

Spotlight Mid-term Assessment Report Using ROM Review

Type of ROM review **Projects and Programmes**

Project title **Spotlight Initiative to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls, Vanuatu**

Project reference

EU Delegation in charge **EU Pacific**

Key information				
Domain (instrument)	Region			
DAC Sector	Human and Social Development: « Gender Equality »			
Zone Benefitting from the Action	Vanuatu			
Type of Project/Programme	Geographic			
Geographic Implementation	Single-country			
Contracting Party	SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE			
EU contribution	USD \$2,475,000			
Project Implementation Dates	Start Date	01.01.2020	End Date	31.12.2021 ¹
ROM expert(s) name(s)	Jen Bowtell			
Field phase	Start Date	06.09.2021	End Date	15.11.2021

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	0
Partner country government	8	3
UN agencies	5	2
CSO reference group	2	1
Implementing partners	4	5
Final Beneficiaries	4 (FGDs)	0
Other	0	2
Regional Programme Interviews (Transcripts by the Regional MTA Expert)	5	
Total	29	13

Key documents ²	Number
Essential documents	8
Other documents	0

¹ A six-month no-cost extension to June 2022 has been agreed

² Please consult Annex 1 for details on essential documents and other documents.

Abbreviations

CSE	Comprehensive sexuality education
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSO RG	Civil Society Organisation Reference Group
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Australia
DSPPAC	Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination, Gov. of Vanuatu
DWA	Department of Women's Affairs, Government of Vanuatu
EUD	EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu
EVAWG	Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls
FLE	Family Life Education
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
IP	Implementing Partner
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
MoJCS	Ministry of Justice and Community Services, Government of Vanuatu
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training, Government of Vanuatu
MoH	Ministry of Health, Government of Vanuatu
MoYSD	Ministry of Youth, and Sport Development, Government of Vanuatu
NYC	National Youth Council
PDD	Project Design Document
RC	(UN) Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RUNO	Recipient UN Organisation
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
VFHA	Vanuatu Family Health Association
VNSO	Vanuatu National Statistics Office
VWC	Vanuatu Women's Centre

A. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

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

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

As per the Terms of Reference, the MTA uses the EU Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) methodology as an approach to ensure that the results are comparable (across countries) and easy to interpret. However, the questions to be answered for the MTA are different from standard ROM methodology questions and were agreed in advance by the EU and the Spotlight Secretariat. The 14 MTA questions are grouped by Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability, which form the main headings of the report.

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

Table 1. Grading criteria

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 that 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 that are so serious that, if not addressed, they may lead to the 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 Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu

The Spotlight Initiative commenced in January 2020 and was officially launched by the Prime Minister of Vanuatu on October 20th, 2020. While the majority of Implementing Partners are based in Vanuatu's capital, Port Vila, many of the Spotlight activities aim to be implemented on a national scale across the 6 provinces of Vanuatu.

The implementation of the Spotlight Initiative has been affected by a complex set of compounding factors. In March 2020, the Government of Vanuatu declared a State of Emergency due to COVID-19 in the region. In the midst of the COVID-19 emergency, the Category 5 Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold made landfall in Vanuatu in April 2020, displacing over 18,000 people and affecting more than half of the country's population. The double disaster required the Government of Vanuatu and key partners to shift focus across this period to respond to the effects of the cyclone and prepare for a potential outbreak and community

transmission of COVID-19 in Vanuatu. The direct impact of the cyclone and the implications of the global COVID-19 pandemic imposed programmatic and operational challenges that resulted in challenges for a timely programme set up. The planned DHS/MICS was postponed because of the COVID-19 response and planned activities in the health sector and in schools were delayed as the pandemic response and reconstruction after the cyclone were prioritised. Travel restrictions affected Spotlight staffing and access to technical support, with a high level of staff turnover and long periods of vacancy of key positions in the Vanuatu and Regional Programme. The decision by the Government of Vanuatu to abolish the Ministry of Justice and Community Services, a key strategic partner for the Spotlight Initiative, also created challenges for the implementation of key activities.

Phase 1 of the Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu has recently been granted a 6-month no-cost extension to June 30th, 2022.

Methodological approach

The MTA involved a combination of three methodological approaches: Qualitative data collection (Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)), an Online Survey and a document review. The response rate to the survey was only 13/45 (29%) which was below the minimum target of 50% for a quantitative analysis of Likert tables and ranking scores. Narrative answers to survey questions were, however, included in the qualitative analysis together with KII transcripts and FGD protocols.

For the qualitative data collection, information was collected in individual and group interviews of 29 key informants from 20 stakeholder groups including eight government institutions, six CSOs (including members of the CSO Reference Group (CSO RG)), four recipient UN organisations (RUNOs), the Spotlight Initiative Team and the EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu. Among the interviewed stakeholder 23 were female (79%) and six male (21%). Four FGDs were conducted among the following groups: Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) peer educators (Vatu Mauri Consortium Grant Recipient), female participants of the Famili I Redi Labour mobility training (IOM), Master Trainers of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Family Life Education (FLE) in-school curriculum (UNFPA), and community facilitators of the Child Protection Community Facilitation Package (UNICEF).

Data collection for the MTA took place in Port Vila with zoom calls to Suva, Fiji.

Limitations and measures taken

Because of the low response rate, a quantitative analysis of the on-line survey could not be done. Performance monitoring data were only available up to December 2020 and provided no information on progress against indicators

Stakeholders for KIIs and FGDs were identified by the contracting RUNO, presenting a potential selection bias.

Narrative survey responses were included in the qualitative analysis.

The evaluation question 7 could not be answered because of missing data. This section will be updated in the second quarter of 2022 upon receipt of quality assured data from the Spotlight Secretariat.

Responses of all interviewed stakeholders as well as narrative responses of survey participants were triangulated in the analysis, thereby mitigating any potential selection bias.

Programmes reaching end-beneficiaries were in preparation or early implementation, too early to collect meaningful feedback from end-beneficiaries.

The data collection phase ended on November 15th, 2021. In its feedback to the draft report, the Spotlight Initiative Country Team provided information on activities and developments after this date.

Data were collected in FGDs with intermediate beneficiaries such as community facilitators, trainers, and peer educators.

Information provided for activities and developments after data collection had ended could not be considered in the report.

B. RELEVANCE

1. Does the action align to the principles of the Spotlight Initiative as listed in the Spotlight Initiative Fund TORs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good - Good <input type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>Programme Design</p> <p>The National Programme design phase provided a valuable space for individual and group stakeholder consultations that enabled the identification of key national and organisational priorities in the programming of activities aiming to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG). The consultation phase was able to identify existing structures, programmes, activities and stakeholders that worked across the space and highlighted possible overlap and opportunities for collaboration. Activities were designed in collaboration with Vanuatu government stakeholders and representatives of national Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). They closely considered the local context as demonstrated by activities that align with national policies, strategies and action plans, including the National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030 and the National Gender Equality Policy 2020-2030. The European Union (EU) Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu provided meaningful contributions during the design phase which was highlighted as critical to limit duplication with parallel existing actions from a donor perspective. Interviewed stakeholders, however, noted that the engagement of the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) in the national design phase was limited.</p> <p>The timeframe provided for conducting and completing the consultations and programme design was identified as a significant challenge, with limited time to collate consultation findings and confirm planned activities with government and implementing partners (IPs). This resulted in a delay in early implementation, with further consultations and strengthening of relationships required after the initial design of the programme before implementation was able to begin. The limited timeframe for programme design limited the types of activities RUNOs could develop under Spotlight, with some opting to move ahead with projects and activities that were already in their programme rather than looking for opportunities to innovate.</p> <p>Existing programmes and activities promoting gender equality and/or addressing violence against women and girls were identified during the design phase and documented in the Project Design Document (PDD), but there is limited evidence that they were considered in the design, and that opportunities for partnership, collaboration or reduced overlap were pursued with key initiatives, for instance the DFAT funded <i>Stretem Rod Blong Jastis mo Sefti</i> programme. Stakeholders also reported that there were only limited consultations among RUNOs and implementing partners during efforts to re-design the programme in response to COVID-19 and to the emergency situation following TC Harold.</p> <p>While there is evidence that the Spotlight Initiative, the multi-donor funded Pacific Partnership to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) led by UN Women, and the UNFPA Transformative Agenda Programme worked together in the design and planning phase, interview respondents noted that there was a continued need to maintain and further develop</p>	

collaboration and complementarity between these programmes. The Spotlight Initiative and the Pacific Partnership work in a common space and pursue several common pathways in their respective Theory of Change (ToC). While this was seen as an opportunity to create synergies, respondents also noted that it sometimes generated confusion among implementing partners as well as risk of duplication. Vanuatu was added to the Pacific Partnership Programme in 2019. Stakeholders reported that consultations for the Spotlight Initiative and the Pacific Partnership in Vanuatu were carried out at the same time and that key partners in the EVAWG space including the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) and the Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) were therefore reduced in their capacity to engage with the Spotlight Initiative. Both government and the EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu highlight a need for more clarity about activities supported by these UN-led initiatives.

It should be noted, however, that strengthening of Spotlight and the Pacific Partnership's collaboration has started to take shape through the monthly technical Coherence meetings; joint reporting through the National Gender Policy Strategic Areas; collaborative work between UNFPA and UN Women (Spotlight and Pacific Partnerships) on strengthening capacities and developing of Administrative data systems; convening of the CS-NRG covering the broader EVAW programming and joint updating of the CS-NRG; and adoption of a single and broader EVAW coordination framework led by the Director General of Ministry of Women.

Alignment to Spotlight Initiative Principles

The Country Programme Document is well aligned with the Spotlight principles, with a range of innovative activities that aim to address current gaps in Vanuatu's systematic infrastructure to address violence against women and girls. The Spotlight Initiative aims to address the issue holistically, using strategic pillars to include multiple institutions across sectors.

Gender Transformative, Human Rights-Based and Inclusive

There is evidence of strategies and activities that are gender transformative, gender-inclusive and gender-sensitive across the programme. Interventions utilise a range of modalities with a strong focus on education and training for youth and community members, health care workers and other key service providers on gender rights, sexual reproductive health, child protection and response to gender-based violence (GBV). Many activities include women, men, girls and boys and aim to implement systems that will result in a long-term change in attitude, knowledge and behaviour. Examples include the CSE Family Life Education (FLE) curriculum for both in-school and out-of-school youth which aims to strengthen education on gender-based-rights and sexual health to shift attitudes among girls and boys at a transitional age, as well as in the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the health sector to improve the support for female survivors of gender-based violence and to strengthen the referral processes.

Many of the activities carried out under the Spotlight programme demonstrated a human-rights based approach, with examples such as the Public Prosecution Office's development of a Victims' Charter which aims to increase the rights afforded to victims of domestic abuse, and UNICEF's Child Protection Community Facilitation Package which aims to empower community members with knowledge and understanding of children's rights.

There is evidence across activities of a ‘leave no-one behind’ approach, with some reference to including people with disabilities, people of the LGBTQI community, as well as survivors of violence in consultations, planning and activity design. While most government-led activities had the scope or capacity to reach out across provinces, it proved more difficult to engage CSOs that were able to work outside the island of Efate, resulting in potentially missed opportunities to engage with rural communities across Vanuatu.

Key findings:

- The time allocated to programme design and consultation was too short and restricted creative design of activities, as well as fully achieving government consensus and collaboration by key stakeholders.
- Programme activities are well designed and reflect the Spotlight Initiative Principles. They are context-specific, mostly gender-transformative, and generally adopt a human-rights-based approach.
- Consultations among other large EVAWG programmes during the design phase were limited to two programmes managed by UNFPA and UN Women but did not include the DFAT-funded *Stretem Rod Blong Jastis* programme working in the law and justice sector. After the design phase, ongoing collaborations among programmes were limited, resulting in missed opportunities for renewed or new partnerships and limited the avoidance of duplication.

Recommendations:

1. During the programme extension period, the RCO and UNFPA, as the Vanuatu Coordination and Technical Coherence Lead, should facilitate a follow-up consultation that re-engages existing and new programmes or partners working in the EVAWG space before planning a possible Phase 2, to identify opportunities for collaboration, learning and reduced duplication.
2. The RCO and UNFPA should continue to work with UN Women to develop concrete strategies to better align the Spotlight Initiative and the Pacific Partnership activities. This could involve the National Steering Committee and the CSO Reference Group, and it could include the development of integrated reporting mechanisms to government and programme donors.

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

☒ Very Good - Good

☐ Problems

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

☐ Serious deficiencies

The Spotlight Programme in Vanuatu is implemented by four RUNOs: UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, and IOM. There is no evidence of overlap or duplication among the activities of the four agencies, and they jointly have the expertise to manage the agreed programme.

Table 2. Agreed Division of Labour for the Spotlight Initiative

Outcome / Pillar	Lead Agency	Focus of activities	Partners	% Budget
1. Laws and Policies	UNDP	Development of Victims' Charter	PPO	2%
2. Institutions	IOM	GBV guidelines in emergency response	NDMO	10%
3. Prevention	UNFPA	CSE (FLE) in schools & out of schools	MoET	38%
	UNICEF	Child Online Protection	MoJCS	
	UNICEF	Child Protection Community Facilitation Package	MoYSD	
	IOM	Famili I Redi Labour Mobility Training	Dep Labour	
4. Services	UNDP	Renovation of victim support centre	PPO	25%
	UNFPA	SOPs for GBV referral in Health Centres	MoH	
5. Data	UNFPA	GBV administrative data systems	VNSO	12%
6. Women's Movement	UNDP	Small grants to CSO	Mixed	11%

UNFPA is the Technical Coherence Lead on the Spotlight initiative in Vanuatu and, in addition, is responsible for Spotlight activities on the curriculum for Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), health service delivery, and administrative data systems. UNFPA is well placed to support these activities, with extensive experience, existing partnerships, and activities with key stakeholders.

While UNFPA has the technical staff required to implement the Spotlight activities, COVID-19 related limitations have created challenges in accessing this expertise in-country. Gaps in locally based staff throughout the project had significant implications for the implementation of activities and technical coherence across the national programme. With a new staff member recently appointed to this role, UNFPA is now making renewed progress and appears to now have sufficient capacity to drive the allocated activities and support the overall coherence of the programme. The recruitment of local consultants working directly within the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and Ministry of Health (MoH) has been critical in driving activities forward, but there is an evident gap for in-country support to achieve activities under Pillar 5.

UNICEF has extensive experience in the delivery of programmes in the areas of health, nutrition, WASH, education, and child protection, and is building on existing activities under the Spotlight Initiative on Community-based Child Protection and Child Online Protection.

UNICEF is well resourced in terms of human capacity both in-country and regionally, although staff are required to manage Spotlight activities alongside with other UNICEF programmes. The recruitment of local consultants working directly within the Ministry of Youth and Sport Development (MoYSD) and Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS) has been critical in providing sufficient human resources to government partners for implementation of activities.

UNDP has experience in supporting law reform and in managing grants within the region, however, the travel restrictions imposed by COVID-19 have severely limited the human resource capacity of the team to utilise this expertise in-country. UNDP is supporting the development of a 'victims' charter' and the renovation of a support centre for survivors of violence with the Public Prosecutions Office (PPO), as well as for the management of CSO small grants.

UNDP has faced major challenges in terms of human resourcing in-country, with no active locally based staff. The current model and budget do not enable the recruitment of a full-time staff dedicated to Spotlight activities, and staff that are supporting remotely are required to support Spotlight activities as well as managing other donor-funded programmes. UNDP's plan to second core staff and consultant advisers to be on the ground in Vanuatu could not be executed due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions. While there appears to be a good working relationship between remote staff, the PPO and some of the small CSO grant holders, there is a visible need for additional support on the ground for the grassroots grantees that may lack the capacity, confidence, and experience to work online with remote advisors. UNDP is unlikely to address this need adequately without in-country resources. Regardless of this situation, significant progress and results have been recorded in the work of partners on the ground.

IOM brings experience and expertise in human rights-based support systems in the context of migration and displacement. The agency has demonstrated strong linkages with relevant partners including the Department of Labour (DoL) and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) and has worked well in adapting activities based on the contextual needs of the government partners. IOM has been able to source the technical expertise required to adequately support the Labour Mobility Training and the development of GBV Guidelines in Emergency Response under the Spotlight Initiative.

While IOM has demonstrated expertise and experience, the agency has faced severe challenges in human resourcing for Spotlight Initiatives, with the 18% budget cap for programme management placing significant strain on effective staff management. The cap has resulted in staff turnover and the inability to allocate Spotlight activities to existing IOM staff, instead requiring out-sourcing to consultants. IOM informants noted that the office had the human resources to implement the Spotlight activities but not sufficient budgetary flexibility to make effective use of them.

RUNO respondents commented that the absence of UN Women among the RUNOs in the Vanuatu Programme was unusual, given the high level of expertise and engagement of this UN agency in the response to VAWG in the Pacific. It was apparently due to the agency's commitment to the Pacific Partnership in Vanuatu. UN Women is engaged as a strategic partner with the role of linking activities under the Spotlight Initiative with the Pacific Partnership to ensure complementarity and alignment. This MTA was unable to interview UN Women in Vanuatu, and therefore is not well placed to comment on the effectiveness of this coordination role.

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

RUNO collaboration

There is evidence of strong RUNO collaboration at certain periods across the Spotlight Initiative; however, the difficult circumstances brought on by COVID-19, TC Harold and staffing have left evident gaps in consistent inter-agency partnership. RUNOs collaborated well in the design phase of the programme, facilitated by the Technical Coherence Lead for Vanuatu engaged by UNFPA. However, the position fell vacant in mid-2020 and a replacement was only found in July 2021. In the absence of this role for an extended period, RUNOs were unable to take advantage of the intended design under the UN reform and returned to working in silos on their allocated activities.

Coordination was invigorated by the appointments of a new Technical Coherence Lead by UNFPA in Vanuatu and a new Spotlight Coordinator in the Suva RCO in mid-2021. There is now evidence of growing collaboration and communication between RUNOs. A fortnightly meeting is organised between the RCO and Vanuatu RUNOs, led by the UNFPA Technical Coherence Lead and UN Women, bringing together actors under Spotlight and Pacific Partnership. There is also a shared online activity calendar that identified activities planned under both Programmes. These systems have demonstrated a positive change to information sharing and planning among RUNOs.

RUNOs have identified a desire to further strengthen this relationship and explore more opportunities for collaboration and sharing of expertise, while also aiming for more collaboration in the standardisation of M&E tools and communication platforms. There is some evidence of partnership in implementation across RUNOs and in some cases, across programmes, linking Spotlight activities with those supported by the Pacific Partnership.

RUNOs support the envisaged concept of the UN System reform and see opportunities to increase effectiveness. Some suggest that without sufficient human resources and dedicated staff it is difficult to take advantage and fully participate effectively in the coordination process.

RUNOs and RCO

RUNOs express a positive relationship with the RCO team in Suva. The position of the Spotlight Programme Coordinator fell vacant for more than three months in 2020 but a new appointment just prior to the MTA has improved information flow and strengthened relationships. Agencies report high responsiveness and flexibility from the RCO, and generally feel well supported in any required changes in activities. However, some respondents also mentioned that they had repeatedly raised issues with the RCO without receiving a timely response.

Key findings:

- UN agencies are well placed to implement the Spotlight activities with adequate technical expertise and existing partnerships with government departments and key implementing agencies.
- While technically equipped, all RUNOs have struggled with limited human resource capacity which has been particularly difficult due to travel restrictions and the 18% budget limit for administrative costs.

- Collaboration and coordination among RUNOs have been dependent on the presence of a Technical Coherence Lead in Vanuatu and a Programme Coordinator in Suva, both positions that were vacant for extended periods.

Recommendations:

3. The Spotlight Programme Coordinator in collaboration with the Technical Coherence Lead should facilitate consultations among RUNOs to identify strategies for improved coordination, communication and collaboration and result in long-term strengthened partnerships beyond the Spotlight Initiative.
4. The Spotlight Secretariat and the EU should review the budget ceiling for administrative costs to enable RUNOs to mobilise sufficient human resources for the effective implementation of the Initiative during the 6 month no-cost extension period and a possible Phase 2.

3. Does the action presently respond to the needs of the target groups / end beneficiaries? Are the necessary consultations taking place with key stakeholders?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Very Good - Good <input type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>The initial design of Spotlight activities brought together national and local representatives of government, UN organisations and CSO representatives to map out critical gaps and needs in the GBV and EAWG sector to inform the programme design and subsequent Spotlight activities in Vanuatu. Government and implementing partners (IPs) have since worked closely with relevant RUNOs to redesign or adjust planned activities based on the context and challenges that emerged in 2020, including COVID-19 and TC Harold.</p> <p>Many of the Spotlight activities are designed to be transformative in nature, often looking at implementing new or improved systems, policies, and mechanisms to produce substantive and sustainable change. In Vanuatu, implementation of EAWG activities requires extensive groundwork to develop relevant relationships, build capacity and integrate new systems before outputs can reach end-beneficiaries. At this point, there are a limited number of activities that are reaching end-beneficiaries, making it difficult to access feedback at the current stage of implementation. A key example is the development of the CSE (FLE) curriculum³, which has required extensive work at a regional and national level to gain support for the overarching concept, time to develop the curriculum itself, and from there to equip educators with the content to pass on to the students. While feedback mechanisms for CSE (FLE) could be improved, it should be noted that some efforts have been established, including the (1) CSE (FLE) committee which is a multisectoral mechanism charged with oversight, implementation guidance, and tool development, as well as the (2) the GBV SOPs approach on trainings, which involves practicums at the health facility level as mechanisms for feedback.</p>	

³ The Vanuatu MoET chose to use the term 'Family Life Education (FLE)' as more culturally appropriate than the term 'Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)' used by the Spotlight Programme.

For activities that are actively engaging the end beneficiaries, there is limited evidence of feedback being collected and utilised for adjustments or future decision-making. IOM's Famili I Redi programme conducts a pre-and post-test after each training which offers basic quantitative feedback on the content uptake, however, there appears to be space for more substantive qualitative data collection to correlate and strengthen the findings. There are additional opportunities to improve beneficiary feedback mechanisms, including through the Child Protection Community Facilitation Package (CP-CFP) activities implemented by MoYSD, as well as beneficiaries of the CSO small grant recipients. Mechanisms and tools for feedback from intermediary implementing agents have been developed or were under development at the time of the MTA. The training practicums on GBV SOPs for health workers at facility level generate direct feedback on the understanding and relevance of the SOPs in the context of the Vanuatu health sector. In addition, a multisectoral committee provides feedback to UNFPA on emerging issues in the development of the CSE (FLE) curriculum.

There is little evidence of implementing agencies feeding back relevant information to beneficiaries at this stage.

Key findings:

- Although it was too early to collect the views of end-beneficiaries in the MTA, the activities under the Spotlight Initiative appear to respond to their needs. For many activities, extensive foundational work is required to reach end-beneficiaries. There is, however, only limited evidence that adequate feedback mechanisms for end-beneficiaries have been or are being established.

Recommendations:

- RUNOs and IPs should review current feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries to identify opportunities and develop approaches for strengthening the information collected and exchanged with end-beneficiaries and intermediary implementing partners.

4. Do all key stakeholders still demonstrate effective commitment (ownership) and deliver accordingly?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good - Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu</p> <p>The EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu is committed to the completion of the Spotlight Initiative Phase 1, including the no-cost extension, but respondents noted that funding for Phase 2 will depend on the outcome of the MTA. EU stakeholders had mixed views about the use of the 'new way of collaboration' under the Spotlight Initiative for driving the UN Reform process.</p> <p>UN Agencies</p> <p>All RUNOs demonstrate a strong commitment to the Spotlight activities and despite facing several setbacks, have made a concerted effort and considerable progress on restructured</p>	

workplans. RUNOs have contributed significant resources to the Spotlight Initiative, including staff time, technical expertise and administrative support beyond the expenditures accounted for in the Initiative's management and administrative budget.

Government

The Spotlight Initiative was launched by the Prime Minister of Vanuatu, reaffirming political will and commitment to the programme and its overarching goals. Government is also well represented in the Spotlight National Steering Committee with high-level officials of relevant Ministries including the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), Ministry of Youth and Sports Development (MoYSD), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA), Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS) and the Department of Women's Affairs (DWA). However, at the time of implementation of the MTA, the Committee had only met once in late 2020, making it difficult to confirm if this commitment remains. A second Steering Committee was scheduled for November 2021. As this was past the data collection period of the MTA, information about the process and outcome of this meeting was not available for inclusion in this report.

Across the Spotlight Initiative, the majority of government partners demonstrate effective commitment and ownership of activities. Government departments were consulted in the design phase of the programme with most activities designed to align with existing national policies or strategic work plans. In most instances, government partners highlight that Spotlight has enabled them to prioritise tasks that were already planned and has provided resources and opportunities to extend the scope and effectiveness of activities.

The insertion of Spotlight Initiative consultants into government departments has been a critical strategy in moving forward and ensuring government has sufficient resources to implement Spotlight Initiative activities. It was noted by the government respondents that without these consultants or the Spotlight funding, it is unlikely that activities would be able to continue at the same level of engagement. For activities where a consultant has not been employed, there is often a gap in capacity and activity progress is lacking. This is particularly evident for the Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) and the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), although the delays with the NDMO are also heavily attributed to the State of Emergency due to both COVID-19 and TC Harold. There is also a gap in the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO) in terms of capacity and experience in the rollout of community consultations, which could potentially be assisted by a locally based consultant.

The MoET, MoJCS, MoH, MoYSD, PPO and Department of Labour (DoL) all demonstrate ongoing or renewed commitment to their activities, despite severe challenges faced in 2020. COVID-19 and TC Harold have been significant barriers to government engagement and prioritisation of Spotlight activities, particularly for the MoH and NDMO. The MoJCS commitment has also been impacted by the Government's wavering plans to dissolve the Ministry, resulting in a change of leadership and general internal instability.

Interviewed government stakeholders stated that they can adapt and change activities as needed and that RUNOs are flexible and supportive. Informants from one government department, however, mentioned that despite alignment with government policy, Spotlight activities are still largely driven by the respective RUNO and there is a need for greater

ownership and agency for government partners. It was suggested that for true ownership, government must be given the space to lead activities and their implementation, with RUNOs providing support only if and where required.

While most government departments demonstrate effective commitment to Spotlight activities, there are still some gaps. The Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VSNO) has minimal clarity on Spotlight and the activities the Office is engaged in under the Initiative. There is also evidence to suggest that the Spotlight activities outlined for the VSNO were not formally agreed upon and are not in line with the department's priorities.

The Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) was not included as a recipient of the Spotlight grant due to existing activities under the Pacific Partnership. In interviews, representatives of the DWA noted that the Department had received minimal communications regarding Spotlight activities and identified a need for better collaboration to ensure that activities are well aligned to the Pacific Partnership, the National Gender Equality Policy and other EVAWG programmes and initiatives. Information received by the MTA team after data collection had completed indicate that progress was made at the second NSC meeting. This could however, not be verified.

Civil Society

All CSOs that received funding through the Spotlight Initiative demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing assigned activities. The two CSO grantees interviewed were positive about the Spotlight Initiative, with activities making good progress and an indication that they were generally well supported by the UNDP team.

The Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA) demonstrates commitment to assigned activities but is restricted in progress towards implementation. A breakdown in communication and delays in finalising the programme has prevented the VFHA from actioning the logistical implementation.

The Vanuatu Women's Centre (VWC) was not included under the Spotlight grant given commitments made under the Pacific Partnership. As one of the central CSOs working on EVAWG in Vanuatu, there appears to be a need to better engage VWC to leverage its technical expertise and ensure activities are coherent with existing referral processes and EVAWG strategies. There is an evident need and demand to engage VWC in the CSO Reference Group.

Representatives of the Civil Society Organisation Reference Group (CSO RG) see potential and value in the group but feel that the mechanism is not functioning effectively, which is restricting their commitment and engagement. There is no budget allocated to the CSO RG, placing limitations on its role and how members are engaged. While one RUNO suggested a need for sitting fees, both interviewed CSO RG members would prefer the commitment to remain unpaid but insist on a clear structure and purpose, improved communication and planning and the inclusion of the VWC in the committee to strengthen the mechanism. Information received by the MTA team after the period of data collection indicates that these issues were addressed in the first meeting of the CSO RG held in November 2022. This information could, however, not be verified.

Key findings:

- The EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu, UN agencies, government departments and CSO IPs are committed to the Spotlight Initiative despite challenges experienced in Phase 1.
- Activities supported by Spotlight are well aligned with government priorities, are supported by high-level national decision-makers, and are generally well integrated into relevant government departments to ensure locally led implementation. However, the Spotlight National Steering Committee had only met once (in 2020) at the time data were collected for the MTA in October 2021, and some interviewed government informants felt that that Spotlight activities were fundamentally UN-led and that government should be further empowered to lead and own the activities.
- Interviewed stakeholders identified the non-involvement in the Vanuatu Spotlight Programme of the Department of Women's Affairs on the government side and of the Vanuatu Women's Centre on the CSO side as a major weakness.
- The poor functioning of the CSO Reference Group is limiting the commitment and engagement of members.

Recommendations:

6. During the extension of Phase 1, the Programme Coordinator together with RUNO partners in Vanuatu should explore ways for a stronger implication of the Vanuatu Department of Women's Affairs in a possible Phase 2 programme.
7. The RCO and RUNOs should review the structure and systems of the CSO Reference Group, review the membership and consider including a representative of the VWC, as well as consider allocating a budget to support CSO RG functioning.

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 in line with the ToC?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good - Good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problems <input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>Theory of Change</p> <p>The Theory of Change (ToC) is well developed and adequately covers the six outcome areas, with a specific ToC designed for each outcome under the relevant Pillar. Assumptions are meaningful and relevant and align well with the defined activities. The main challenge with the ToC is its ambitious nature in terms of expected outcomes within a relatively short timeframe. It is also noted that the Spotlight ToC has similarities with that of the Pacific Partnership, and that some informants raised concerns about duplication.</p> <p>M&E</p> <p>The global results indicators present some issues in adequately tracking progress and implementation. Some RUNO informants have praised the high-level nature of the global indicators and feel that reporting based on outcomes provides flexibility at the implementation</p>	

stage. One informant felt that relevant indicators were well designed and captured meaningful results that extend past basic head counting of participation. Others, however, mentioned that the global indicators were not well adapted for the Pacific and Vanuatu context, and failed to consider the lower level of institutional capacity and progress to date within the EVAWG space, particularly when compared to other countries in the global Spotlight Programme.

All RUNOs expressed concern that the global indicators are not able to capture the various milestones and activity outputs that have been achieved. The global indicators are designed to capture long-term transformation which is difficult to measure across the relatively short span of the programme and in many instances requires a much larger timeframe to produce measurable changes for end-beneficiaries. For example, under Pillar 5 the number of reports that are generated from the new administrative data systems are monitored. The indicator, however, fails to consider the extensive process required to emplace these systems and strengthen the mechanisms that will enable improved data administration before reports can be developed.

RUNO respondents expressed concerns that despite considerable progress, achievements are not captured by the current M&E framework, and that additional narrative is required to ensure progress is adequately captured. IOM respondents indicated that there is no indicator to capture one of its core activities, the development of GBV guidelines in emergency response. RUNOs indicate that these issues have been raised repeatedly with no clear resolution from the RCO or Spotlight Team.

Most RUNOs have indicated that they have developed their own internal, refined M&E mechanisms that are typically framed around implementation milestones to better track progress. There are plans to host a training on reporting requirements and harmonising of data at outcome level.

There is a lack of clarity around the M&E frameworks established for government and IPs. The MTA found only limited evidence of structured mechanisms and reporting requirements for activities to be fed back to RUNOs. However, it is understood that Spotlight consultants placed in government ministries are responsible for this and have made progress in developing M&E systems and overseeing ongoing data collection. The MTA did not find any evidence of structured M&E requirements for CSO grantees of funding under Pillar 6.

Respondents of the EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu noted that information generated with the use of current monitoring tools does not always present an accurate picture of implementation and narrative reports often failed to adequately highlight bottlenecks and challenges that needed to be addressed.

Key findings:

- The Theory of Change is well developed and aligns closely with the defined activities but is ambitious in terms of expected outcomes within a relatively short timeframe.
- The indicators of the global results monitoring framework do not adequately track progress and accurately document implementation to date.

- There is limited clarity about M&E requirements and frameworks for government and CSO IPs.

Recommendations:

8. The RCO, RUNOs and the EU Delegation should jointly review current M&E challenges and agree on a harmonised complementary reporting framework that aligns with the global indicators but enables RUNOs to report on refined milestones.
9. The RUNOs should work with government partners, IPs and CSO grant recipients to review and define practical, effective reporting and M&E requirements.

<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>
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Before COVID-19 / TC Harold

A risk assessment was undertaken during programme design. Understandably, while it acknowledged that natural disasters or pandemics may present a risk, the analysis was unable to predict the severity of the impact that these events would have on Spotlight activities. While it is not expected that the programme design team would be able to predict and plan for these types of unprecedented challenges, the proposed mitigation measures do not appear to be adequate. The possible diversion of funds and resources to respond to disasters or pandemics was identified as a risk, but the proposed counterstrategy fails to address this, instead focusing on strategies to respond to the emergencies. This said it is unlikely that even the most comprehensive risk matrix would have been able to predict and provide appropriate mitigation strategies for such a complex set of circumstances without the gift of hindsight.

The double disaster of COVID-19 and TC Harold had an enormous impact on the Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu and has resulted in significant delays in the rollout of implementation. Vanuatu has now been under a State of Emergency (SOE) for over 18 months, with key government departments required to divert their full attention and resources to respond to the immediate cyclone response and COVID-19 prevention and containment. RUNOs, government agencies and IPs have all faced challenges in terms of recruitment and allocation of human resources with technical expertise and regional staff unable to travel into the country and a high level of staff turnover due to instability.

There is some evidence of delays in the first few months before the COVID-19 pandemic and TC Harold, as the design phase failed to finalise and confirm Spotlight activities with government departments, requiring additional consultations and efforts to establish

partnerships at the beginning of the implementation phase. These risks were accounted for in the risk matrix and do appear to have adequate corresponding mitigating strategies, however, it does not appear that these were effectively utilised, presumably due to the coexisting challenges faced by the programme.

After COVID-19/ TC Harold

While considerably reduced, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect the Spotlight Initiative in Vanuatu. Staff of the MoH are overstretched and the ministries' key focus remains on the control of COVID-19. Equally, the NDMO remains at the helm of the State of Emergency with extremely limited capacity from upper management to engage in Spotlight. Other activities such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) planned by VSNO for 2021 are delayed due to the rollout of vaccinations. Access to technical expertise and in-country support remains limited for RUNOs with ongoing restrictions on inwards travel.

COVID-19 response plans were developed and discussed with the RCO and EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu and integrated into individual work plans for RUNOs and IPs. RUNOs have been able to reprogramme and adjust activities to align with government priorities, while also leveraging new and emerging opportunities, for example through the bolstered Australian Labour Mobility Programme, which has effectively linked to IOM's GBV prevention training. The insertion of local consultants into relevant ministries has proven to be an effective strategy to mitigate limited government capacity and drive activities forward.

There are also examples of leveraging activities implemented in the response to TC Harold to accelerate and streamline the implementation of Spotlight activities. An example was documented in the Vanuatu Spotlight Annual Report 2020, with the engagement of local youth volunteers, through youth networks of the MoYSD, who were mobilised for the emergency response and were later oriented towards the community-based child protection programme in SANMA province.

Going forward, there is still a high risk of COVID-19 further affecting Spotlight activities. Community transmission and lock-down in Vanuatu over the next 6 months is still a possibility that would place a significant additional delay on the implementation of activities. Vanuatu is also now preparing for the upcoming cyclone season, with early forecast predictions indicating the high chance of cyclones in the region over the next five months. There is no clear response plan developed to mitigate challenges in these scenarios.

Key findings:

- A comprehensive risk assessment was completed in the design phase of the Spotlight programme but could not predict the severity of the impact of TC Harold and the COVID-19 pandemic which significantly delayed implementation. The pandemic continues to affect the Spotlight programme, primarily by limiting access to technical expertise and staffing in-country and by diverting the focus of government partners towards epidemic control measures and the disaster response.

- The RCO and EUD worked with RUNOs to reprogramme and update workplans. RUNOs have adjusted activities to align with current government priorities, while also leveraging new and emerging opportunities related to the emergency response.
- There is still a high risk of COVID-19 community transmission and potential lock-down in Vanuatu over the next six months that would cause significant additional delays in the implementation of programme activities.

Recommendations:

10. RUNOs should work with government agencies and IPs in developing an up-to-date COVID-19 response plan that identifies mitigation strategies should a lockdown be implemented in Vanuatu.

C. EFFECTIVENESS

<p>7. To what extent has progress towards output targets been achieved? Is the quality of the outputs satisfactory?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Very Good – Good
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> Serious deficiencies
<p>Achievement of results against the approved workplan</p> <p>According to the global performance monitoring data provided to the MTA by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, the Vanuatu programme monitors and reports against 21 indicators at the outcome and output level. They are aligned with the nine outputs included in the approved workplan. This question focuses on a quantitative review of progress against output targets. Qualitative information on progress of activities for each outcome were collected in interviews and are presented in response to question 8.</p> <p>We have analysed progress against the results framework for 2020 (Year 1) and 2021 (Year 2) - obtained from the SMART platform through the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. Delays in the early stages of implementation have led to an underachievement of outputs in 2020. For the first year of the programme, the available performance data for 2020 shows that the majority of milestone targets were set to “zero”. Consequently, there are limited milestones and progress to report for the output indicators, outcome indicators and sub-indicators.</p> <p>The analysis otherwise reveals a particularly limited progress across outcomes in 2020, which is not surprising, given the delays mentioned above (see question 6). In 2021, achievement of results improved, especially under Outcomes 2 and 6 where at least 70% of the outputs were achieved. Conversely, the milestones achieved for Outcome 4 and 5 remained below 30%.</p> <p>Graphs 4 and 5 below summarise for each result the percentage of outcome and output indicators that were fully achieved (green), ongoing (more than 50% achieved, yellow) and not achieved (less than 50% achieved, orange) and those for which no data was available or not applicable (NA) because there was no milestone set for the year (grey colour). The overview of the achievements is available in annex 3.</p>	

Figure 1. Progress against 2020 milestones

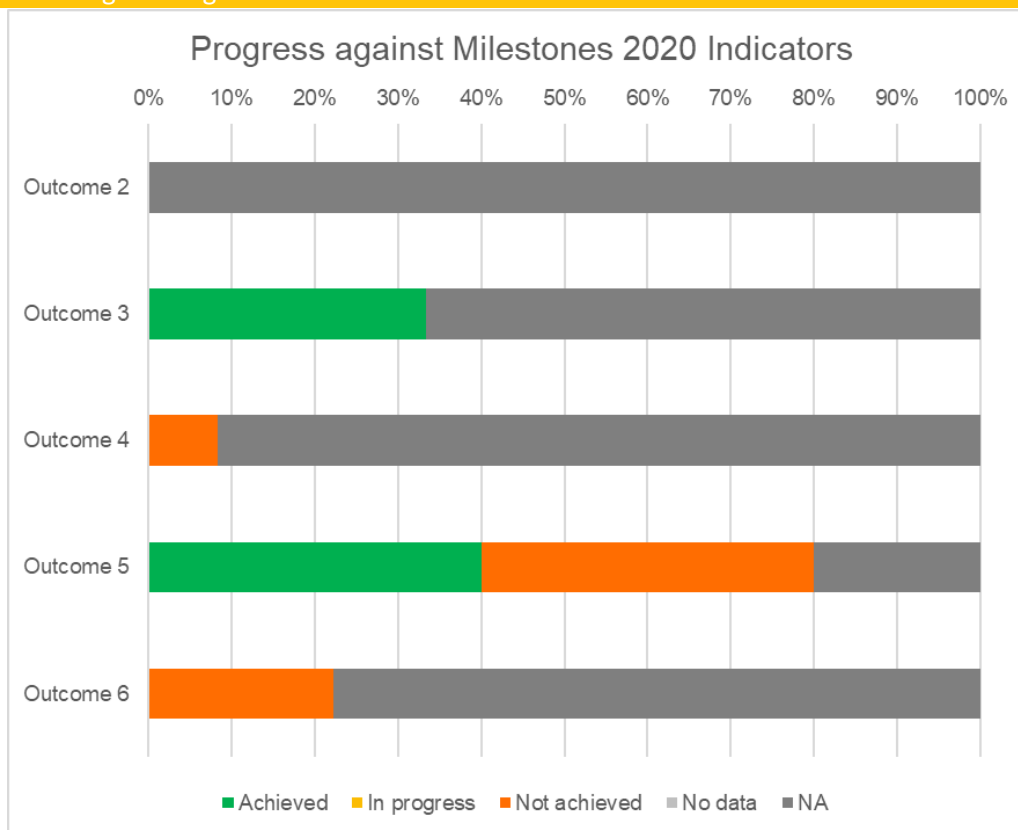
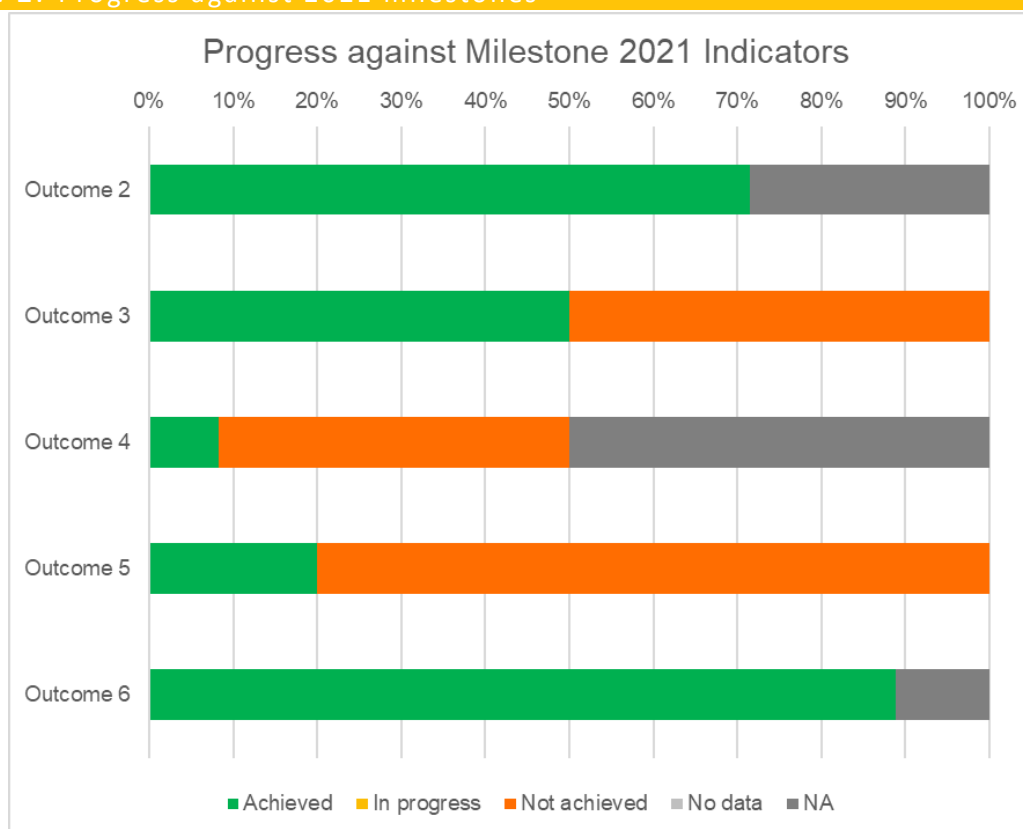


Figure 2. Progress against 2021 milestones



Is the quality of outputs satisfactory?

There was reduced scope of this MTA to assess the quality of the activities and outputs to date, with limited narrative reports and beneficiary feedback available. Interviewed informants were

asked about their perception of the quality of outputs and in almost all cases stated that these were in line with expectations. However, nearly all interviews were conducted with informants who were responsible for overseeing or implementing the activities. Information was collected from FGDs with end- or intermediate beneficiaries. While the FGDs confirmed the perception of satisfactory quality of outputs, the number of groups and the scope of activities covered in these discussions were very limited.

Key findings:

- The Spotlight Initiative faced delays in 2020, leading to a lack of progress across indicators. In 2021, more significant progress was made, especially under outcomes 2 and 6.
- The qualitative data collected through the KIIs and the FGDs indicated a general sense of quality and satisfaction with the programme's outputs and its performance towards achieving at least some of them.

Recommendations

- When developing a harmonised complementary reporting framework (Recommendation 8), the RCO, EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu and RUNOs should consider six-monthly indicator updates in order for feedback on performance that can be used for programme decisions, including the early recognition and elimination of implementation bottlenecks.

8. Are the outputs still likely to lead to the expected outcomes? To what extent has progress towards the outcome targets been achieved?

☐ Very Good - Good

☒ Problems

☐ Serious deficiencies

Progress against the approved workplan by outcome area

Given the high-level nature of the outcomes, and the limited data available on outputs to date, it is difficult to comment on whether outputs are still likely to lead to expected outcomes and the extent of progress made against outcomes.

Progress and obstacles are summarised in Table 3 based on interviews with stakeholders. While RUNOs, government departments and IPs noted that there was progress towards the achievement of several outputs, they also highlighted critical bottlenecks and obstacles that are, in part, also reflected in delayed budget execution. (see Question 9).

The EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu echoes these findings, suggesting that it has been very difficult to obtain specific details on implementation to date and on critical bottlenecks that need to be addressed.

Table 3. Key achievements and obstacles per Pillar

Pillar	Key achievements in Phase I	Issues arising / obstacles to address in remainder of Phase I and Phase II
Pillar 1	<p><u>Design of Victims' Charter</u></p> <p>The PPO has recently finalised agreements with UNDP to develop a 'Victims' Charter'. Consultations are due to start in late 2021 with the hope that these can be completed, and a draft can be presented to the Council of Ministers by the end of the year.</p>	<p>Despite good intentions, the PPO have limited human resources to commit to this activity with other work commitments prioritised.</p> <p>The PPO does not have experience in community consultations and has reached out to VWC for support.</p> <p>The proposed strategy to work with VWC to roll out nation-wide community consultations appears appropriate but will require additional time. The proposed timeframe in Phase 1 is unrealistic.</p>
Pillar 2	<p><u>Development of GBV SOPs in Emergency</u></p> <p>IOM is working with key stakeholders in NDMO to progress the development of GBV SOPs in Emergency Situations. IOM is working with UN Women which is developing complementary guidelines under the Pacific Partnership.</p>	<p>IOM is reliant on UN Women to complete their SOPs before moving ahead with their own.</p> <p>NDMO is still managing Vanuatu's State of Emergency and has limited Human Resource capacity, especially at a higher decision-making level.</p>
Pillar 2	<p><u>Capacity building of Parliamentarians</u></p> <p>This MTA did not find any evidence of activities with Parliamentarians at national level.</p>	<p>Implementation plans are unclear for this activity</p>
Pillar 3	<p><u>CSE (FLE)</u></p> <p>Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) / Family Life Education (FLE) has been recognised by regional and national leaders as a critical component of youth education.</p> <p>CSE (FLE) in-school curriculum for Year 11 and 12 has been completed. CSE (FLE) is now up to international standards.</p> <p>An CSE (FLE) multi-stakeholder committee has been engaged led by the MoET.</p> <p>A Master Trainers' training has been conducted with education supervisors and RMNCAH coordinators who will roll out the curriculum to schoolteachers.</p> <p>Teacher training on the CSE (FLE) curriculum is planned for Jan 2022.</p> <p>A working group is finalising the curriculum for CSE (FLE) for out-of-schools with 4 out of 7 modules complete.</p>	<p>MoH's access to Spotlight budget or a workable finance alternative is a major barrier. At the time of MTA data collection, vendors for activities completed over 3 months ago had not yet been paid. Provincial officers of MoET were not willing to move forward with organising CSE (FLE) provincial committees until they received their allowances from the previous training.</p> <p>Master Trainers are concerned over the implementation approach, and do not feel that a single training on the curriculum will be sufficient. Ongoing monitoring and support to teachers needs to be included in the workplan.</p> <p>Trainings of teachers is restricted in terms of time frame, with limited available options to schedule training around school semesters.</p> <p>The CSE (FLE) multi-stakeholder committee appears to focus on the in-school curriculum only.</p> <p>There is mixed communication and poor collaboration between government and IPs on the CSE (FLE) out-of-school curriculum. MoYSD has budget for this but is not currently utilising the budget. VFHA is unable to utilise allocated budget.</p>
Pillar 3	<p><u>Child Online Protection</u></p> <p>Review and update of Child Online Protection Policy completed through a National technical working group.</p> <p>MOU with Implementing CSO (VanIGF) signed in Oct 2021.</p>	<p>Initial delays due to restructuring of MoJCS</p>

Pillar 3	<p><u>Child Protection Community Facilitation Package</u></p> <p>MoYSD is rolling out Provincial Training of Trainers (ToT), with the aim to complete ToT in all 6 provinces by end of 2021. Training of community facilitators started in early 2021.</p>	<p>Discrepancies over activity ownership/ leadership and allocation of roles between MoYSD and MoJCS. Weak communication and collaboration between the two departments.</p> <p>FGDs with Efate-based community facilitators suggest a need for refined implementation strategy that will enable more widespread and sustainable uptake of training material.</p>
Pillar 3	<p><u>Labour Mobility Training</u></p> <p>A comprehensive training package for seasonal workers and their partners has been developed with content on violence prevention and healthy relationships.</p> <p>The training package has been validated in a multi-stakeholder workshop.</p> <p>Facilitators have been trained and workshops are currently being rolled out on a frequent basis, with government desire to scale up across Provinces.</p>	<p>Budget allocation expected to be expended by end of 2021. There will be a funding gap for activities and staffing during the 6 month no-cost extension of Phase 1</p>
Pillar 4	<p><u>SOPS for Health Service Facilities</u></p> <p>The SOP on GBV Referral Systems was finalised and planned to be launched during the 16 days of activism in November.</p> <p>20 health clinicians trained on draft SOPs.</p>	<p>MOH remains focused on COVID-19 and the health facility staff required to attend SOP trainings are also engaged in COVID-19 prevention and vaccination activities.</p>
Pillar 4	<p><u>Renovation of a Victim Support Centre</u></p> <p>Early stages of contracting for the renovation of the PPO's Victim Support Centre</p>	<p>No clear challenges given the 6-month extension is applicable.</p>
Pillar 5	<p><u>Data Administrative Systems</u></p> <p>Advancements at a regional level on data administrative systems are now ready to be tailored to Vanuatu's context.</p> <p>The Ministry of Women through the Director of Women Affairs, has committed to lead the Vanuatu Multi-sectoral committee strengthening data systems and prevalence data; evidenced by the recently concluded capacity building data work shop series.</p> <p>Advancements on strengthening of coordination through the Regional Reference Group (RRG) on GBV Administrative Data Systems, constituting regional partners.</p> <p>Harmonization of national VAW/G administrative data systems by RRG with national GBV referral systems.</p>	<p>Current lack of relationship and engagement between regional and national stakeholders and the VNSO.</p>
Pillar 5	<p><u>Plans for MICS</u></p> <p>A Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is planned for 2022 which will include data collection on gender and family violence</p>	<p>The MICS cannot be rolled out while the vaccination campaign is underway. It is on hold by MoH directive.</p>
Pillar 6	<p><u>Small Grants</u></p> <p>8 CSO organisations have been awarded a small grant of between USD \$21,000 and \$50,000</p>	<p>No in-country support for small grantees with limited experience working online.</p> <p>Unclear reporting and monitoring requirements.</p> <p>Concerns over quality of some activities. Possible overlap / lack of integration with other</p>

CSO grantees are undertaking activities including the roll out of Human Rights and GBV awareness to market vendors, SRH awareness to youth in Efate through peer educators and the development of a grassroots victims' charter through a women's network to be presented to chiefs.

programmes (i.e. Action Aid's development of a community victim referral system with PPO's Victims Charter), concerns in one activity regarding implementation design and ensuring a 'do no harm approach' (i.e. Vatu Marui Consortium's 'community watchdog')
Lack of clarity over project extension timelines putting additional pressure on small CSOs.

Key findings:

- While progress is made towards achieving some outputs of the revised workplan, there are serious constraints and bottlenecks in others that will affect the potential of achieving targeted outcomes.

Recommendations:

- The National Steering Committee should use the extension of Phase 1 for an activity-by-activity review to determine which of the outputs and outcomes are achievable based on current achievements and bottlenecks, focus on those that can be achieved during this period, and develop a proposal for an achievable workplan for a possible Phase 2.

9A. Do the government, implementing partners or RUNOs have sufficient capacity (financial, human resources, institutional) to ensure that implementation is going according to plan?

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?

☐ Very Good - Good

☒ Problems

☐ Serious deficiencies

Budget execution

For the assessment of budget implementation, the MTA is required to rely on expenditure data provided by the Spotlight Secretariat. By June 2021, i.e. 18 months into the original 24 month period of Phase 1, only 43% of the budget for Phase 1 had been spent or committed by RUNOs. After completion of data collection for the MTA, an updated expenditure report for the third quarter of 2021 was received confirming information that implementation had accelerated considerably in the second half of 2021. By the end of the third quarter, 64% of the budget had been spent or committed. As shown in Table 4, budget execution rates varied significantly among the four RUNO partners. The still low budget overall execution rate was primarily due to underspending by UNFPA which holds about half of the entire Vanuatu Spotlight programme budget.

Table 4. Budget execution by the end of the third quarter in 2021

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	COMMITMENT	% SPENT OR COMMITTED
UNDP	624,725	401,257	99,604	80%
UNFPA	1,120,944	381,550	200,838	52%
UNICEF	440,840	245,822	12,158	59%

IOM	288,491	136,771	102,753	83%
Total	2,475,000	1,165,400	415,353	64%

Contextual constraints and the slow start during the first year of the programme can explain low budget execution to some extent. The proposed 6 month no-cost extension of Phase 1 is the appropriate response, but it raises issues for IOM and UNDP which will likely have expended most of their budgets by the end of 2021 and will not have any funds to implement activities during the extension period.

In interviews, informants mentioned the modality of CSO implementation as another sources of expenditure delays. According to RUNO informants, few CSOs in Vanuatu meet the rigorous financial and organisational requirements of accessing UN funds, and agencies had difficulties identifying and contracting CSO IPs. To overcome this, UNFPA entered into an agreement with IPPF to channel funds to IPPF's local affiliate, the Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA). Partnerships with international CSOs were meant to mitigate risks due to perceived low local CSO capacity, but these partners were particularly affected by COVID-19 travel restrictions. In addition, UNFPA respondents noted that the Agency's portfolio included many transformational activities in sensitive areas that required efforts in generating a facilitating environment before budgets could be spent on implementing activities. Transfers to government departments also experienced significant delays, especially to departments not supported by a Spotlight Initiative consultant such as the Vanuatu National Statistics Office (VNSO) which particularly affected IP disbursement rates of UNFPA.

UNICEF respondents noted that its child protection work in Vanuatu has focused on strengthening child protection systems of the State as the main duty bearer. For the development of the child online protection package under Pillar 3, UNICEF had to establish a new partnership with a CSO IP which was only signed in October 2021 accounting for some of the delays in spending the budget for transfers to IPs.

Disbursement rates to implementing partners by September 2021 were reported by the Spotlight Secretariat as presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Expenditures on Grants and Transfers to IPs by September 2021

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	% SPENT
UNDP	412,000	305,677	74%
UNFPA	579,000	16,574	3%
UNICEF	300,000	189,764	63%
Total	1,291,000	512,015	40%

All interviewed stakeholders acknowledged the constraints in budget implementation faced by RUNOs, but several respondents, including the EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu respondents, pointed out that some of the major bottlenecks are not well identified or described.

Absorption capacity and other obstacles limiting programme implementation

Government (at all levels)

Government in Vanuatu, like in other Pacific countries, faces a critical gap in the institutional and human capacity. Government departments are often overwhelmed with external funding from various agencies and donors for concurrent projects, with the same staff required to manage several programmes. This evidently leads to slow implementation and often to high staff turn-over. Technical expertise is often sought internationally, but the pool of locally based experts working in programmes on GBV remains very limited.

Uncertainty about the future of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS), a lead strategic partner of the Spotlight Initiative, has been and continues to be a critical challenge to implementation going forward. At this stage, it is understood that the MoJCS portfolio will be absorbed by the MoYSD, but specific details have not been finalised. UNICEF and UNFPA have collaborated well with MoJCS to adjust accordingly; however, forward planning is difficult as it is not clear how the shift may impact on the Ministry.

The MoET has also faced challenges accessing Spotlight Initiative funds and moving ahead with project activities. Transfers of Spotlight Initiative funds to the MoET are blocked because the Ministry's finance department had not reconciled underspent funds from a previous UN project. The short-term solution to shift to a direct payment model appears to be impractical and inefficient, with only a few direct payments able to be processed by the RCO each week due to COVID restrictions in Fiji. Delays in payment have stretched to over 3 months in some cases, with venues, provincial officers and other vendors engaged in early activities still waiting for payment. This has resulted in significant delays in the roll out of the training for the in-school CSE (FLE) curriculum and has damaged the reputation of the MoET. Attempts to resolve the issue had been unsuccessful at the time of the MTA and were a major cause of concern for the MoET. This was due to a number of misunderstandings, which have since been resolved.

Other government departments, including the MoYS and MoJSC, highlighted delays in implementation due to slow financial processes at government level, where relevant finance departments are under-resourced and systems to access allocated funds are complex and slow. An additional source of delay is the need for all funds to be transferred through the national department, instead of directly to provincial offices. Most department have been able to mitigate these delays by submitting plans and budgets early, often with the support of the consultants mobilised and supported by Spotlight.

Civil society implementing partners

The Vanuatu Family Health Association (VFHA) is the main one of the CSO implementing partner for UNFPA programmes under Pillar 3. It does, however, not meet UN conditions for direct funding and funds are therefore transferred via its international parent organisation, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). While the systems to access funding are effective, the VFHA has encountered difficulties in spending its allocated budget. There is an evident lack of communication between the VFHA and the MoET regarding the establishment of the CSE (FLE) Out-of-School National Committee which should be supported by the VFHA. Thus, according to VFHA respondents, only the In-School National Committee has been established, leaving the VFHA with a budget to manage a committee that has not yet been

established. According to UNFPA, this is based on a misunderstanding because “the wrong VFHA staff attended the CSE (FLE) committee establishment”. Feedback on progress provided in interviews with the VFHA, the MoET, IPPF and UNFPA varied greatly, suggesting a breakdown in communication among the partners and a lack of oversight.

CSO grantees interviewed generally felt they had the capacity in terms of human resources, technical skills and budget to implement the activities that they had received funding for. Finance systems were working well, and reporting requirements were well understood and not over-burdensome. There was positive feedback on the support provided to grantees from UNDP, although several respondents mentioned that having no UNDP in-country support staff was creating difficulties.

RUNOs

In interviews, UN stakeholders frequently highlighted that the 18% ceiling on management costs was insufficient to effectively manage and implement programme activities. For most RUNOs, the cap reduced the capacity for full time staff to work exclusively on the Spotlight Initiative and required them to instead juggle Spotlight activities with existing programmes and commitments. The cap also required RUNOs to look at alternative strategies to ensure sufficient human resourcing, such as employing external consultants instead of contracting existing staff.

The Vanuatu Spotlight Programme has an overall human resource budget for staff in country and in Suva of USD 611,712 of which USD 385,670 is covered by the agencies’ contribution. UNFPA is the only agency with full time staff (three staff members) allocated to the Spotlight Programme. It also has the largest human resource budget that is covered to 80% by the EU Spotlight grant and to 20% by a UNFPA contribution. The other three agencies have part-time staff allocations to the programme ranging from 5% to 20% with most of the costs covered by the contribution of their agency to the programme (ranging from 100% by UNICEF to 61% by IOM). The MTA only had information on human resource expenditures from the EU grant portion of the budget by the end of the third quarter of 2021 which ranged from 4% by UNDP to 90% by IOM. Information about the execution of the agencies’ contribution to the human resource budget was not available but interviewed RUNO staff affirmed that remaining administrative budgets were insufficient to cover staff costs during the six-month extension period and was already affecting their ability to retain staff.

Other bottlenecks and challenges

In some instances, RUNOs or IPs were dependent on input from other parties to enable implementation and were therefore facing delays in implementation that was out of their control. For example, the IOM requires UN Women to finalise the SOP on GBV in Emergencies before it can complete its component. Equally, VFHA is contracted to coordinate the logistics of the SGBV SOPs for health facilities but has been unable to do so with the SOPs still yet to be confirmed (which was achieved just after the MTA).

Of all the government departments, IPs and CSOs interviewed, only a few were aware of the six month no-cost extension. Most were still working towards the deadline of December 2021

for Phase 1 activities and were under considerable strain to implement these activities in the proposed timeframe.

Key findings:

- Initially slow programme implementation accelerated significantly in the second half of 2021 and 64% of the budget had been executed by September 2021. Significant implementation bottlenecks affected the implementation of activities by UNFPA and UNICEF.
- Some bottlenecks have been overcome in recent months, but challenges related to limited implementation and absorption capacity by government and CSO IPs remain.
- RUNOs expressed concerns that the 18% budget limit on administrative costs is affecting their ability to retain programme staff during the six-month extension of Phase 1.

Recommendations:

12. In its activity-by-activity review of remaining Phase 1 activities (Recommendation 12), the National Steering Committee should also consider budget re-allocations including, if necessary, budget shifts between agencies.
13. In a possible Phase 2 of the Spotlight Programme, the EU and the Spotlight Secretariat should review the 18% ceiling on administrative budgets and its impact on appropriate staffing of implementing UN partners.

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

National Implementation Modality

The national implementation modality is an effective strategy that ensures activities are government led, building capacity and strengthening sustainability. Government partners are generally clear on their allocated workplan, are committed to implementation and feel the modality promotes ownership and sustainability. RUNOs are able to share implementation responsibilities, while also being able to provide oversight and technical support where required.

CSO IPs' Modality

The modality of working through CSOs to implement Spotlight activities has faced some challenges. There is an evident limitation in the capacity of CSOs in terms of meeting the financial systems criteria to access UN funding. Most CSOs in Vanuatu do not have the strict governance structures and accounting systems in place to make them eligible to receive direct funding, dramatically reducing the pool of CSOs that can be engaged in Spotlight Initiative. The majority of CSOs that were able to meet the strict criteria were urban-based, with limited scope for rural and outer-island grassroots CSOs to take part. There was evidence of CSOs working creatively around this problem, with more established regional and national CSOs applying on behalf of smaller organisations and sub-contracting work out, while managing their budget and taking on reporting requirements (for example IPPF/VFHA and Vatu Mauri Consortium/Young Women for Change).

This barrier has made it difficult for RUNOs to meet the required 30 percent of funds allocated to CSOs and has affected the execution of the budget lines for grants and transfers. This limitation has also affected the overall design that aims to empower CSOs to facilitate the implementation across the different pillars. It has reduced space to build capacity in grassroots CSOs, with fall-back measures instead engaging larger regional or international CSOs, rather than strengthening the systems of local CSOs. There is evidence to suggest that this approach is disempowering grassroots CSOs and failing to create sustainable growth and capacity in these local-level organisations. On the other hand, it was reported by one stakeholder that the more established organisations have aimed to play a mentorship role to support smaller grassroots organisations, which was seen to be positive for movement building.

Key findings:

- The national implementation modality is effective in ensuring that activities are government led and is expected to increase local capacity and contribute to sustainability of activities and results.

- The modality of working through CSOs to implement Spotlight activities has faced challenges because of limited capacity of CSOs in Vanuatu to directly access UN-administered funds due to specific requirements of UN engagements.

Recommendations:

14. During the six-month extension of Phase 1, UNDP should conduct a CSO capacity assessment survey and develop a capacity development training for CSOs based on the assessment findings.

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

Management of the Programme

At a national level, the Spotlight management and coordination structures appear to be functioning well now that key staff positions have been filled, including the new Spotlight Coordinator in the RCO and the UNFPA Vanuatu Technical Coherence lead. There was an evident gap in technical coherence without these key roles in place for at least three months with the absence of the Spotlight Coordinator, however these structures are now building momentum and functioning more effectively. Structured meetings are hosted fortnightly, bringing together the regional and Vanuatu-based RCO and representatives from each RUNO, coordinated by the Technical Coherence Leads (UNFPA and UN Women). There is also a new shared calendar of events that is helping to streamline planning and coordination across the Spotlight Initiative and the Pacific Partnership.

The Spotlight Programme Coordinator for Vanuatu is based at the regional RCO in Fiji, had recently been recruited, and therefore declined to be interviewed. Interviewed respondents pointed out that the physical distance presented challenges. The RCO in Vanuatu provides support to coordination where required but its capacity to engage continues to be limited by COVID-19 related travel restrictions.

In general, RUNOs have a good working relationship with government departments and IPs; however, there remain gaps in communication systems. Perceptions of activity progress and challenges mentioned by interviewed stakeholders often differed between RUNOs, government agencies, regional IPs and local IPs, suggesting there are still gaps in coordination, communication and reporting mechanisms.

The EU Delegation to the Pacific and to Vanuatu is not actively engaged in governance and management mechanisms of the Spotlight Initiative at the national level and has a greater presence in the Regional Programme. The EU's participation in the National Steering

committee has also been limited due to the lack of Steering Committee meetings. Communication between the EU and RUNOs is facilitated by the RCO where required.

National Steering Committee

The National Steering Committee is not effectively fulfilling its intended role. The Committee has only met once and has not been active in facilitating ongoing strategic high-level management and coordination decision-making as intended. This may in part be attributed to COVID-19 and to the emergency generated by TC Harold. A second meeting was scheduled just after the MTA in which mayor issues were apparently resolved. This could, however, not be confirmed on the basis of MTA data.

While there is value in including high-level government representatives in this Committee, this also poses a challenge in terms of logistics and coordination to bring these people together on a regular basis.

The minutes of the first and only National Steering Committee meeting were not made available to the MTA for analysis.

Technical working groups or pillar working groups

Technical or pillar working groups were not planned for Vanuatu and activities under each pillar are, in most cases, carried out individually by RUNOs with limited evidence of collaboration across implementing partners. In some cases, there was limited coherence between individual implementing partners working on the same activity (for example MoJCS and MoYS on the Child Protection Community Facilitation Package; MoET, VFHA and IPPF on the CSE (FLE) out-of-school curriculum).

UNICEF utilises an existing Child Protection working group to share activities and identified opportunities for collaboration. It was highlighted by stakeholders that there is an evident gap and opportunity to establish a EVAWG working group. Vanuatu has an active Gender and Protection (G&P) Cluster that is led by the Department of Women's Affairs and co-led by CARE and Save the Children in times of an emergency. RUNOs were able to actively engage in the Cluster during the response for TC Harold, and initially identified opportunities to build on new relationships and coordination through the Spotlight Initiative. At the time of the MTA, there was no evidence that this had been carried forward.

CSO Reference Group

The strategic design and implementation of the CSO RG has severely restricted its added value. The group has so far failed to produce meaningful results and has, in some cases, eroded the reputation of the Spotlight Initiative among key actors in the EVAGW sector.

While an interim CSO RG was able to provide valuable input in the early consultation period, members of the final CSO RG were only engaged in late 2020, resulting in an initial lack of continuity and engagement in the proposed activities. Since its formation, the CSO RG has only had one opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on a Spotlight activity. A CSO RG meeting was scheduled in the month following data collection for the MTA

The CSO RG does not include representation from some key CSOs working on EVAWG, including the Vanuatu Women's Centre, which, according to RUNO informants, was invited but did not engage. Several informants also mentioned that equal representation was prioritised over specific technical expertise in the GBV and EVAGW sector, resulting in a group that was diverse, but not necessarily equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to provide high-level input into GBV programming. This has damaged the legitimacy of the group and the perceived quality of input it is able to produce.

The structure, systems and purpose of the group remained unclear among interviewed CSO RG members, who felt they had not been equipped with the time, material and necessary information to provide meaningful input into programme activities. There is also a lack of clarity of how RUNOs, government departments and CSO IPs are to engage and utilise the CSO RG in a way that is structured and functional for all partners.

There is an evident role for the CSO RG in reviewing and supporting activities developed by CSO grantees and to provide community input into strategies and plans. Stakeholders identified opportunity for the CSO RG to broaden its scope and potentially support programming across the EVAGW sector instead of being specifically linked to Spotlight.

General Programme Coherence

There are gaps in linking partners of the Spotlight Initiative, including government and CSO IPs. Most partners had no knowledge of Spotlight Initiative activities in Vanuatu or the Regional Programme beyond their allocated projects. Many stakeholders highlighted the gap in communication mechanisms to support the sharing of information about Spotlight activities and potentially also activities supported by the Pacific Partnerships and the Transformative Agenda programmes. This was seen as a missed opportunity for improved sharing of resources and expertise and for the reduction of duplication.

There is also an apparent gap in collaboration with Pacific Partnership and Transformative Agenda activities. Apart from the technical coherence meeting that included the Pacific Partnership, there was no evidence of partner knowledge about or collaboration across these programmes. Some activities had identified collaborations in the initial programme design phase, but it was unclear if these linkages had continued. For example, the original Spotlight design included the development of an M&E system for CSE (FLE) delivery in- and out-of-school by the Transformative Agenda programme, however there was no evidence that this was implemented.

Key findings:

- The Spotlight programme management and coordination structures were not effective for much of the programme in Phase 1 but have significantly improved in the second half of 2021.
- The National Steering Committee and CSO Reference Group did not fully meet their expected roles, at least during the period covered by the MTA.

- There is a lack of coherence among implementing partners; government and CSOs IPs having only limited knowledge of Spotlight activities for which they are not directly responsible.
- Opportunities for coordination and sharing among major programmes addressing EVAWG in Vanuatu are not sufficiently realised.

Recommendations:

15. The RCO and RUNOs should clearly define the expected role and develop practical systems to improve the functioning of the National Steering Committee and CSO RG.
16. Spotlight partners in Vanuatu should further investigate the establishment an EVAWG national working group that could possibly align with or fall under the existing Gender and Protection cluster and provide a platform for active communication and cooperation between all bodies engaged in EVAWG activities.

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

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

There have been some barriers to effectively set up and implement coordination mechanisms. They have largely stemmed from the prolonged absence of key staff responsible for coordination and technical coherence of the programme at the RCO and UNFPA. The location of the programme coordinator in Suva and COVID-19 related travel restrictions have also contributed to the perception expressed by interviewed RUNO stakeholders that the leadership of the programme by the RCO was weak. Interviews with RUNO staff confirmed that there is limited understanding across all RUNOs of how the UN Reform can be translated into practise.

While there has been information exchange and attempts to piggyback activities across RUNOs, there is no evidence of improved cost efficiencies through the new way of working. There are strategies in place to further develop this, with a new shared calendar of events and a training planned to strengthen RUNOs understanding of the UN Reform and how it can be best implemented.

There is evident potential for the new approaches of working to improve efficiency. RUNOs express commitment and enthusiasm to the One UN approach and see value in harmonising across agencies to increase overall effectiveness.

Interviewed staff of the EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu suggested that the streamlined approach and proposed ‘One UN’ model exhibits strong potential to increase efficiency, helping donors to align thematic programmes. However, not all interviewed EU Delegation agreed with this assessment.

There is a clear voice from government ministries and departments that increased coherence from the UN is welcomed, and that this would be increasingly beneficial if implemented not

just across the Spotlight Initiative, but among all UN-led programmes including the Pacific Partnership and the Transformative Agenda.

Key findings:

- The One UN system approach is theoretically welcomed by RUNOs and government but faced challenges that included a limited understanding of the UN Reform principles among RUNOs further complicated by COVID19 restrictions, which made it very difficult for the RCO to lead joint programme out of Fiji.
- While there has been information exchange and attempts to piggyback activities across RUNOs, there is to date no evidence of improved cost efficiencies through the new way of working.

Recommendations:

17. The planned training on the UN Reform for RUNOs should aim to clearly define roles and responsibilities between the RCO and RUNOs, and establish strategies to increase efficiencies through collaboration. This should include streamlining reporting, CSO contracting, and branding policies while also looking for opportunities for sharing resources and technical expertise.

E. SUSTAINABILITY

13. Is sufficient capacity being built so that local actors, such as government as well as CSOs, the women's movement and groups representing women and girls that face intersecting forms of discrimination, will be able to manage the process by the end of the Initiative without continued dependence on international expertise?

☐ Very Good - Good

☒ Problems

☐ Serious deficiencies

While the programme design document outlines high-level sustainability measures, there is no specific sustainability plan for the Vanuatu Spotlight Programme. A review of the proposed sustainability strategies in the design document suggests a need to revisit and redefine these based on re-programming and lessons learnt to date.

Despite the absence of a defined sustainability and exit plan, the majority of activities under the Spotlight Initiative appear to be designed in a way that is inherently sustainable, through their alignment with government policy and priorities and the modality of national implementation. The development of national policy, charters, curricula, operating procedures and bills creates an enabling environment for long-term results that are integrated into existing systems and opens opportunities for increased government allocation of funds and resources in the future.

Government Partners

Government partners demonstrate strong commitment to the Spotlight activities, and in some cases request even further independence to ensure activities are government led and owned. However, while activities are generally included in national strategic plans, it is stressed that capacity to implement these will be severely reduced without external funding. Spotlight funding has enabled government departments to prioritise certain activities in their annual plans and budgets. Without these funds, it is unlikely that the activities would receive the same level of focus. The integration of Spotlight consultants into government departments has shown to be an effective strategy to develop local capacity. These positions are linked to specific activities. Therefore, without support for these activities the human resource capacity of government IPs would be limited.

Interviewed stakeholders identified opportunities to strengthen sustainability of outputs, particularly with regards to training, capacity building and integration of new material. The programme in Phase 1 focused on the development of charters, curricula, SOPs and training packages, and initial trainings implemented for master trainers, community facilitators and health care professionals. There is now a need for follow up with ongoing mentorship, monitoring and support to ensure learnings and capacity are not lost.

Many of the activities under the Spotlight Initiative aim to address embedded cultural and social norms and will require time and persistence to shift attitudes and effect behaviour-change. Activities need to set realistic targets and outcomes that can be achieved within the relatively short lifespan of the programme but should also develop practical support mechanisms that can ensure continuation of the path towards these long-term goals after the Spotlight Initiative has ended.

CSO engagement

Envisaged strategies to build capacity with local CSO remains a shortfall to date. As previously discussed, restrictive standards have greatly reduced the number of CSOs that qualify for funding through the Spotlight Initiative. In some cases, local CSOs have been able to offer practical alternatives, such as sub-contracting, which has enabled smaller grassroots organisations to engage. This is also a strategy employed at a regional level, with the example of IPPF managing the VFHA contract. While there are some benefits in this strategy, it does not appear to achieve the goal of increasing grassroots CSO capacity. Equally, without adequate support on the ground for grant recipients, there is a threat of over-burdening small, inexperienced CSOs, but also a risk that implementation strategies are not meeting the required standards. When working in the sensitive context of GBV and EVAGW it is critical that young organisations are provided the necessary technical support to develop suitable and effective programmes.

Local Staff

In general, the challenge of COVID-19 and restricted travel has resulted in an increased emphasis on local expertise, with international advisors unable to travel in country. This has provided new opportunities for locally based experts to step up and fulfil roles that otherwise might not have been available.

Spotlight Next steps

The Spotlight ToC is very ambitious in terms of outcomes across a relatively short timeframe. The activities conducted under Spotlight are designed to be transformative, which when working within the EVAWG space, requires extensive time and commitment to generate sustainable change.

There is no assurance of continued funding of Spotlight by the EU. It is therefore critical that the Spotlight partners explore opportunities of working with other internationally funded EVAWG initiatives, transferring lessons and functional structures of cooperation that were established under Spotlight into the wider national EVAWG agenda.

Key findings:

- While there is no structured sustainability plan in place, most activities under the Spotlight Initiative are designed in a way that is inherently sustainable.
- Government commitment and integration into national workplans demonstrates strong ownership, but it is evident that the progress of activities is still reliant on external funding and adequate human resources.
- Envisaged strategies to build capacity of local CSO remains a shortfall to date. CSOs need additional on the ground support to enable effective transfer of skills and ensure programming is appropriate and effective.

Recommendations:

18. RUNOs should work individually with respective government departments and IPs, and in consultation with other development partners working in the EVAWG space, to develop a

sustainability plan outlining measures that will enable successful transfer of ownership and long-term continuation of activities within and beyond the Spotlight Initiative.

F. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROGRAMME DESIGN

Main findings

- The time allocated to programme design and consultation was too short and restricted creative design of activities, as well as fully achieving government consensus and collaboration by key stakeholders.
- Programme activities are well designed and reflect the Spotlight Initiative Principles. They are context-specific, mostly gender-transformative, and generally adopt a human-rights-based approach.
- Consultations among other large EVAWG programmes during the design phase were limited to two programmes managed by UNFPA and UN Women but did not include the DFAT-funded Stretem Rod Blong Jastis programme working in the law and justice sector. After the design phase, ongoing collaborations among programmes were limited, resulting in missed opportunities for renewed or new partnerships and limited the avoidance of duplication.
- UN agencies are well placed to implement the Spotlight activities with adequate technical expertise and existing partnerships with government departments and key implementing agencies.
- The EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu, UN agencies, government departments and CSO IPs are committed to the Spotlight Initiative despite challenges experienced in Phase 1.
- The Theory of Change is well developed and aligns closely with the defined activities but is ambitious in terms of expected outcomes within a relatively short timeframe.
- The indicators of the global results monitoring framework do not adequately track progress and accurately document implementation to date.
- There is limited clarity about M&E requirements and frameworks for government and CSO IPs.
- A comprehensive risk assessment was completed in the design phase of the Spotlight programme but could not predict the severity of the impact of TC Harold and the COVID-19 pandemic which significantly delayed implementation. The pandemic continues to affect the Spotlight programme, primarily by limiting access to technical expertise and staffing in-country and by diverting the focus of government partners towards epidemic control measures and the disaster response."
- The RCO and EUD worked with RUNOs to reprogramme and update workplans. RUNOs have adjusted activities to align with current government priorities, while also leveraging new and emerging opportunities related to the emergency response.

- There is still a high risk of COVID-19 community transmission and potential lock-down in Vanuatu over the next six months that would cause significant additional delays in the implementation of programme activities.
- While there is no structured sustainability plan in place, most activities under the Spotlight Initiative are designed in a way that is inherently sustainable.
- Government commitment and integration into national workplans demonstrates strong ownership, but it is evident that the progress of activities is still reliant on external funding and adequate human resources.

Recommendations

- a) (Q1, R1) During the programme extension period, the RCO and UNFPA, as the Vanuatu Coordination and Technical Coherence Lead, should facilitate a follow-up consultation that re-engages existing and new programmes or partners working in the EVAWG space before planning a possible Phase 2, to identify opportunities for collaboration, learning and reduced duplication.
- b) (Q1, R2) The RCO and UNFPA should continue to work with UN Women to develop concrete strategies to better align the Spotlight Initiative and the Pacific Partnership activities. This could involve the National Steering Committee and the CSO Reference Group, and it could include the development of integrated reporting mechanisms to government and programme donors.
- c) (Q5, R8) The RCO, RUNOs and the EU Delegation should jointly review current M&E challenges and agree on a harmonised complementary reporting framework that aligns with the global indicators but enables RUNOs to report on refined milestones.
- d) (Q5, R9) The RUNOs should work with government partners, IPs and CSO grant recipients to review and define practical, effective reporting and M&E requirements.
- e) (Q6, R10) RUNOs should work with government agencies and IPs in developing an up-to-date COVID-19 response plan that identifies mitigation strategies should a lockdown be implemented in Vanuatu.

2. GOVERNANCE

Main findings

- Activities supported by Spotlight are well aligned with government priorities, are supported by high-level national decision-makers, and are generally well integrated into relevant government departments to ensure locally led implementation. However, the Spotlight National Steering Committee only met once (in 2020), and some government informants felt that that Spotlight activities were fundamentally UN-led and that government should be further empowered to lead and own the activities.

- Interviewed stakeholders identified the non-involvement in the Vanuatu Spotlight Programme of the Department of Women's Affairs on the government side and of the Vanuatu Women's Centre on the CSO side as a major weakness.
- The poor functioning of the CSO Reference Group is limiting the commitment and engagement of members.
- The National Steering Committee and CSO Reference Group did not fully meet their expected roles, at least during the period covered by the MTA.
- There is a lack of coherence among implementing partners; government and CSOs IPs having only limited knowledge of Spotlight activities for which they are not directly responsible.
- Opportunities for coordination and sharing among major programmes addressing EVAWG in Vanuatu are not sufficiently realised.

Recommendations

- a) (Q4, R6) During the extension of Phase 1, the Programme Coordinator together with RUNO partners in Vanuatu should explore ways for a stronger implication of the Vanuatu Department of Women's Affairs in a possible Phase 2 programme.
- b) (Q4, R7) The RCO and RUNOs should review the structure and systems of the CSO Reference Group, review the membership and consider including a representative of the VWC, as well as consider allocating a budget to support CSO RG functioning."
- c) (Q11, R16) The RCO and RUNOs should clearly define the expected role and develop practical systems to improve the functioning of the National Steering Committee and CSO RG.
- d) (Q11, R17) Spotlight partners in Vanuatu should further investigate the establishment an EVAWG national working group that could possibly align with or fall under the existing Gender and Protection cluster and provide a platform for active communication and cooperation between all bodies engaged in EVAWG activities.

3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Main findings

- While technically equipped, all RUNOs have struggled with limited human resource capacity which has been particularly difficult due to travel restrictions and the 18% budget limit for administrative costs.
- Collaboration and coordination among RUNOs have been dependent on the presence of a Technical Coherence Lead in Vanuatu and a Programme Coordinator in Suva, both positions that were vacant for extended periods.

- Although it was too early to collect the views of end-beneficiaries in the MTA, the activities under the Spotlight Initiative appear to respond to their needs. For many activities, extensive foundational work is required to reach end-beneficiaries. There is, however, only limited evidence that adequate feedback mechanisms for end-beneficiaries have been or are being established.
- RUNOs expressed concerns that the 18% budget limit on administrative costs is affecting their ability to retain programme staff during the six-month extension of Phase 1.
- The Spotlight programme management and coordination structures were not effective for much of the programme in Phase 1 but have significantly improved in the second half of 2021.

Recommendations

- a) (Q2, R3) The Spotlight Programme Coordinator in collaboration with the Technical Coherence Lead should facilitate consultations among RUNOs to identify strategies for improved coordination, communication and collaboration and result in long-term strengthened partnerships beyond the Spotlight Initiative.
- b) (Q2, R4) The Spotlight Secretariat and the EU should review the budget ceiling for administrative costs to enable RUNOs to mobilise sufficient human resources for the effective implementation of the Initiative during the 6 month no-cost extension period and a possible Phase 2.
- c) (Q2, R5) RUNOs and IPs should review current feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries to identify opportunities and develop approaches for strengthening the information collected and exchanged with end-beneficiaries and intermediary implementing partners.
- d) (Q9, R14) In a possible Phase 2 of the Spotlight Programme, the EU and the Spotlight Secretariat should review the 18% ceiling on administrative budgets and its impact on appropriate staffing of implementing UN partners.

4. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND RESULTS

Main findings

- The MTA had insufficient access to data from the Spotlight Secretariat to assess the programme progress against targets and to independently verify the quality of outputs.
- While progress is made towards achieving some outputs of the revised workplan, there are serious constraints and bottlenecks in others that will affect the potential of achieving targeted outcomes.
- Initially slow programme implementation accelerated significantly in the second half of 2021 and 64% of the budget had been executed by September 2021. Significant implementation bottlenecks affected the implementation of activities by UNFPA and UNICEF.

- Some bottlenecks have been overcome in recent months, but challenges related to limited implementation and absorption capacity by government and CSO IPs remain.
- The national implementation modality is effective in ensuring that activities are government led and is expected to increase local capacity and contribute to sustainability of activities and results.
- The modality of working through CSOs to implement Spotlight activities has faced challenges because of limited capacity of CSOs in Vanuatu to directly access UN-administered funds.
- The One UN system approach is theoretically welcomed by RUNOs and government but faced challenges that included a limited understanding of the UN Reform principles among RUNOs further complicated by COVID19 restrictions, which made it very difficult for the RCO to lead joint programme out of Fiji.
- While there has been information exchange and attempts to piggyback activities across RUNOs, there is to date no evidence of improved cost efficiencies through the new way of working.
- Envisaged strategies to build capacity of local CSO remains a shortfall to date. CSOs need additional on the ground support to enable effective transfer of skills and ensure programming is appropriate and effective.

Recommendations

- a) (Q7, R11) When developing a harmonised complementary reporting framework (Q5, R8), the RCO, EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu and RUNOs should consider six-monthly indicator updates in order for feedback on performance that can be used for programme decisions, including the early recognition and elimination of implementation bottlenecks. "
- b) (Q8, R12) The National Steering Committee should use the extension of Phase 1 for an activity-by-activity review to determine which of the outputs and outcomes are achievable based on current achievements and bottlenecks, focus on those that can be achieved during this period, and develop a proposal for an achievable workplan for a possible Phase 2.
- c) (Q9, R13) In its activity-by-activity review of remaining Phase 1 activities (Recommendation 12), the National Steering Committee should also consider budget re-allocations including, if necessary, budget shifts between agencies.
- d) (Q10, R15) During the six-month extension of Phase 1, UNDP should conduct a CSO capacity assessment survey and develop a capacity development training for CSOs based on the assessment findings.
- e) (Q12, R18) The planned training on the UN Reform for RUNOs should aim to clearly define roles and responsibilities between the RCO and RUNOs, and establish strategies to increase efficiencies through collaboration. This should include streamlining reporting,

CSO contracting, and branding policies while also looking for opportunities for sharing resources and technical expertise.

- f) (Q13, R19) RUNOs should work individually with respective government departments and IPs to develop a sustainability plan outlining measures that will enable successful transfer of ownership and long-term continuation of activities within and beyond the Spotlight Initiative.

G. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Spotlight programme documents (essential documents)	Availability
Country Programming document as approved by OSC	x
Country Budget as approved by the OSC (may also include revised budget)	x
Spotlight Country Programme Snapshot	x
Inception report	x
2020 Annual report	x
Annex A Country Report (included in the 2020 Annual Report)	x
Ad hoc (2nd Tranche) report - 2021 January - June Country Programme Results	x
Spotlight Initiative financial information on the MPTF Gateway	x
Knowledge management workplan (2020 Draft)	x
National CSO Reference Group workplan	-
CSO Reference Group Bios	-
Communication workplan	-
Stories directly from the Calendar	-

ANNEX 2: LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Stakeholder group	Institution / organisation
EU	EU Delegation to the Pacific and Vanuatu
UN & Spotlight	Resident Coordinator's Office
UN & Spotlight	Resident Coordinator's Office Vanuatu
UN & Spotlight	UNFPA
UN & Spotlight	UNICEF
UN & Spotlight	IOM
UN & Spotlight	UNDP (conducted by Regional MTA expert)
Government	Ministry of Education and Training
Government	Ministry of Health
Government	Ministry of Justice and Community Services
Government	Ministry of Youth and Sport Development
Government	Public Prosecutor's Office
Government	Department of Women's Affairs
Government	Vanuatu National Statistics Office
Government	Department of Labour
CSO Reference Group	CSO Reference Group Member
CSO Reference Group	CSO Reference Group Member
CSO IP	Vanuatu Family Health Association
CSO IP	Vanuatu Womens Centre
CSO IP	Vatu Mauri Consortium
CSO IP	Silae Vanua
Focus Group Discussion	Peer Educators, Young Women for Change
Focus Group Discussion	Participants, Famili I Redi Training
Focus Group Discussion	FLE in-school Master Trainers
Focus Group Discussion	Child Protection CFP Community Facilitators

ANNEX 3 DETAILED TABLE ANALYSIS M&E DATA

Indicator level	Indicator #	Disaggregation	Progress 2020	Progress 2021
OUTCOME 2: National and sub-national systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including in other sectors				
Outcome	Indicator 2.1 Existence of a functioning regional, national and/or sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms at the highest levels for addressing VAWG/HP that include representation from marginalized groups.	National	NA	NA
Outcome	Indicator 2.3 Extent to which VAWG/HP is integrated in 5 other sectors (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture) development plans that are evidence-based and in line with globally agreed standards.	Justice	NA	Achieved
		Security	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 2.1.3 Number of strategies, new plans and programmes of other relevant sectors (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture) that integrate efforts to combat VAWG developed in line with international HR standards, within the last year.	Justice	NA	Achieved
		Security	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 2.3.2 Number of Parliamentarians with strengthened knowledge and capacities to hold relevant stakeholders accountable to fund and implement multi-sectoral programmes to address VAWG, within the last year.	Women	NA	NA
		Total	NA	Achieved
OUTCOME 3: Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviors change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and harmful practices.				
Outcome	Indicator 3.3 Existence of with at least 3 evidence-based, transformative/comprehensive prevention strategies/programmes that address the rights of those marginalized and are developed in a participatory manner.	None	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 3.1.1 Existence of a draft new and/or strengthened Comprehensive Sexuality Education in line with international standards	None	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 3.1.2 Number of young women and girls, young men and boys who participate in either/both in- and out-of school programmes that promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and exercise of rights, including reproductive rights, within the last year. [Girls and Boys in-school]	Total in school	NA	Not achieved
		Total out-of-school	Achieved	Not achieved
Output	Indicator 3.2.1 Number of women, men, girls and boys who regularly attend community programmes to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women’s and girls’ sexuality and reproduction, within the last year. [Total]	Total	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 3.2.2 Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, within the last year. [Total]	Total	Achieved	Not achieved
OUTCOME 4: Women and girls who experience violence and harmful practices use available, accessible and quality essential services including for long term recovery from violence				
Output	Indicator 4.1.2 Number of women and girls with access to programmes developed to integrate VAWG response into SRH, education and migration services.	Girls	NA	NA
		Women	NA	NA
Output	Indicator 4.1.3 Existence of national guidelines or protocols that have been developed and/or strengthened in line with the guidance and tools for essential services.	Developed	NA	Achieved
		Strengthened	Not achieved	Not achieved
Output	Indicator 4.2.1 Number of women and girl survivors of violence that have increased KNOWLEDGE of a) to quality essential services, and b) accompaniment/support initiatives, including longer-term recovery within the last 12 months	Girls with Knowledge (a) ES	NA	Not achieved

Indicator level	Indicator #	Disaggregation	Progress 2020	Progress 2021
		Women with Knowledge (a) ES	NA	Not achieved
		Girls with Knowledge (b) Longer Term Recovery Services	NA	NA
		Women with Knowledge (b) Longer Term Recovery Services	NA	NA
Output	Indicator 4.2.2 Number of women and girl survivors/victims and their families, including groups facing multiple and intersecting forms or discrimination, that have increased ACCESS to a) to quality essential services and b) accompaniment/support initiatives, including longer-term recovery services, within the last 12 months	Girls with Access (a) to ES	NA	Not achieved
		Women with Access (a) to ES	NA	Not achieved
		Girls with Access (b) Longer term Recovery Services	NA	NA
		Women with Access (b) Longer term Recovery Services	NA	NA
OUTCOME 5: Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and harmful practices, collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes.				
Outcome	Indicator 5.1 Existence of globally comparable data on the prevalence (and incidence, where appropriate) of VAWG/HP, collected over time. [Prevalence]	Prevalence	Achieved	Achieved
		Incidence	Achieved	Not achieved
Outcome	Indicator 5.2 Existence of publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on various forms of VAWG/HP (at least on intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, family violence, harmful practices when relevant, and trafficking and femicide) at country level.	IPV	Not achieved	Not achieved
Output	Indicator 5.1.1 National Statistical Offices has developed/adapted and contextualized methods and standards at national level to produce prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG	None	Not achieved	Not achieved
Output	Indicator 5.2.1 Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making, within the past 12 months	None	NA	Not achieved
OUTCOME 6 - Women's rights groups and civil society organizations, including those representing youth and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination, more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and EVAWG				
Outcome	Indicator 6.1 Number of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and relevant CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, increase their coordinated efforts to jointly advocate on ending VAWG	Total	NA	Achieved

Indicator level	Indicator #	Disaggregation	Progress 2020	Progress 2021
Outcome	Indicator 6.3 Number of women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and CSOs, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, report having greater influence and agency to work on ending VAWG. [Total]	None	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.1.1 Number of jointly agreed recommendations on ending VAWG produced as a result of multi-stakeholder dialogues that include representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year	None	NA	NA
Output	Indicator 6.1.2 Number of official dialogues about ending VAWG with relevant government authorities that include the full participation of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs, including representatives of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, within the last year.	None	Not achieved	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.1.3 Number of CSOs representing youth and other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that are integrated with coalitions and networks of women's rights groups and civil society working on ending VAWG, within the last year.	Youth	NA	Achieved
		LNOB	Not achieved	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.1.4 Number of women's rights groups, networks and relevant CSOs with strengthened capacities to network, partner and jointly advocate for progress on ending VAWG at local, national, regional and global levels, within the last year	None	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.2.1 Number of supported women's right groups and relevant CSOs using the appropriate accountability mechanisms for advocacy around ending VAWG, within the last year	None	NA	Achieved
Output	Indicator 6.3.2 Number of women's rights groups and relevant CSOs using knowledge products developed by the participating UN agencies in the design of their own programmes on ending VAWG, within the last year	None	NA	Achieved