued with human resources capacity issues (attracting and retaining the necessary personnel). KIIs indicated that the level of knowledge and skills within the relevant government departments to drive the process has contributed to delays. They have also had difficulty procuring the necessary consultants locally for programme implementation. As a result UNFPA has reallocated a portion of its personnel budget to support the MoHSSS in strengthening their capacity to coordinate and implement the Initiative on the Government side. The Spotlight implementation unit in the MoHSSS was literally a one-woman office⁹ (Key Informant). Other governmental agencies reported struggling with multiple other responsibilities in addition to the Spotlight Initiative activities. Governmental partners have also reported struggling with timely communication with RUNOs especially in instances where there were no staff physically in Guyana.

Key findings:

- As of March 2022, all RUNOs were still lagging with overall financial expenditure and commitments. Overall programme expenditure stood at 43 percent with significant underspending (below 25% as measured against the overall budget) in the categories of staff and personnel, transfer and grants to counterparts, general operating costs and supplies; commodities and materials.
- Most IPs are confident they have sufficient absorptive capacity to implement the programme activities but are challenged by untimely disbursements of funds from RUNOs leading to issues.
- Government's absorptive capacity has been affected by its deficit human resources capacity and challenges procuring consultants in a timely manner.
- RUNOs absorption capacity is affected by limited human resource capacity as staff members often have to split time with other programmes.

Recommendations:

16. In Phase 2, the issue of the timely disbursement of funds to the IPs and CSOs should be addressed with urgency since it is creating frustration for the IPs. It is unclear why the delays occur and is recommended to review whether any measures can be taken to either speed up the disbursements or otherwise clarify the processes to the Ips so they can manage their expectations.
17. Actions should be developed to assist the government and the programme in general to address the issue of limited human resources for programme implementation and expenditure. Suggested

⁹ At the time of the assessment the officer of the Spotlight Unit at the MHSSS resigned.

measures could include offer support to Government for gender budgeting, including human resources; revisions of the TOR for adaptability to the Guyanese context should be considered and exit interviews should be reviewed to identify reasons for staff loss.

18. An examination of the RUNOs staff time assigned to the programme and the programme management requirements should be done to assess the staff ability to realistically implement the activities in a timely manner.

D. EFFICIENCY

10. 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

Chosen implementation mechanism

The implementation of the programme is a collaborative effort between the four RUNOs, Government Ministries and agencies and CSOs. The programme utilised the “one UN Reform” approach towards the implementation. The “One UN Approach” has had some challenges including the alignment of procurement and other systems. RUNOs expressed the view that the approach is a work in progress and there are some minor challenges that are being addressed.

According to the CPD, financial allocations to activities under each pillar is allocated to the relevant RUNOs and Associated Agencies, as may be deemed necessary. The transfer of grants to relevant line ministries is the implementation modality used for Pillar 1 interventions. The CPD also specifies that for Pillars 2 and 6, a framework and funding window is established “for Government-CSO partnerships with agreed service lines, accountability standards and social contracting modalities”. In practice, this means that various modalities including direct transfers to government partners and to CSOs are adopted to support Pillar 3 activities. The implementation and funding modalities for Pillars 4 and 5 are not explicitly described in the CPD.

The implementation modality of working through government Ministries, agencies and CSOs has faced challenges. In general, the pace of getting things done in government ministries is slow with heavy layers of bureaucracy in addition to human resources capacity gaps. The majority of CSOs complained of untimely disbursement of funds, a long procurement process and a lengthy wait to access the government and RUNOs. Grants were provided to nine CSOs.

Programme Management Cost

The programme management cost is set at a maximum of 18 percent of the overall budget for the Spotlight Initiative at the global level. According to the project documents 17 percent of Guyana’s budget is allocated to management cost, which covers the following: staff and personnel; supplies, commodities, and materials; equipment, vehicles, and furniture; contractual services; travel; and general operating and other direct costs. Costs for communication and evaluation are also considered management costs but not included in the 18% budget cap for programme management cost. Key Informants cited travel and access to hinterland areas as one of the reasons for the budget not being sufficient.

“Well, I would say it's never enough. I would say relatively it's a lot 4.5 million for Guyana. But in absolute needs, it's not enough to cover everything, but it's not the EU role either to cover everything. We should be the enablers, and we should trigger some dynamic. We're not here to you know, always be behind 100%”

Survey respondents were not in agreement as to whether the budget is enough to achieve the expected results – 22 percent of respondents said the budget was insufficient to implement the programme, while 37 per cent said it was sufficient. The other respondents did not have a clear opinion on the level of funding. In interviews with the Key Informants, several highlighted that the budget was insufficient to

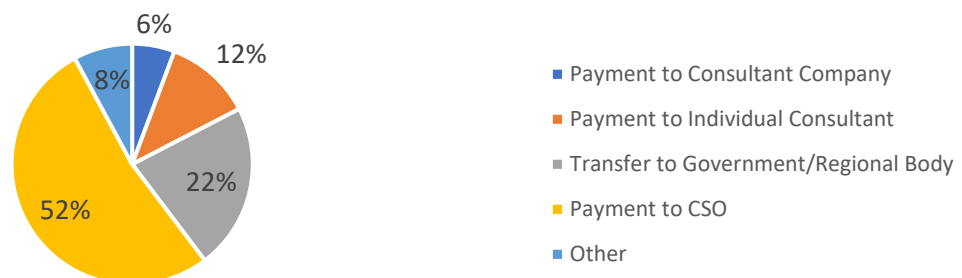
implement the programme in Guyana. A major reason is the geographical areas of the target communities having very limited accessibility.

Budget by delivery mechanism

According to programme documents the RUNOs work closely on all pillars to ensure strong delivery across the UN system for the Spotlight Initiative. Financial allocations to the associated activities of each pillar are allocated to RUNOs with the appropriate operational capacity and not necessarily in totality to the respective pillar.

The programme budget (not including management costs) is split into five delivery mechanisms: 52% of the budget are transferred to CSOs, 12% are payments to individual consultants, 6% are payments to a consultancy company, 22% are designated to the government and 8% are classified as “other”, which usually mean they are spend by RUNOs. The requirement of the Spotlight Initiative to channel 50 to 70 percent of CSO funding to national and grassroots organizations has, thus, been met.

Figure 5. Programme budget by delivery mechanism



Source: Spotlight Initiative Guyana budget

Key findings:

- The implementation of the Spotlight Initiative as “one UN” is for the most part working in Guyana with some minor challenges of fully aligning various systems especially procurement processes.
- The implementation modality of working through CSOs is effective and the budget allocation is appropriate, also because of adjustments made in the requirements for their engagement.
- Some KIIs believe the budget for implementation is not sufficient, particularly for implementing activities in rural and hinterland areas.

Recommendation:

19. As they prepare for Phase 2, the technical team should investigate ways to expand access to the programme’s financial resources for smaller organisations (rural, hinterland, indigenous populations and sexual minorities) that lack the capacity to access the programme resources with the RUNOs requirements.
20. The RUNOs should revisit their requirements and make them more applicable to the Guyanese civil society context which is generally weak, lacking agency and capacity.

11A. How effectively is the Initiative managed?
11B. How effectively is the Programme managed? Are the governance and management mechanisms for the Initiative at national level adequate and functioning as planned? Do partner government and other partners (please consider CSO and EU Delegation) in the country effectively participate in these mechanisms?

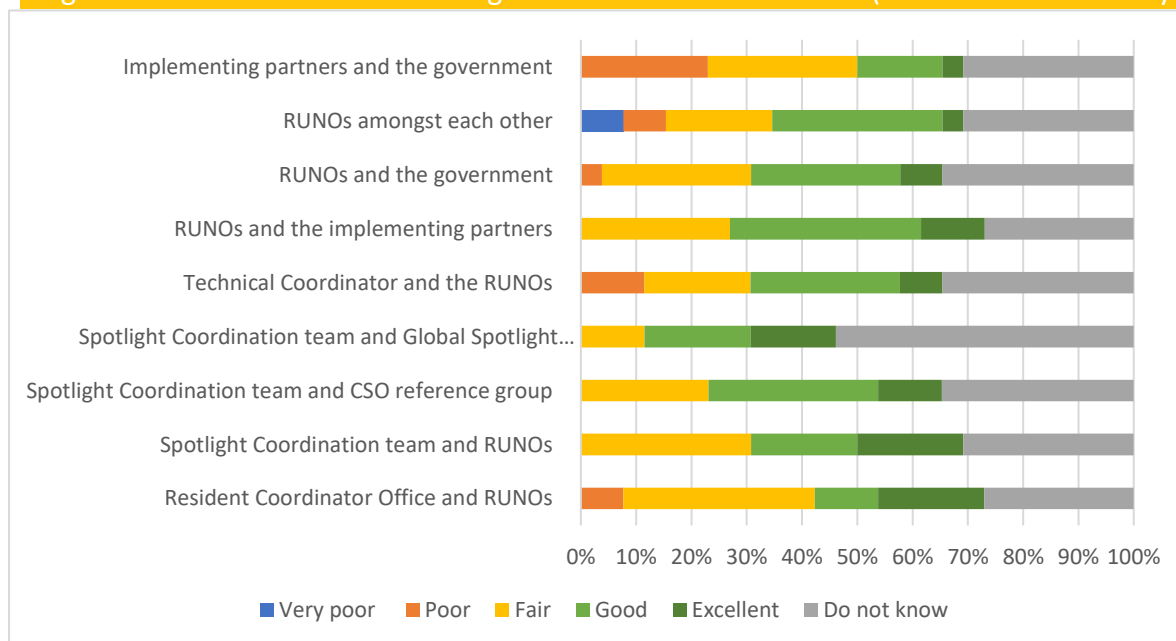
☒ Very Good – Good
☐ Problems
☐ Serious deficiencies

Support from the Spotlight Secretariat

Based on interviews with key informants, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat provided valuable support during the programme design stage in developing the country programme documents, the budgets and similar documents, by making these available as an operations compendium. In addition, they would facilitate webinars on best practices from other countries and are always available for any issues surrounding monitoring and reporting. In terms of the implementation of the programme, the KIIs did not identify any issues with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. The sentiments of a supportive secretariat were the majority view of the RUNOs KIIs.

Figure 6 below captures the online survey responses when asked to assess the collaboration between the IPs, the Government, CS-NRG, RCO, RUNOs, Spotlight Team and the Global Spotlight Secretariat. 26 respondents replied to this question. Only 2 respondents identified the collaboration among the RUNOs to be 'very poor' rating of 7.7 percent was the collaboration between the RUNOs despite the 'one UN' initiative. Except for the Spotlight Team and the Global Spotlight Secretariat, all the others received at least 40 percent rating of 'fair to excellent' with the highest being Spotlight Team and RUNOs at 69 percent. The Spotlight Team and Global Spotlight Secretariat also received more than 50 percent response of 'Do not know'.

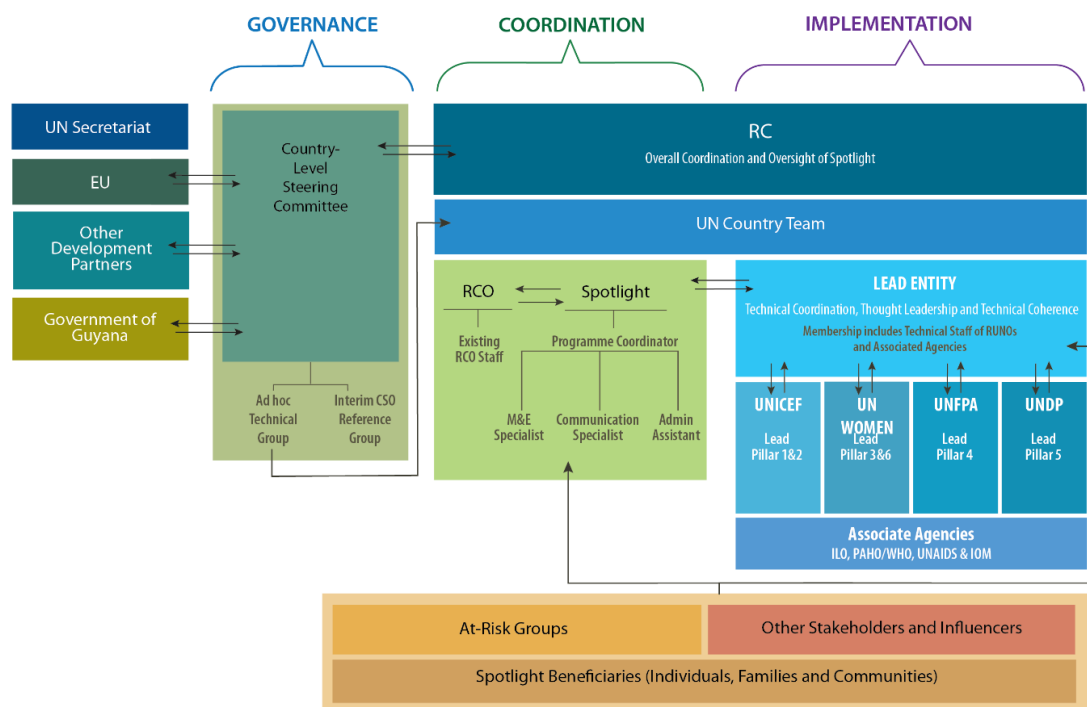
Figure 6. Collaboration among different stakeholders (from online survey)



Governance mechanism

In keeping with the major thrust of the initiative to leave no one behind, there were engagements with stakeholders through the various governance levels for the programme. These are the National Steering Committee (NSC), the Gender Technical Working Group (GTWG), and the Civil Society National Reference Group (CS-NRG).

Figure 7. Spotlight Initiative Governance Structure



The governance system consisted of several actors (roles described below) with coordination by an RC, UN Country Team, RCO and Programme Coordination Unit. Implementation is the responsibility of the RUNOs and Associate Agencies.

National Steering Committee

The NSC is the highest governing body of the programme with an overall oversight and accountability responsibility and co-chaired by the Minister of Human Services and Social Security and the UN Resident Coordinator as the co-chairs. The membership caters for broad-based stakeholder involvement comprising of senior members from government and state agencies, representatives of the CS-NRG, the EUD Ambassador and Heads of the RUNOs

Two meetings of the NSC have been convened to date: its inaugural meeting was held in February 2021 and focused on the review and approval of the 2021 Annual Work Program. The second meeting was held in July 2021, addressed strategic issues emerging from the programme's implementation which led to the endorsement of several programmatic revisions. These issues focused mainly on ensuring there is linkage to existing programmes that could support programme implementation.

KIIs were eager to share their views on the NSC. Some felt that it embodied the principles of "leaving no one behind" whilst others felt that it was too large. Most KIIs felt that it was functional. One KII described it as follows:

"What I can see is that the steering committee is up and running. To the best of my knowledge, it has been able to meet at all times when required to do so. All the relevant documents that need to be shared and discussed with that body have been provided to them. There has been a question, though, as to whether the steering committee is too broad; whether it has too many members and whether it may need to be trimmed down. There's a concern out there that having too many members may make the Committee less efficient."

Another Key Informant explained: “So, I feel sometimes the cooperation component is a bit side-lined by the UN. Yes, so this is my lamentation, that despite our reminders, it has not really been corrected”

There was also another concern about political interference in the implementation of Spotlight Initiative activities and a lack of knowledge among the wider population about the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana.

Perception on the effectiveness of the NSC is further gleaned from respondents to the online survey. Most survey respondents perceived the committee to be operating effectively - ‘fair’ (65 percent) or ‘good’ (17 percent).

Management of the Programme

Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU)

The Guyana Spotlight Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU) coordinates activities among the various agencies with technical guidance from UNFPA in its capacity as lead technical coherence agency, and under the overall supervision and guidance of the RCO. The PCU was established in the last quarter of 2020 and includes the Programme Coordinator, who fulfils the coordination role, a Monitoring and Evaluation and Knowledge Management Consultant, a Communications Specialist and a Programme Officer¹⁰. The technical coherence role is supported by UNFPA. They currently operate out of the ‘UN House’. Their main role is to coordinate the execution of the programme and play a key role in ensuring coherence between outcomes, coordination among the agencies responsible for implementing several activities, communication and monitoring the Initiative. Since its formation, their work has been focused on establishing and/or strengthening the governance mechanisms, understanding and building on the cohesion among the RUNOs, Pillars and main Partners, as well as beginning to establish relationships with implementing partners and with other partners, such as the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the Communities of Learning. They also assist the RUNOs and Associate Agency in identifying challenges and developing a plan of action.

Gender Technical Working Group (GTWG)

The Inter-Government/CSO/EU/UN Gender Technical Working Group consists of technical working groups working on the six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative programme implementation. The Technical Group has the responsibility to recommend changes in project implementation or project document based on progress reports and evaluation assessments. It can also propose changes affecting the budget of the project document to the NSC and provides reports and advice as requested. The GTWG meets quarterly.

The online survey respondents opined that the technical committee is effective with 27.8 per cent finding it either good or excellent and 44 percent finding its operation to be fairly effective. Narrative comments to the survey indicated that some respondents found the GTWG to be too large which has affected its effectiveness. However, no respondent believed the operation was poor, but 27.8 percent were not able to respond to the question. KIIs did not have a specific view on the GTWG.

CS-NRG

The CS-NRG provides valuable support to the Spotlight Initiative through the involvement of its members at different levels of governance and implementation of the programme. Members from within the group have seats on the National Steering Committee and the Gender Technical Working Group and they have provided pertinent input in the development of terms of references and in the review reports.

In the initial *formulation* phase, there has been considerable engagement with CSOs, through broad consultations and one on one meetings as well as community visits. CSOs with membership covering the

¹⁰ The Finance/Admin Officer and Programme Officer are no longer part of the PCU

areas of health, legal services, education, women's economic empowerment, LGBTI issues and human rights have joined in discussions, and contributed to reviewing the ProDoc Version 0. It was agreed with CSOs to keep the process open during the formulation phase, with the provision for continued consultation with CSOs on the formation of the CSO reference group for the implementation phase. The Guyana group initially comprised sixteen (16) members, including representation from vulnerable segments of the population such as the Venezuelan migrant and refugee population, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI) community, persons with disabilities (PWD), sex workers, indigenous women and girls, rural and hinterland communities, women's rights organizations, and women's grassroots organizations.

In April 2020, after the Call for Nominations to the CSNRG, the permanent CSNRG was officially established. Throughout the selection process, the Guyana programme ensured that the composition of the CSNRG would represent populations that face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination to ensure that no one is left behind. One member subsequently resigned, and three (3) additional CSOs representing indigenous populations and faith-based organizations were added, following recommendations from the new Government to improve inclusion and diversity.



The group convenes monthly to discuss plans and matters of importance to the implementation of their work plan and the overall rollout of activities under the Spotlight Initiative. The CS-NRG has a budget of 15,000 USD. Interviews with CS-NRG members indicated a good functioning of the CS-NRG, however, it has not always been possible to ensure full participation of all members at the meetings because of the COVID-19 restrictions and other competing obligations. Furthermore, some members expressed frustration with the lack of clarity as to their role on the Spotlight Initiative and how their inputs are contributing to the implementation and success of the Initiative.

Key findings:

- The Guyana Spotlight Initiative received adequate support from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat during the design and implementation phase according to the KIIs.
- Some key informants of the CSNRG and Implementing partners expressed concerns regarding the size of the NSC and its possible effects on its ability to function efficiently.
- Challenges identified by KII were initial access to the available Spotlight funding by CSOs and full participation of all members of the CS-NRG at their monthly meetings due to other priorities and the restrictions on social gathering due to the COVID-19 pandemic response.
- Some CS-NRG members are uncertain of their roles and responsibilities and if their inputs are taken into consideration in the programme implementation.

Recommendations:

21. The CS-NRG members should be provided with clearer guidance on their roles and how their inputs are feeding into the programme implementation. Participation at the monthly meetings should also be promoted and institutionalised to ensure effective operation of the CR-NRG.
22. An examination of the size of the NSC should be conducted to determine if its size negatively affects its effectiveness.

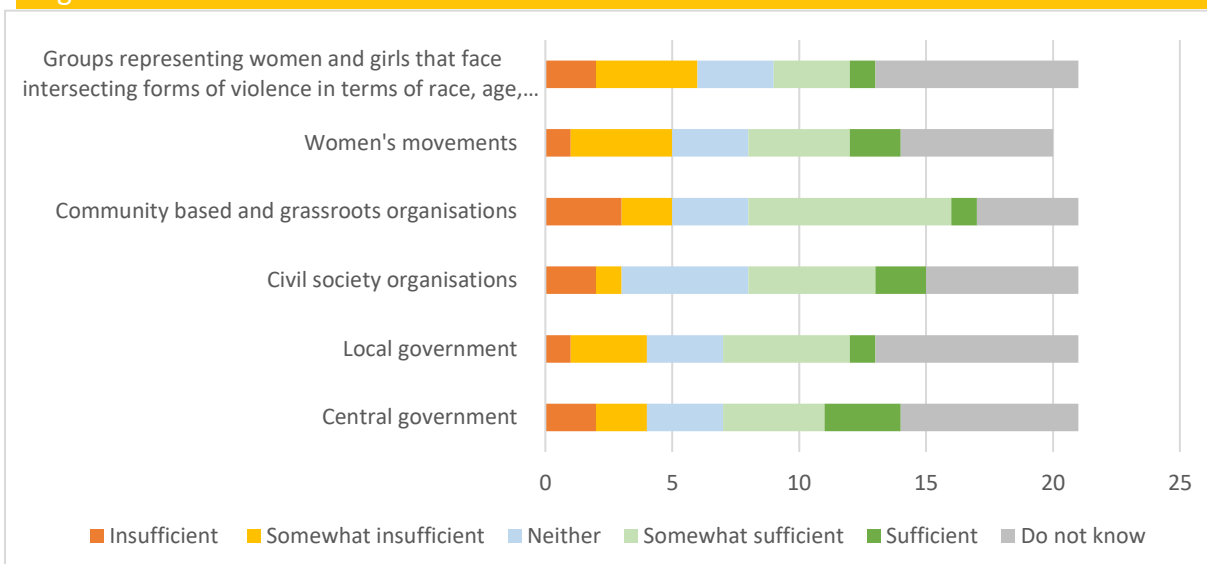
<p>12. Are the chosen implementation and coordination mechanisms (a “new way of working”, in line with UN Reform) contributing to efficiency?</p>	<div> <div>  Very Good – Good </div> <div>  Problems </div> <div>  Serious deficiencies </div> </div>
<p>The majority of the RUNOs felt that the “new way of working” has its benefits and may have contributed to a more holistic approach and successful coordination so far. The consultative formulation process of the Guyana Spotlight Initiative programme was shepherded through joint coordination efforts embodying the principles of UN Reform. The Resident Coordinator’s office coordinated the process and involved the close collaboration of civil society representatives, the EU Delegation, and national stakeholders.</p> <p>Some tangible examples of the approach at work included the processes to develop and rollout the reprogrammed Spotlight Guyana activities, in response to COVID-19 in Guyana, and the Joint Call for Proposals for the CSO grants. Both initiatives have joint coordination among all the UN actors. The COVID-19 crisis was efficiently addressed through the responsiveness created by the collaboration.</p> <p>The Spotlight Programme by design is positioned to promote the use of inter-agency tools for collaboration. Under the “One UN” reform, RUNOs are working closer together at the technical level on the Guyana Spotlight Initiative. For example, the coordinated efforts of the programme are bolstered by regular meetings of the 4 RUNOS and the Guyana Coordination Unit which are held monthly to share updates and discuss cross-pillar and cross-RUNO matters.</p> <p>Also, the housing of several of the agencies involved in the programme in one common physical area called the 'UN House' has also contributed to efficiency and interagency coordination, as the programme is cost sharing common services such as janitorial and security within this context.</p> <p>The agencies worked jointly on the plan to maximize effectiveness and efficiency and avoiding duplication of efforts. Other examples of joint coordination include the joint call for Proposals for CSO grants. However, according to KIIs, CSOs found the joint call for proposals tedious and bureaucratic. According to RUNOs the collaborative development of work plans led to improved efficiency of joint efforts in the implementation of activities. Despite this overall achievement of coordination, KIIs did identify some minor challenges of the merging or aligning of different processes such as financial systems. CSO in the KIIs identified untimely disbursement of funds as an issue of the programme and some RUNOS indicated that the alignment of procurement systems and financial processes is still “work-in-progress”.</p> <p>The majority of the KIIs indicated that there is a perception of efficiency. However, almost all RUNOs interviewed and also those responding to the online survey indicated a large insufficiency of human resources to implement, coordinate and monitor this comprehensive and holistic programme.</p>	
<p>Key findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RUNOs have begun working together resulting in “coordinated approaches, complementary strategies and activities, and the majority of survey respondents are of the opinion that the “one UN” has led to greater efficiency. There were some minor challenges in the alignment of systems mainly financial processes and procedures despite the initiative of joint calls for proposals between agencies. <p>Recommendations:</p> <p>23. RUNOs should build on the efficiency and effectiveness of the “new way of working” to ensure responsiveness of the Guyana Spotlight Programme. The minor challenges to efficiency mainly in</p>	

merging and alignment of financial systems and procurement processes should be addressed to allow for a more seamless implementation of the Spotlight Initiative especially since it has the potential to affect resource utilization and absorption of the programme.

E. SUSTAINABILITY

<p>13. 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?</p>	<div> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Problems </div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies </div>
<p>Sustainability Approach of the Guyana Programme</p> <p>The Spotlight Initiative in Guyana does not have a separate sustainability plan, though elements that promote sustainability are discussed in the presentation of each of the six (6) pillars. The partnership with the MoHSSS and other key government institutions working to prevent and respond to VAWG, together with the investments to strengthen the technical and operational capacities of CSOs and MOHSSS, are at the core of the country programme's strategy. The approach would ensure national ownership and sustainability through and beyond the Spotlight Initiative's interventions. The 2021 Country Report identifies several sustainability mechanisms mainstreamed in the implemented activities, including government ownership and commitment to update the iMatter.gy GBV app, the training of leaders in hinterland communities to ensure that there is leadership and less resistance to the impacts of the programme's activities in indigenous communities. The country report also declares a "sense of sustainability" among local authorities, village councils and local authorities, and some capacity building. There is an emphasis on training in the sustainability approach according to the KIIs and project documents. However, many KIIs stressed that government ownership is key.</p> <p>Government Buy-in and Ownership</p> <p>RUNOs have indicated national buy-in and ownership of the programmes by the Government of Guyana. Government ownership is demonstrated by the participation of critical governmental agencies in the programme activities. These programmes include the building of the capacity of the human resources of the agencies to tackle VAWG in the various sectors of the government. However, there are varying views among other stakeholders of buy-in and ownership by the government. Some KIIs would like to see aligned national programmes with national funding focused on VAWG. Governmental partners believe that the capacity is being built at the national level for the ownership of the programme after the Spotlight Initiative ends. However, most KIIs have expressed the view that given Guyana's projected prosperous economic trajectory, that there should be further indications of financial investments in VAWG in Guyana.</p> <p>Building Women Rights Organisations (WROs) and CSOs Capacity</p> <p>Respondents to the online survey felt that some level of capacity was built among local actors. Figure 8 shows that survey respondents are of the opinion that community-based and grassroots organizations are benefitting most from the capacity building efforts. Civil society organizations and local government respectively, were perceived as beneficiaries of capacity building, followed by central government. Groups representing women and girls were perceived as benefitting the least. RUNOs KIIs considered capacity building occurring at local levels through the IPs.</p>	

Figure 8. Extent Local Actors benefitted



Source: Online Survey

The CSOs in the Guyana programme are from a wide cross-section of the Guyanese society and represent several focal areas. Generally, CSOs capacity in Guyana is weak due to a few factors including financial and human resources capacity. The organizations suffer from lack of sustained funding sources to allow them to carry out uninterrupted advocacy, welfare and awareness activities. Most IPS and CSOs interviewed believed capacity is being built to allow them to manage the process without international expertise. The CSOs and IPs are confident of their ability to take the reins of the process. However, the concern is not the management of the process but the source of financial resources to continue the process after the initiative ends.

Key findings:

- There is no separate Spotlight Initiative sustainability plan in Guyana, instead sustainability is addressed in each of the pillars.
- The partnership with the MHSSS and other key government institutions working to prevent and respond to VAWG together with the investments to strengthen the technical and operational capacities of CSOs and the MOHSSS are at the core of the country programme's strategy to ensure national ownership and sustainability through and beyond the Spotlight Initiative's interventions
- Most stakeholders are of the view that sufficient capacity is being built in CSOs to allow them to manage the process after international funding ends.

Recommendation:

24. There is a need for awareness building activities on the sustainability strategy of the programme among key stakeholders especially IPS and CSOs.
25. The programme should consider the development of a distinct sustainability plan, using a participatory approach with all relevant stakeholders.

F. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROGRAMME DESIGN:

Main findings:

1. The design of the Guyana programme used a participatory process that involved extensive consultations with key stakeholder groups namely the government, the UN community, and civil society, guided by experts in the prevention and the response to VAWG with knowledge of and familiarity with the situation in the country.
2. Though an initial exclusion of hinterland and indigenous persons occurred in the design phase this was noted, and efforts were made to address the inclusion of these groups in the implementation of the programme activities.
3. The Spotlight Principles are being mainstreamed by all stakeholders in the implementation of the programme activities. However, many key informants expressed concern that the principle of “leaving no one behind” was not fully incorporated into the programme activities with groups such as the LGBTQI population, men, and men representative organizations appear to be excluded as beneficiaries from programme interventions.
4. Guyana’s Spotlight Initiative conducted a consultative process in the design phase that involved a broad range of stakeholders, including, CSOs, institutions serving survivors, and survivors but did not involve hinterland residents and indigenous populations.
5. The findings from the consultations that informed the design of the Guyana programme provided the Spotlight Initiative team with a good understanding of the target group’s needs but would have been limiting since it captured the needs and perspectives of Georgetown, the capital city and the coastal regions. The exclusion of the hinterland regions is significant in a country where there is differential access to governance and social services between the coast and hinterlands. In addition, the indigenous populations which occupy the hinterland areas have distinct cultural and social characteristics. Whilst the inclusion of hinterland regions is addressed in the implementation phase, IPS are facing challenges of unanticipated costs (to access areas) and adapting activities to the socio-cultural factors of the indigenous populations.
6. Many respondents to the online survey felt that their feedback is being collected and fed back into the programme design. However, the responses in the interviews indicated a mixed view on this with one key stakeholder responding that their views were not necessarily taken into consideration in the design and implementation phase.
7. Most stakeholders (IPs, CSNRG and the EU) are of the opinion that more should be done to include the hinterland areas, indigenous populations and the LGBTQIA+ (in general and especially those in the hinterland areas).
8. The Theories of Change presented in the CPD for the six pillars of the Guyana programme are relevant to the programme and the proposed activities. However Key Informants have found that ToCs are difficult to adapt to the actual Guyana situation. This was also compounded that during the design of activities there was no baseline data and some key target groups were excluded during the design consultations. Some stakeholders, in particular RUNOs, continue to work with the ToC and make it transferrable to the national context.

9. The Guyana Spotlight Initiative Programme used the Spotlight Initiative's global indicators to inform their results framework. The RUNOs and the PCU expressed concerns about the ambition of the indicators in the Guyanese context especially in light of the late start, the short programme's duration and the specific challenges facing the implementation of any such intervention in Guyana.
10. The global indicators were not fully transferable to the local context (this was the case especially for hinterland region activities) making it difficult to measure the indicators effectively.
11. The risk assessment matrix developed for the Guyana programme at the time of its design identified several risks (contextual, programmatic, institutional, and fiduciary). The risks identified pre-COVID-19 were detailed and applicable and captured most of the associated risks across the four risk areas of the programme. The only risk the programme did not capture was climatic risks.
12. The risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic was added as a new risk to the inception report. The risks posed by the pandemic to programme implementation were amplified for hinterland and rural communities because of difference in technological literacy, availability of equipment and access to internet and telecommunication services.
13. The Guyana programme adjusted well to the COVID-19 pandemic by making several modifications to the way it worked to continue operating despite the challenges of both the pandemic and the massive floods in some regions of the country.

Recommendations:

- a) The present initiatives to address the inclusion of hinterland and rural areas should be continued and expanded to ensure that the principles of leaving no one behind are fully integrated, and these areas can benefit in a more meaningful way from the programme's activities.
- b) The extensive consultation process conducted on the coastlands should continue and include hinterland regions and sub-populations of the regions. Two of the sub-groups identified included indigenous populations and LGBTQIA+. In the case of the LGBTQIA+ the challenges to their involvement in the programme implementation should be addressed for them to strengthen their participation. Their participation is important in fully addressing GBV in Guyana.
- c) The programme should consider developing a formal mechanism for collecting feedback on the programme activities. A semi-grievance mechanism of the project is recommended to capture feedback especially from beneficiaries.
- d) Another review of the programmes targets for outputs and outcomes should be done with the relevant stakeholders to discuss what amendments can be made to reflect more realistic milestones and targets in light of the local circumstances.
- e) More appropriate output and outcome indicators relevant to the Guyanese context should be developed and added to the results matrix. If some of the global indicators cannot be measured, proxy indicators should be identified.
- f) The programme should use the lessons learnt from Phase 1 and refine the programme risks and associated mitigation measures. It should involve the IPs and the local CSOs in the development of nuanced mitigation measures that reflect all the on-ground considerations for both contextual and programmatic risks.
- g) Prior to Phase 2, there is a need to review the mitigating measures proposed in the risk assessment matrix and the integration of measures to address some of the contextual risks such

as social cohesion issues. The lack of climate risks should also be addressed in the Risk Management Matrix.

2. GOVERNANCE:

Main findings:

1. The Government of Guyana is committed to the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana. Despite the late start due to an elections crisis the government has demonstrated sustained commitment to the programme through providing leadership in several areas and the participation of governmental agencies in several pillars.
2. The RUNOs have shown a continued commitment to the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana. They have leveraged their institutional history of working in Guyana to manoeuvre the programmatic landscape of Guyana.
3. The EUD expressed their general satisfaction with the focus of the implementation and the achievements thus far while acknowledging the need for more inclusion in the implementation, unpacked reports of programme activities, tangible demonstration of sustainability, and more visibility as the donor of the programme.
4. The IPs, local government and CS-NRG are fully committed to the programme. However, the processes of the programme should be improved and revised after consultations and feedback from these groups to quell their frustrations.

Recommendations:

- a) Ensure the sustained government's commitment through assistance in addressing the issues of acquiring and retaining the necessary human resources to assist the government agencies in their implementation of programme activities and achieving responsiveness.
- b) Issues of the inclusion of all programme stakeholders' views and providing feedback can be improved to ensure continued commitment to the programme by all stakeholders. In preparing for Phase 2, the views of all the partners, including the EUD, should be taken into consideration unless not possible and duly justified.

3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT:

Main findings:

1. The Guyana Spotlight Initiative has put together a framework that has facilitated joint programming and collaboration among the RUNOs, while avoiding duplications across the Pillars in alignment with the “One UN” reform agenda. There have been no reports of the process not working and leading to delays or duplication of efforts.
2. Review of the project documents and KII provided evidence of the technical capacity of the RUNOs to implement the Spotlight Initiative programme in Guyana and their assigned pillars.
3. The implementation of the Spotlight Initiative as “one UN” is for the most part working in Guyana with some minor challenges of fully aligning various systems especially procurement processes.
4. The implementation modality of working through CSOs is effective and the budget allocation is appropriate, also because of adjustments made in the requirements for their engagement.
5. Some KIIs believe the budget for implementation is not sufficient, particularly for implementing activities in rural and hinterland areas.
6. The Guyana Spotlight Initiative received adequate support from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat during the design and implementation phase according to the KIIs.
7. Some key informants of the CSNRG and Implementing partners expressed concerns regarding the size of the NSC and its possible effects on its ability to function efficiently.
8. Challenges identified by KII were initial access to the available Spotlight funding by CSOs and full participation of all members of the CS-NRG at their monthly meetings due to other priorities and the restrictions on social gathering due to the COVID-19 pandemic response.
9. Some CS-NRG members are uncertain of their roles and responsibilities and if their inputs are taken into consideration in the programme implementation.
10. RUNOs have begun working together resulting in “coordinated approaches, complementary strategies and activities, and the majority of survey respondents are of the opinion that the “one UN” has led to greater efficiency. There were some minor challenges in the alignment of systems mainly financial processes and procedures despite the initiative of joint calls for proposals between agencies.

Recommendations:

- a) As they prepare for Phase 2, the technical team should continue to expand access to the programme’s financial resources for smaller organisations (rural, hinterland, indigenous populations and sexual minorities) that lack the capacity to access the programme resources with the RUNOs requirements through capacity building and mentoring of CSOs in Pillar 6.
- b) The RUNOs should revisit their requirements and make them more applicable to the Guyanese civil society context which is generally weak, lacking agency and capacity.
- c) The CS-NRG members should be provided with clearer guidance on their roles and how their inputs are feeding into the programme implementation.

- d) An examination of the size of the NSC should be conducted to determine if its size negatively affect its effectiveness.
- e) RUNOs should build on the efficiency and effectiveness of the “new way of working” to ensure responsiveness of the Guyana Spotlight Programme. The minor challenges to efficiency mainly in merging and alignment of financial systems and procurement processes should be discussed and joint action identified to allow for a more seamless implementation of the Spotlight Initiative especially since it has the potential to affect resource utilization and absorption of the programme.

4. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS:

Main findings:

1. The programme’s progress, measured in terms of implementation and achievement of milestones for the output indicators is lagging behind the planned work plan due to several contextual factors that affected programme implementation. The finalisation of some activities is also delayed due to bureaucratic processes such as the ascension of legislation in the national parliament, which explains the difference in progress of implementation (as measured by the activities implemented) versus progress of the results framework (as measured by achieving the milestones).
2. The RUNOs and governmental agencies had most awareness of the M&E framework. The IPs and the beneficiaries were either not aware or only aware of their specific activity or pillars.
3. The EU was concerned of the lack of some visibility in the communication and knowledge products related to the outputs.
4. There is indication that progress has been made by the Guyana programme on achieving expected outcome targets though stymied by the COVID-19 pandemic, national floods and the prolonged general elections.
5. The desk review of the programme documents indicate that progress is being made towards the outcome targets and milestones. The outputs are in sync with the expected outcomes and will contribute to the necessary outcomes. The KIs and direct beneficiaries also confirmed that progress is being made towards the outcomes and pointed to the legislations outcomes as game changing.
6. Some of the outcome’s indicators are delayed due to the timeframe posed for achieving the targets being unrealistic and does not reflect known obstacles of working in Guyana such as challenges of working in hinterland areas or getting legislation passed in parliament.
7. As of March 2022, all RUNOs were still lagging with overall financial expenditure and commitments. Overall programme expenditure stood at 43 percent with significant underspending (below 25% as measured against the overall budget) in the categories of staff and personnel, transfer and grants to counterparts, general operating costs and supplies; commodities and materials.
8. Most CSOs are confident they have sufficient absorptive capacity but are challenged by untimely disbursements of funds from RUNOs leading to issues.

9. Government's absorptive capacity has been affected by its deficit human resources capacity and challenges procuring consultants in a timely manner.
10. RUNOs absorption capacity is affected by limited human resource capacity as staff members often have to split time with other programmes.
11. There is no separate Spotlight Initiative sustainability plan in Guyana, instead sustainability is addressed in each of the pillars.
12. The partnership with the MHSSS and other key government institutions working to prevent and respond to VAWG together with the investments to strengthen the technical and operational capacities of CSOs and MOHSSS are at the core of the country programme's strategy to ensure national ownership and sustainability through and beyond the Spotlight Initiative's interventions
13. Most stakeholders are of the view that sufficient capacity is being built in CSOs to allow them to manage the process after international funding ends.

Recommendations:

- a) The PCU with the involvement of other relevant stakeholders such as IPs and the government should meet to analyse the bottlenecks to progress in the achievement of the milestones, develop response and mitigating mechanisms and adjust the milestones and targets accordingly.
- b) The PCU should increase its sensitization and awareness efforts on the results matrix to ensure that all stakeholders are knowledgeable on it and its associated timelines. The implications for not achieving the outputs in the assigned timeframe should be stressed.
- c) The concerns raised by the EUD in relation to visibility should be addressed by the PCU and the RCO, ensuring adequate visibility of the EU's support and contribution to the Initiative in Guyana is portrayed in published outputs and deliverables, but also more generally during activities.
- d) A reassessment of the planned activities under each pillar should be done to determine whether the timeframe for the target's achievement is realistic or if changes should be made. This reassessment should be a collaborative effort between all project stakeholders.
- e) Modifications to the results matrix should consider all local factors that can affect project outputs such as bureaucratic processes delays.
- f) Create awareness and sensitization of the results framework and reinforce the required participatory approach that is necessary.
- g) In Phase 2, the issue of the timely disbursement of funds to the IPs and CSOs should be addressed with urgency since it is creating frustration for the IPs. It is unclear why the delays occur and is recommended to review whether any measures can be taken to either speed up the disbursements or otherwise clarify the processes to the IPs so they can manage their expectations.
- h) Actions should be developed to assist the government and the programme in general to address the issue of limited human resources for programme implementation and expenditure. Suggested measures could include offer support to Government for gender budgeting, including human resources; revisions of the TOR for adaptability to the Guyanese context should be considered and exitinterviews should be reviewed to identify reasons for staff loss.

- i) An examination of the RUNOs staff time assigned to the programme and the programme management requirements should be done to assess the staff ability to realistically implement the activities in a timely manner.
- j) There is a need for awareness building activities on the sustainability strategy of the programme among key stakeholders especially IPS and CSOs.
- k) The programme should consider the development of a distinct sustainability plan, using a participatory approach with all relevant stakeholders.

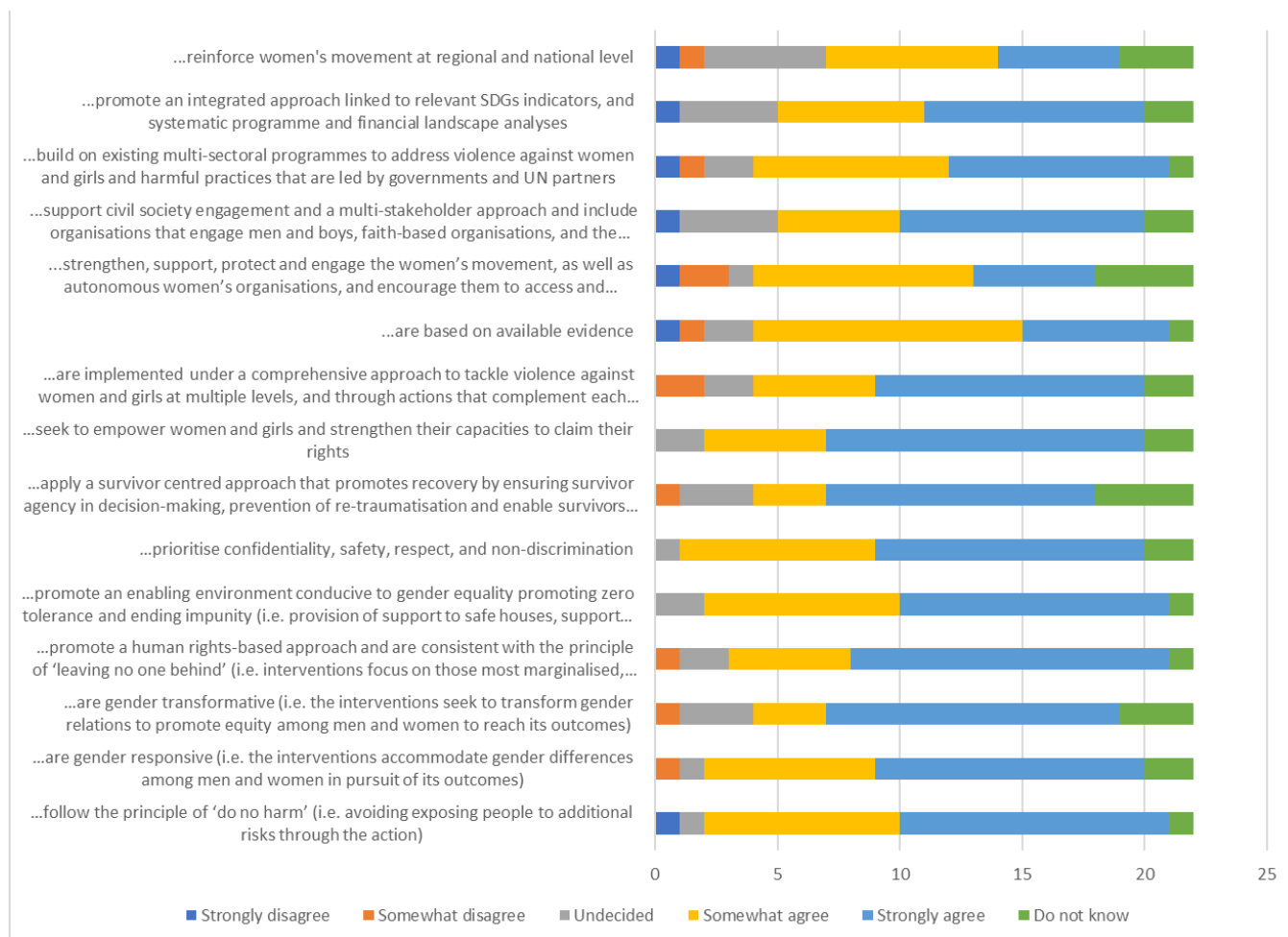
ANNEX 1: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Spotlight Initiative programme documents (essential documents)	Availability
Country Programming document as approved by OSC	Yes
Country Budget as approved by the OSC (may also include revised budget)	Yes
Spotlight Initiative Country Programme Snapshot	Yes
Inception report	Yes
Annual report (2020)	Yes
Annual Report (2021)	Yes
Annex A Country Report (included in the Annual Report)	Yes
Ad hoc (2nd Tranche) report (may also include provisional narrative report – 2 pager)	Yes
Spotlight Initiative financial information on the MPTF Gateway	Yes
Knowledge management work plan	Yes
National CSO Reference Group work plan	Yes
CSO Reference Group Bios	Yes
Communication work plan	Yes
Stories directly from the Calendar	Yes
Other documents	
Guyana 2021 Mid-year Report (2 pager)	
Guyana Country Programme Snapshot	
COVID-19 Response Plan Final 20 September 2021	
Ram, J., et al, IMPLEMENTATION: DELIVERING RESULTS TO TRANSFORM CARIBBEAN SOCIETY. Caribbean Development Bank (2017)	

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Stakeholder group	Institution / organisation	Position
European Delegation	Delegation to Guyana, for Suriname, and with responsibility for Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, Saint Barthelemy, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten	Head of Cooperation Programme Manager
Resident UN Coordinator	RCO	Resident Coordinator
RUNO	UNICEF Office for Guyana and Suriname	Country Representative Child Protection Officer Youth Crime and Violence Officer
RUNO	UNDP Guyana	Programme Analyst
RUNO	UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean	Representative MCO Caribbean Planning and Coordination Specialist
RUNO	UNFPA Caribbean Office	Liaison Officer
Spotlight Team	Programme Coordination and Implementation Unit	Programme Coordinator
Spotlight Team	Programme Coordination and Implementation Unit	M & E Specialist
Government representative	Ministry of Human Services and Social Security	SI Programme Officer
Government representative	Ministry of Education	Education Officer
CSO-NRG		Member
CSO-NRG		Member
CSO – Implementing partner	Blossom	
CSO – Implementing partner	Youth Challenge Guyana	Director
CSO – Implementing partner	Merundoi Inc.	President
CSO – Implementing partner	Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association	Executive Director
CSO – Implementing partner	Help and Shelter Guyana	President
Beneficiaries	Child Advocacy Center	
Beneficiaries	Mon Repos NDC	Council Member
Beneficiaries	Port Mourant NDC	Overseer
	Ministry of Education	Education Officer

ANNEX 3: ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES REGARDING THE ALIGNMENT OF THE PROGRAMME TO THE SPOTLIGHT PRINCIPLES



ANNEX 4: Stakeholder participation in design, implementation and monitoring

