



United Nations
MPTF Office



STOP RAPE NOW
UN ACTION AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

United Nations
Team of Experts
Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict

**First Consolidated Annual Progress Report on
Activities Implemented under the
Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund**

**Report of the Administrative Agent of the Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund
for the period 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020**

Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
Bureau of Management
United Nations Development Programme
<http://mptf.undp.org>

31 May 2021

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS



OCHA - Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights



OSRSG-SVC - Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict



UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/Aids



UNDP - United Nations Development Programme



DPPA - Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs

CONTRIBUTORS



BELGIUM



DENMARK



ESTONIA



FINLAND



GERMANY



ITALY



JAPAN



NETHERLANDS



NORWAY



SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



TURKEY



UNITED KINGDOM



DPO -
Department of
Peace
Operations



UNFPA - United
Nations
Population Fund



UNHCR – UN
High
Commissioner
for Refugees



UNICEF - United
Nations
Children's Fund



UNODC - United
Nations Office
on Drugs and
Crime



UN Women –
United Nations
Entity for
Gender Equality
and the
Empowerment
of Women



WHO - World
Health
Organization



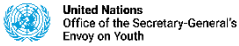
IOM -
International
Organization for
Migration



UNOCT - United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism



UNODA - United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs



Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth



OSAPG- Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide



OSRSG-CAAC - Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict



OSRSG-VAC - Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CAR	Central African Republic
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CRSV	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence
CRSV-MPTF	Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DPPA	United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
DPO	United Nations Department of Peace Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FARC-EP	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo
FoCs	Frameworks of Cooperation
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBVIMS	Gender-based Violence Information Management System
GFP	Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JCs	Joint Communiqués
MARA	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF	Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MPTFO	UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSAPG	United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide
OSRSG-CAAC	United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
OSRSG-SVC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
OSRSG-VAC	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children
PUNOs	Participating UN Organizations
R-ARCSS	Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in Republic of South Sudan
RMC	Resource Management Committee
SCC	Special Criminal Court

SCR	Security Council resolution
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPLA-IO	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition
SRN	Stop Rape Now
SMSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SMSG-CAAC	Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict
SMSG-SVC	Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict
SSPDF	South Sudan People's Defence Forces
SVC	Sexual Violence in Conflict
SWPA	Senior Women Protection Adviser
ToC	Theory of Change
TOE	UN Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict
TORs	Terms of Reference
UMIRR	Joint Rapid Response and Prevention Unit for Sexual Violence against Women and Children
UN	United Nations
UN Action	UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict
UN Action MPTF	UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict Multi-Partner Trust Fund
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAD	United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability Against Da'esh/ISIL Crimes
UNOCT	United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism
UNODA	United Nations of Disarmament Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
UNPOL	Police Division of the UN Department of Peace Operations
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WPA	Women's Protection Adviser
WPS	Women Peace and Security

DEFINITIONS

Allocation

Amount approved by the Steering Committee for a project/programme.

Approved Project/Programme

A project/programme including budget, etc., that is approved by the Steering Committee for fund allocation purposes.

Contributor Commitment

Amount(s) committed by a donor to a Fund in a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement with the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office), in its capacity as the Administrative Agent. A commitment may be paid or pending payment.

Contributor Deposit

Cash deposit received by the MPTF Office for the Fund from a contributor in accordance with a signed Standard Administrative Arrangement.

Delivery Rate

The percentage of funds that have been utilized, calculated by comparing expenditures reported by a Participating Organization against the 'net funded amount'.

Indirect Support Costs

A general cost that cannot be directly related to any particular programme or activity of the Participating Organizations. UNDG policy establishes a fixed indirect cost rate of 7% of programmable costs.

Net Funded Amount

Amount transferred to a Participating Organization less any refunds transferred back to the MPTF Office by a Participating Organization.

Participating Organization

A UN Organization or other inter-governmental Organization that is an implementing partner in a Fund, as represented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the MPTF Office for a particular Fund.

Project Expenditure

The sum of expenses and/or expenditure reported by all Participating Organizations for a Fund irrespective of which basis of accounting each Participating Organization follows for donor reporting.

Project Financial Closure

A project or programme is considered financially closed when all financial obligations of an operationally completed project or programme have been settled, and no further financial charges may be incurred.

Project Operational Closure

A project or programme is considered operationally closed when all programmatic activities for which Participating Organization(s) received funding have been completed.

Project Start Date

Date of transfer of first instalment from the MPTF Office to the Participating Organization.

Total Approved Budget

This represents the cumulative amount of allocations approved by the Steering Committee.

US Dollar Amount

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

INTRODUCTION

This first Consolidated Annual Narrative and Financial Progress Report for the [Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund \(CRSV-MPTF\)](#) is prepared by the UN Action Secretariat, the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (Team of Experts), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in its capacity as the Administrative Agent of the CRSV-MPTF. It is based on information provided by the Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs). In accordance with the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Fund, the Administrative Agent consolidates financial reports from the PUNOs and combines this with the narrative report, which is prepared by the UN Action Secretariat.

The CRSV-MPTF (the Fund) succeeds the UN Action Multi-Partner Trust Fund, which operated from 1st January 2009 to 31st December 2019 and builds upon past achievements, best practices, and lessons learned, in an opportunity to reinforce synergies between UN entities, governments, and civil society in preventing and responding to CRSV, galvanised by resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#). The new CRSV-MPTF focuses on four CRSV-specific outcomes which will be detailed in a further section of this report.

This Report provides information on key achievements by the UN Action Network during 2020, as they relate to deliverables specified in [UN Action's Strategic Framework for 2020 – 2025](#), and its attending 2020-2021 Workplan. It also summarises key achievements of the Team of Experts, which assists national authorities in strengthening the rule of law with the aim of ensuring criminal accountability for perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. This Report provides financial information for the period 1 January 2020 – 31 December 2020. A separate report detailing the TOE activities for the year has also been prepared¹.

OVERVIEW OF THE TEAM OF EXPERTS ON THE RULE OF LAW AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT

The United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict (Team of Experts) was created by Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) to assist national authorities in strengthening the rule of law with the aim of ensuring criminal accountability for perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence. Subsequent Security Council resolutions, including 2106 (2013); 2331 (2009); 2447 (2018); and 2467 (2019) have reinforced the mandate of the Team of Experts - the only dedicated Security Council mandated entity to provide this type of support on a global basis – and further elaborated the causes and consequences of conflict-related sexual violence and its linkages with other crimes including terrorism, trafficking and transnational organized crime; and brought greater focus to the needs of victims and the importance of justice to respond to and prevent conflict-related sexual violence.

The Team of Experts is based at the UN Headquarters in New York, works under the overall strategic leadership of the SRSG-SVC, and deploys regularly to some of the world's most challenging contexts. It provides a "One UN" response to Member States needs through a "co-lead entity" structure that currently includes experts from the Department of Peace Operations (DPO); the Office of the High Commissioner

¹ Also see the [Team of Experts' 2020 Annual Report](#)

for Human Rights (OHCHR); the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (Office of the SRSV-SVC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This approach allows the Team of Experts to leverage the comparative advantage of each co-lead entity to ensure coherence, maximize impact and feed its experiences back to the co-lead entities to strengthen their respective rule of law programmes. The co-lead entities also participate in an Advisory Group which meets regularly to guide and enhance the impact of the Team. The Team of Experts regularly engages with UN partners through inter-agency coordination arrangements, most notably the Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law (GFP) and UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action).

The Team operates under five-year Joint Programme that builds upon the experiences and lessons learned by the Team while supporting national authorities in strengthening the rule of law over the past decade. While there has been some progress at the normative level, sexual violence, like other serious international crimes continue to be a common feature of armed conflict across the world and perpetrators are rarely brought to justice. Demand among Member States for assistance remains high, often surpassing the Team of Experts' ability to respond given financial and human capacity constraints.

From the outset, the Team of Experts has been funded entirely through voluntary contributions for all staffing, programmatic and operational costs, and considerable effort is dedicated to ensuring that adequate resources are mobilised to meet current commitments and fulfil the Team's obligations under its Security Council mandate

OVERVIEW OF UN ACTION

UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict ([UN Action](#)) is a network of 19 UN entities², united by the goal of ending sexual violence during and in the wake of armed conflict. Working as one UN, UN Action aims to prevent and respond to CRSV, enhance accountability, and meet the needs of survivors of sexual violence through a survivor-centred approach. UN Action brings together the collective experience and institutional capacity of the UN system, and over the last decade has filled critical knowledge gaps, generated policy, guidance, and training materials to inform evidence-based prevention and response to CRSV. It has, furthermore, enhanced country-level capacity in this area. UN Action does so through the CRSV-MPTF, which (including activities funded through its predecessor, the [UN Action MPTF](#)), has funded 53 projects across 17 conflict-affected countries since 2008, as well as regional and global-level initiatives. These projects have fostered collaboration across UN entities and catalysed innovative initiatives and programming in the area of CRSV. Notably, the UN Action Network is the only UN system-wide initiative that leads advocacy, knowledge-building, resource mobilisation and joint programming to prevent and respond to CRSV.

UN Action was created in 2007 in response to the [“Call to Action”](#) of the June 2006 *Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond*, held in Brussels. The establishment of UN Action responded to calls from within the UN, as well as from women's rights organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and Member States to elevate sexual violence politically as a peace and security challenge, and as a humanitarian, human rights, gender and development issue.

² DPO, DPPA, IOM, OCHA, UNODA, OHCHR, OSAPG, OSRSG-CAAC, OSRSG-VAC, Office of the Youth Envoy, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOCT, UNODC, UN Women and WHO

In June 2007, the Secretary-General's Policy Committee endorsed UN Action as "a critical joint UN system-wide initiative to guide advocacy, knowledge-building, resource mobilization, and joint programming around sexual violence in conflict". In all relevant resolutions, notably [1820 \(2008\)](#), [1888 \(2009\)](#), [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#), the Security Council specifically highlights UN Action as *the* critical interagency coordination forum to address CRSV, through joint advocacy, knowledge generation and programming.

UN Action works through a network of Focal Points from each member entity and is governed by a Steering Committee consisting of Principals from the 19 UN entities. UN Action is chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) and is supported by a Secretariat, located in the Office of the SRSG-SVC.

In line with relevant Security Council resolutions mentioned above, UN Action seeks to synergise efforts of humanitarian, human rights, development, political, peacekeeping and security actors to address CRSV – reinforcing good practices, strengthening coordination, and avoiding duplication of effort. To achieve this synergy of action, UN Action harnesses the comparative strengths of each UN entity for a force-multiplier effect, recognising that sexual violence requires a broad-based, multisectoral response.

Further, UN Action is the primary consultation forum for the [annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence](#). The Report serves not only as a public record of events, but also as a global advocacy instrument for driving the field of CRSV prevention and response forward. Annually, the report brings new concerns and information on CRSV to light, and additionally, serves as a reference tool, as well as a basis for strategic advocacy, and enhanced operational response.

Subsequent annual Reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council, have detailed critical dimensions and emerging challenges for addressing CRSV. Most recently, these include addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by women and girl survivors, and children both as a result of sexual violence in armed conflict, the use of sexual violence to pursue strategies and tactics of terrorism, sexual slavery and conflict-driven trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, sexual slavery and forced marriage, as well as the need for enhanced justice and accountability, including reparations for survivors of CRSV. In 2019, the Security Council enshrined these new areas in resolution 2467, thereby providing strategic direction on essential elements that need to be considered in a survivor-centred approach to addressing CRSV. Further, the Security Council, under Operative Paragraph 34 in the same resolution, encouraged UN Action to *revise and continue development of innovative operational tools and guidance*, such as in these new areas.

Shortly after the issuance of Security Council resolution 2467, UN Action developed its new [Strategic Framework \(2020 – 2025\)](#), focusing particularly on a comprehensive and survivor-centred approach to CRSV, with a renewed emphasis on prevention of CRSV, including addressing its structural root causes. In parallel, following a review, and in line with the newly developed Strategic Framework, UN Action launched the CRSV-MPTF as a successor to the UN Action MPTF, building upon past achievements, best practices and lessons learned, and seizing an opportunity to reinforce synergies between UN entities, governments and civil society partners in preventing and responding to CRSV, galvanised by resolution 2467 (2019).

The overarching goal of UN Action is that CRSV is prevented, survivors' needs are met and accountability of perpetrators is enhanced.

UN Action is also the main forum through which the SRSB-SVC promotes cooperation and coordination of efforts among all relevant stakeholders (as referenced in Security Council resolution 1888 (2009)). The SRSB-SVC, Ms. Pramila Patten, has articulated a three-pillar priority strategy that, alongside the successive Security Council resolutions on CRSV, serve as a guiding approach for UN Action's 2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework. These are:

- a) Converting cultures of impunity into cultures of deterrence;
- b) Addressing structural gender-based inequality as the root cause and invisible driver of sexual violence in times of war and peace; and
- c) Fostering national ownership and leadership for a sustainable, survivor-centred response that empowers civil society and women's rights defenders.

UN Action's work is funded by voluntary contributions³ from a range of governments, including the Governments of Bahrain, Estonia, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and Sweden, and through which funds are directed to UN Action entities to support specific UN Action deliverables.

Adapting to a new context

In 2020, the UN Action Network and the UN system more broadly, were confronted by unprecedented challenges due primarily to the COVID-19. The pandemic has had far-reaching implications for the implementation of the CRSV agenda, with a number of the main considerations outlined by the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in a [Policy Brief](#) issued in 2020. For example, the pandemic amplified gender-based inequality, a root cause and driver of sexual violence. It resulted in the contraction of routine health services, which increased barriers to service provision for victims of sexual violence, including access to emergency post-rape care and sexual and reproductive health. The pandemic also hampered capacity for oversight and monitoring of contexts in which conflict-related sexual violence occurs frequently, such as in detention facilities, displacement settings, and remote rural areas where women undertake essential livelihood activities⁴.

However, despite these far-reaching consequences and challenges, the UN Action Network has adapted with speed to new ways of working, demonstrating agility, resilience, and a commitment to innovation. New methods of working have been explored and implemented including modalities of staying connected to on-the-ground realities. UN Action has already seen the positive consequences of adaptations made, including time-saving and cost-efficiency. In an increasingly digitally reliant era, UN Action increased its social media presence and launched a redesigned website that is regularly updated with new content, and which contains more details on the work of UN Action and its members, as well as a [document library](#) containing tools, guidelines and reports produced over the years.

The UN Action Network has also recalibrated to better respond to new dimensions of the CRSV mandate, including both normative and operational aspects.

Development of the 2020 - 2025 Strategic Framework

Whilst acknowledging that achievements of the UN Action Network, since its creation in 2007, and the MPTF, from its establishment in 2009, have been significant, there has been considerable progress on the

³ UN Action is funded exclusively through extra-budgetary resources and voluntary contributions

⁴ 2020 annual Report of the Secretary General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, [2020-SG-Report.pdf](#) ([stoprapenow.org](#))

CRSV agenda in the past decade, particularly strengthening of the international normative framework including the series of five resolutions on this issue that are increasingly comprehensive and operationally precise. In addition, the adoption of the ground-breaking Security Council resolution 2467 (2019) in April 2019, for the first time in a Security Council document – explicitly articulated a survivor-centred approach in the prevention and response to CRSV.

UN Action works on the implementation of these successive resolutions to move from resolutions to solutions on the ground that will manifest in tangible support for the most vulnerable populations.

In early 2020, the UN Action Network convened to articulate a new goal, develop its 2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework, and attending governance and planning documents which are detailed further in following areas of this report.

Refined Programmatic Approaches

In terms of the approach to programming, UN Action has renewed its focus to support the realisation of formal commitments made by affected countries, articulated in the form of Joint Communiqués and Frameworks of Cooperation reached by the SRSG-SVC on behalf of the UN. Thus, UN Action currently focuses on 19 conflict and post-conflict situations, and increases its coverage when emerging situations of concern arise (for example, Ethiopia in 2020) .

UN Action is currently working on a system-wide approach to conducting gaps assessments on the prevention and response to CRSV, in relation to commitments made by affected countries under the aforementioned Joint Communiqués and Frameworks of Cooperation. UN Action intends to inform programming by conducting joint technical assessments of the most urgent gaps, prioritise areas for intervention, and then developing comprehensive programmes to address these in conflict-affected contexts.

Reinforced by Security Council resolution 2467 (2019), which for the first time articulates a survivor-centred approach to conflict-related sexual violence, going forward, UN Action has re-committed to ensuring all initiatives are framed through a survivor-centred approach in preventing and responding to CRSV, and focusing on supporting the long-term resilience of survivors. As the UN's knowledge-generation hub on CRSV, UN Action has initiated the development of guiding principles for survivor centred approach in preventing and responding to CRSV, building on existing guidance within the human rights and humanitarian sectors. Further, it intends to build on the successes of previous survivor-centred projects funded through UN Action, such as the establishment of One-Stop Centres that bring multisectoral and life-saving services, including free health, sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial, legal, and livelihoods services under one roof to reduce the burden on survivors travelling to multiple locations to access the services they need.

UN Action is also increasingly focused on addressing the structural root causes of CRSV, such as gender inequality, at all levels from legislative and policy to community, through the review, updating and development of knowledge products and tools, and the design and implementation of projects that explicitly address CRSV at its root.

Regarding the strengthening of data as a basis for evidence-driven response, UN Action is updating guidance in this area and is planning on rolling out training on safe and ethical data collection,

management and particularly analysis. Further, UN Action is working to bridge data systems and actors for greater synergy of action, more comprehensive analysis and reporting, and a harmonised response. This includes consideration of the synergies between the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements on CRSV (MARA) as mandated by Security Council resolution 1960 (2010) and the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS).

UN Action Network Growth

The UN Action Network continues to grow at a steady pace. As of this writing, it welcomed four new members: the Office of the Youth Envoy, the Office of the SRSG on Violence Against Children, the Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide, and the UN Office of Counter Terrorism who will all make critical contributions to the CRSV mandate.

The UN Action Network, through its now 19 members, many with on-the-ground operational presence, has considerable reach and capacity. However, it should be noted that in 2020 the CRSV-MPTF only had resources available to fund one field-based project (in Somalia) despite urgent and growing need.

Resourcing Challenges

The COVID-19 crisis has undoubtedly stymied efforts to raise funds for the CRSV-MPTF on a larger scale, and as such had implications on the ability to fund comprehensive projects in countries of concern. A planned, in person, donor-roundtable was delayed due to travel restrictions, however, the SRSG-SVC continued efforts to raise funds through high-level bilateral virtual engagements, which were followed-up at the technical level by the UN Action Secretariat. UN Action has also developed a draft advocacy strategy with components such as fundraising, communications and social mobilisation (including reinvigoration of the Stop Rape Now campaign). This strategy will be finalised and implemented in 2021.

The first section of this report summarises the new governance systems and structure of the CRSV-MPTF and UN Action, the second section will report on achievements related to UN Action's five outcome areas, the third section will report on achievements by the TOE, and the last section will provide a financial report for the 2020 period.

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CONFLICT-RELATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND

Periodic reviews and evaluations of the UN Action MPTF were undertaken during its operation, including of UN Action⁵ and the Team of Experts⁶. Through these, several common themes emerged that were taken into consideration in developing the CRSV-MPTF, including the need to: (i) enhance communication and visibility; (ii) incorporate lessons learned from project implementation; (iii) enhance coordination and

⁵ [Review of UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict 2007-2012](#) – Final Report, dated January 2013; [Review of the UN Action Multi-Partner Trust Fund](#), dated June 2019.

⁶ Mid-term Review of the 2015-2019 Joint Programme of the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law / Sexual Violence in Conflict, dated July 2018.

cooperation; and (iv) enhance impact at the country level. In addition to these common themes, the Fund also incorporates lessons learned and best practices drawn from the operation of the UN Action MPTF over the past ten years.

Thus, through the establishment of the CRSV-MPTF, the UN system seeks to increase coherence, bring attention to critical gaps and underfinanced priorities, and consolidate and coordinate efforts to reduce fragmentation, and ensure impact at the country level.

Under the CRSV-MPTF, two windows were established – one for UN Action and the other for the Team of Experts. Each window has its own oversight and decision-making body to facilitate the work of the respective entities, guided by the strategic leadership of SRSV-SVC, and the three-pillar priority strategy set by the SRSV-SVC as described previously. The decision-making process for the use of funds by the CRSV-MPTF, is outlined in relevant governance documents of the fund and the joint programme of the Team of Experts. The UN Action Steering Committee, chaired by the SRSV-SVC, provides oversight and strategic advice regarding the CRSV-MPTF overall.

The MPTF Office of UNDP serves as the Administrative Agent of the CRSV-MPTF, using the pass-through fund management modality.

While the direction of each of the windows are elaborated in their respective strategic and / or programmatic frameworks, in general, the CRSV-MPTF focuses on four CRSV-specific outcomes:

1. Holistic survivor-centred prevention and protection responses to CRSV are provided by international institutions and actors, in line with Security Council resolution 2467 (2019);
2. Strengthened national and international institutions prevent CRSV by addressing gender-based inequality and discrimination as the root-cause and driver of sexual violence;
3. Greater justice and accountability for CRSV including a victim-centred approach through strengthened capacity and technical expertise of national and international institutions.
4. Better cooperation and information sharing between UN agencies reinforce coordination and improve system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV.

Further, jointly, the work of the Team of Expert and UN Action contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), primarily SDGs 5 and 16:



To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



To promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The UN Action Window of the CRSV-MPTF

Through the UN Action Window of the CRSV-MPTF, UN Action Network members are eligible to receive funding from the CRSV-MPTF for proposals that fit under the UN Action Strategic Framework, based on a call for proposals issued on a biannual (twice-yearly) basis, if the funding situation allows.

To take resource allocation decisions for the UN Action window of the CRSV-MPTF, the UN Action Network established a Resource Management Committee (RMC), a sub-committee of UN Action Focal Points. The RMC comprises of five UN Action Focal Points, one of whom serves as the Chairperson, nominated every year by the broader group of UN Action Focal Points and endorsed by the UN Action Steering Committee Chairperson, the SRSG-SVC. Resource allocation decisions are made by the RMC based on its Operational Guidance, and the UN Action Network Funding Strategy. In 2020, the RMC comprised UNFPA (as Chair), UN Women, DPO, UNHCR and IOM.

The UN Action Secretariat supports the work of the RMC, Participating UN Organisations submitting proposals for consideration, the Administrative Agent, and the UN Action Steering Committee for the purpose of facilitating the CRSV-MPTF.

The UN Team of Experts' Window of the CRSV-MPTF

Through the UN Team of Experts Window of the CRSV-MPTF, the Team of Experts mobilises resources for the implementation of activities under its joint programmes as well as country specific projects. These resources are then transferred to the co-lead entities of the Team of Experts following consultation with the Advisory Group. The Team of Experts then reports on its engagements through its annual report as well as project specific reports.

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE OF THE UN ACTION NETWORK

The UN Action Network Steering Committee

UN Action is governed by a Steering Committee comprised of principals and senior officials from its member entities, and is chaired by the SRSG-SVC. As per the Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee, it serves as a high-level forum for discussing and coordinating substantive policy and operational matters regarding CRSV, with a view to taking consensus-based decisions on concerted courses of action and follow up by UN Action. Principals meet three times a year (including once at the level of heads of agencies / departments) to undertake the following key tasks:

- a) Serving as high-level forum for discussing and coordinating substantive policy and operational matters regarding CRSV;
- b) Endorsing the multi-year Strategic Framework for UN Action developed by Focal Points, which sets out clear tasks and outputs to be achieved by the UN Action Network, indicating the contributions and added value of each member entity;
- c) Providing leadership and advocacy within the member's own entity on addressing CRSV, and on the participation in UN Action;
- d) Ensuring that CRSV prevention and response is mainstreamed within the member's own entity;
- e) Ensuring that resources are made available within the member's own entity to implement UN Action's Workplan and the Strategic Framework;
- f) Reviewing and endorsing the annual Report of the Secretary-General on CRSV;
- g) Endorsing decisions by the UN Action RMC on the allocation of UN Action's resources from the CRSV-MPTF;
- h) Providing strategic advice and taking decisions related to the CRSV-MPTF.

The UN Action Network Focal Points

UN Action Focal Points serve as the main technical representative for entities in the UN Action Network, and serve as the liaison between the entity including its country offices/missions and UN Action, and ensure two-way communication, knowledge sharing and coordinated action.

As per the Term of Reference for the Focal Points, their main role is:

- a) Supporting joint and coordinated action to prevent and respond to CRSV, such as jointly planning and leading initiatives to implement UN Action's Strategic Framework and Workplan;
- b) Supporting their entity's contribution for a coordinated approach on CRSV, such as by serving as a link to their entity's country-level initiatives, providing support, guidance, capacity building and advice to field offices on the implementation of the CRSV mandate, collecting good practices on implementing the CRSV mandate from their entity, promoting institutionalisation of these practices within the organisation, sharing information and tools, and rolling-out guidance developed through UN Action within their entity, and facilitating mainstreaming of CRSV within the work of the entity;
- c) Supporting the awareness-raising, advocacy and public information aspects of the UN Action Network, including by contributing to the development and dissemination of joint advocacy messages and supporting amplification of the Stop Rape Now Campaign;
- d) Guiding the UN Action window of the CRSV-MPTF such as through participating in the RMC, advising on funding strategies and priorities, promoting coherence and complementarity with other funding mechanisms, supporting the development of joint projects and related project proposals and guiding resource mobilisation efforts;
- e) Providing technical advice to the SRSG-SVC, such as by bringing in technical insights from the perspective and expertise of their entity, supporting the process for, and preparation of the annual Report of the Secretary-General on CRSV, and, preparing for and accompanying the SRSG-SVC on missions.

The UN Action Secretariat

The UN Action Secretariat coordinates and convenes the UN Action Network at the working-level, and provides technical and administrative support. It supports the preparation of the annual Report of the Secretary-General on CRSV; frames advocacy messages for UN Action and the SRSG-SVC; supports and engages in joint missions to situations of concern; conducts training, briefings and outreach activities; and develops strategic partnerships with a broad range of actors.

The UN Action Secretariat manages the technical and operational functioning of the CRSV-MPTF (for example coordinating the preparation of the Consolidated Annual Progress Report of the CRSV-MPTF and supporting the UN Action Steering Committee vis a vis its role and responsibilities as relates to the CRSV-MPTF. Further, it supports the UN Action Window of the CRSV-MPTF (for example supporting the functioning of the Resource Management Committee, vetting incoming project proposals, and monitoring progress of approved projects). The Secretariat also facilitates UN Action's strategic planning; monitors implementation of agreed-upon deliverables in line with the UN Action's Strategic Framework and Workplan; evaluates and reports on the impact of the UN Action's activities and mobilises resources for the Fund.

The UN Action Secretariat is located in the Office of the SRSG-SVC. Its core capacity includes the UN Action Coordinator (coordinating the UN Action Secretariat), a Programme Officer (serving as Deputy UN Action Coordinator, supporting knowledge management and learning), a Grants Manager and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist (supporting project proposal review, project monitoring and reporting processes); and an Administrative Assistant. In December 2020, the Government of Japan donated a Junior Professional Officer to the Secretariat. Further, in order to support specific thematic areas of focus identified by the UN Action Network, entities have been encouraged to second additional capacity – UNHCR has committed to providing such support for the 2021 year.

GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE OF THE TEAM OF EXPERTS

The Team of Experts functions under a “co-lead entity” structure that currently includes members from the Department of Peace Operations (DPO); the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This approach allows the Team of Experts to leverage the comparative advantage of each co-lead entity to ensure coherence, maximize impact, and feed its experiences back to the co-lead entities to strengthen their respective rule of law programmes.

The Team operates under the strategic leadership of the SRSG-SVC, pursuant to operative paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 2467 (2019) and is guided in its work by an Advisory Group comprised of one designated senior representative per co-lead entity (DPO, OHCHR, Office of the SRSG-SVC and UNDP) at P-5 level or above. The Advisory Group, *inter alia*, provides programmatic guidance and oversight in the management and delivery of the joint programme to ensure targeted results, coherence, and impact over time; supports resource mobilization; promotes and facilitates collaborative working relationships between the Team of Experts and the co-lead entities; and ensures visibility of the Team of Experts through strategic communication and public information efforts.

The Team is led by a Team Leader who reports to the SRSG-SVC, and currently comprises experts from DPO, OHCHR, the Office of the SRSG-SVC and UNDP, who each report to both the Team Leader and their respective entities. This structure facilitates enhanced communication and greater coherence by ensuring that efforts being undertaken by the Team of Experts complements and informs the work of respective co-lead entities to address CRSV.

UN ACTION’S 2020 – 2025 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

In early 2020, the UN Action Network convened to develop its [2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework](#), through an intensive and iterative process that led to the delineation of a new Goal, Theory of Change (ToC), four main Outcome Areas and a General Outcome related to overall coordination and advocacy, as well as specific activities, which were further detailed in its 2020 – 2021 Workplan.

GOAL, THEORY OF CHANGE AND OUTCOME AREAS

The overarching goal of UN Action is that *CRSV is prevented, survivors' needs are met and accountability of perpetrators is enhanced*.

The Theory of Change (ToC) outlines the goal that UN Action strives towards and maps backwards to articulate the five outcomes that need to be achieved for this goal to be realised⁷.

Thus:

1) **If** the UN Action Network fulfils its role as a consultative forum on CRSV and a platform for coordinating advocacy and implementing joint gap-filling CRSV-focused interventions, **then** UN agencies cooperate and share information to reinforce coordination and coherence and improve the system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV.

2) **If** comprehensive and multisectoral assistance, including medical, psychosocial, livelihoods and justice services are available and accessible to survivors, **and** CRSV prevention and risk mitigation measures are implemented in a survivor-centred manner, including through strategies and plans to implement Joint Communiqués, **then** survivors and at-risk groups are supported and protected and CRSV risks are prevented and mitigated.

3) **If** joint and sustained advocacy targets duty-bearers and decision makers to make and implement commitments to address CRSV, including its root causes **and** capacity and technical expertise of institutional, operational, national and other key actors is strengthened to prevent CRSV, respond to survivors' needs and strengthen legislation, investigations and prosecutions in line with guiding principles and a survivor centred approach, **then** duty-bearers and decision-makers take action to address both the immediate risks as well as the root causes of CRSV at the global and national level and promote compliance and accountability.

4) **If** guidance policies and tools are developed to fill gaps in knowledge, practices, advocacy and technical expertise for improved prevention of and response to CRSV and its root causes in conflict prevention/resolution, political, peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development processes, **and** such guidance, policies and tools are shared within the UN Action Network and other relevant actors, **then** UN action member entities contribute to advancing the CRSV/WPS (Conflict-Related Sexual Violence/Women Peace and Security) agenda in a way that is informed by relevant guidance, policies and tools on addressing CRSV and its root causes.

5) **If** safe, ethical, and gender-responsive data management and analysis methods are used, WPAs (Women Protection Advisers) are deployed, and the MARA (Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements) is strengthened, **and** safe, ethical, and effective coordination is promoted across CRSV information management platforms, **then** reliable, timely, and objective information on CRSV trends, risks and patterns supports evidence-based high-level advocacy, enhances pressure on parties to conflict and informs impactful, survivor-centred solutions.

⁷ UN Action recognises that system-wide efforts and collaboration between States, UN entities including the Team of Experts, non-governmental organizations and civil society is required to realise this goal.

In line with the ToC, five attending Outcomes were developed:

General Outcome related to Overall Coordination of the UN Action Network: UN agencies cooperate and share information to reinforce coordination and coherence and improve the system-wide response and implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on CRSV;

Outcome 1 related to Prevention, Protection and Support to Survivors: Survivors and at-risk groups are supported and protected and CRSV risks are prevented and mitigated;

Outcome 2 related to Capacity Building and Strategic Engagement: Duty-bearers and decision-makers take action to address both the immediate risks as well as the root causes of CRSV at the global and national level and promote compliance and accountability;

Outcome 3 related to Knowledge Building and the development of Policies, Guidance and Tools: UN Action member entities contribute to advancing the implementation of the CRSV/WPS agenda in a way that is informed by relevant guidance, policies, and tools on addressing CRSV and its root causes;

Outcome 4 related to Data Collection, Management, Monitoring, Analysis and Harmonisation: Reliable, timely and objective information on CRSV trends, risks and patterns supports evidence-based high-level advocacy, enhances engagement with, and pressure on, parties to conflict, and informs impactful, survivor-centred solutions.

UN Action also developed targets with linked indicators for each of these Outcome areas. Baseline data collection is underway, and progress will be monitored on an annual basis against these baselines. Activities to be achieved in the 2020 - 2021 were detailed and broken down into a joint Workplan based on the above Outcome areas. As living tools, UN Action's overall Governance Documents, Strategic Framework and Workplan are regularly reviewed and updated in consultation with decision-makers and key stakeholders, including country counterparts.

TEAM OF EXPERTS' JOINT PROGRAMME

Since its establishment in 2011, the Team of Experts has operated under three successive joint programmes (2012-2014, 2015-2019, and 2020-2024), which have provided the operational and programmatic framework upon which the Team has undertaken its work. The Team's current joint programme (2020-2024), which was developed in 2019 through an intensive and iterative process with the co-lead entities and Member State partners, is guided by the principles of national ownership, leadership and responsibility, victim-sensitive and human rights-based approaches, and a refined theory of change. The theory of change is based on the premise that strong political will; improved technical and operational capacity of national rule of law institutions and actors; and enhanced cooperation, coordination, coherence, and knowledge among actors will enable effective, victim sensitive criminal proceedings for conflict-related sexual violence in line with international standards, resulting in increased accountability for such crimes and ultimately contribute to long-term peace, security and development.

First, the lack of political will to promote accountability for conflict-related sexual violence at the national, regional and international levels undermines accountability efforts by preventing the adoption and implementation of internationally compliant laws, policies, and procedures; impeding criminal proceedings; maintaining discriminatory gender norms and gender-based discrimination and stereotypes

that may negatively impact and stigmatize victims of conflict-related sexual violence; and limiting resources for rule of law institutions and actors.

Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) mandates the Team of Experts to work “with the consent of the host government [...] to assist national authorities to strengthen the rule of law.” Through engagement with Member States; international, regional, and national mechanisms and bodies, including the Security Council; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); civil society organisations (CSOs) and others, the Team of Experts seeks to generate political will to promote accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and ensure consistent political advocacy around accountability efforts. The Team of Experts also utilizes opportunities provided by the SRSG-SVC’s formal agreements with Member States in the form of joint communiqués and frameworks of cooperation, the Security Council’s country-specific mandates for UN peace operations, and the Secretary-General’s country and thematic reports to highlight the need for justice and accountability.

Next, the lack of technical and operational capacity of national rule of law institutions and actors to address accountability for conflict-related sexual violence limits the geographical presence and professionalism of justice authorities and other actors, leading to accountability processes which are not compliant with international standards, further undermining confidence in the justice system and contributing to continued instability and conflict.

Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) mandates the Team of Experts to “identify gaps in national responses and encourage a holistic national approach” as well as to “work closely with national legal and judicial officials and other personnel in the relevant governments’ civilian and military justice systems to address impunity, including by the strengthening of national capacity, and drawing attention to the full range of justice mechanisms to be considered.” In accordance with this mandate, the Team of Experts provides technical and operational support on the basis of assessments it undertakes to strengthen the geographical presence and professionalism of rule of law authorities and other actors in areas including, *inter alia*, (i) criminal investigations and prosecutions; (ii) military justice; (iii) legislative reform; (iv) protection of victims and witnesses; and (v) reparations for victims. In addition to specific technical and operational support, the Team of Experts assists governments in developing strategies, plans of action and policy and guidance tools, to address accountability for conflict-related sexual violence.

Finally, the lack of cooperation, coordination, coherence, and knowledge among the range of actors (governments, CSOs, NGOs, United Nations, etc.) working to promote accountability for conflict-related sexual violence limits information sharing, creates unrealistic expectations, contributes to fragmentation, reduces available resources, and undermines efforts to deliver justice in an integrated, coherent and sustainable manner in line with international standards.

Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) mandates the Team of Experts to “make recommendations to coordinate domestic and international efforts and resources to reinforce the government’s ability to address sexual violence.” Based on this mandate, the Team of Experts tracks and analyses country situations for conflict-related sexual violence as well as any corresponding response by rule of law institutions and actors and utilizes its findings and analysis from assessments to inform its discussions with relevant authorities and partners to plan and coordinate future engagements. The Team of Experts also draws upon its engagements in a wide range of contexts to foster experience sharing and learning between counterparts in countries that have experienced conflict-related sexual violence.

In line with its theory of change, the Team of Experts seeks to achieve the following outcome and outputs:

Outcome: Greater accountability for CRSV through prompt, effective and victim sensitive criminal proceedings carried out in line with international standards.

Output 1: Political will to promote accountability for CRSV at country, regional and international levels enhanced.

Output 2: Technical and operational capacity of national rule of law institutions and actors to address accountability for CRSV enhanced.

Output 3: Cooperation, coordination, coherence and knowledge among the range of actors (governments, CSOs, NGOs, United Nations, etc.) working to promote accountability for CRSV enhanced.

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY UN ACTION IN 2020

INITIATIVES UNDER GENERAL OUTCOME RELATED TO OVERALL COORDINATION OF THE UN ACTION NETWORK

The UN Action Network started its year by embarking on a Strategic Retreat to take stock of past achievements and lessons-learned, and develop an ambitious new Goal and Strategic Framework, with attending targets and indicators, as well as a linked 2020 – 2021 Workplan.

Nineteen Focal Points representing 14 UN Action Network members participated in the Retreat, organised by the UN Action Secretariat and a number of Focal Points, with support from a consultant. The Retreat was hosted free of charge at the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (CPPF) in the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), where the hosts also played a leading role in framing the work of UN Action within the broader context of Conflict Prevention and Peace Building. The objectives of the retreat were to plan collectively on UN Action's future direction, begin drafting UN Action's Strategic Framework, develop indicators for a corresponding Results Framework; determine a set of activities for the 2020 - 2021 period; discuss the role of UN Action Focal Points; and create a space for UN Action Network members to interact with one another and deepen professional connections and take ownership of UN Action's future direction. On the second day of the Retreat, donors were invited to a roundtable to review the strategic direction that UN Action planned to take over the next years and receive their inputs, ideas, and recommendations. Canada, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom participated in the roundtable.

Following the retreat, and over the course of the next months, UN Action finalised the strategic and planning documents initiated at the Retreat. It also updated and / or developed a full set of Governance Documents including Terms of References for the Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund, the UN Action Window of the Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund (as well as the Operational Guidance note of the RMC, and funding Criteria of the CRSV-MPTF); the UN Action

Steering Committee, the UN Action Focal Points and the UN Action Secretariat. All these documents were duly endorsed by the Chair of the UN Action Network and the Steering Committee.

Focal Points met monthly to coordinate and implement the work of UN Action, and convened through additional “Core Teams” (a subset of Focal Points) to further strategic and thematic initiatives. Over the course of 2020, these Core Teams became a mainstay of how UN Action rapidly moved work forward, in fact learning the lesson that virtual meetings for both UN Action as a whole, and working through Core Teams allowed for more participation, shorter lead times in convening groups, taking decisions, and harnessing technology to develop and input into documents via virtual platforms.

On advocacy, one of the lessons-learned from the previous UN Action MPTF was that although UN Action had been savvy in its use of social media and celebrity diplomacy, which resulted in the Stop Rape Now website and Get Cross campaign, both internal and external advocacy on UN Action could be strengthened. Further, UN Action’s social media and public engagement had been strongest in its earlier years, and then entered a phase of dormancy, producing little original content, nor growing its reach. Efforts needed to be made to reinvigorate the Campaign, increase presence on social media, and redesign the now dated website.

Hence, in 2020, UN Action, through an Advocacy Core Team, developed a TOR for a consultant to design an Advocacy Strategy, including components related to communications, social mobilisation, and fundraising. The Core Team also developed a set of advocacy messages to be included in statements of UN Action Principals and for dissemination via social media on occasions such as the 75th UN General Assembly, the 20th anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and UN Security Council resolution 1325, and the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Related to these events, UN Action’s social media was most active in September when the [Twitter](#) account added new followers, and garnered 12,600 impressions and the [Facebook](#) page saw 5,563 impressions on our posts.

Following the Secretary-General’s call for global ceasefire, and on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, UN Action issued [a joint statement](#) urging all parties to conflict to cease CRSV and reiterating its commitment to “finally putting an end to the scourge of CRSV and to achieving sustainable peace”⁸.

Further, UN Action updated, redesigned and soft-launched its new website (stoprapenow.org). This website contains pages on UN Action’s past and present projects, an extensive [Digital Library](#) containing guidance, policies, and tools developed by, or supported by UN Action, and news on how each member entity contributes to the CRSV mandate. The Secretariat has also been actively upgrading its social media presence on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#), and established an Instagram account in anticipation of the reinvigoration of the #StopRapeNow campaign in 2021.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and related travel restrictions, the SRSG-SVC was not able to engage in physical field missions (although a number of virtual field visits were conducted)⁹. However, at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, UN Action immediately convened to identify the implications of the pandemic for CRSV survivors and people at-risk in humanitarian contexts, and in May, supported the strategic

⁸ [UN Action joins the call of the Secretary General for a Global Ceasefire](#)

⁹ The UN Action Network will support the preparation for and / or participate in such missions when travel resumes

advocacy of the SRSB-SVC, by advising on the development and publication of the [policy brief on the implications of COVID-19 for the prevention and response to CRSV](#), as referred to earlier in the report.

In parallel, in March, at the request of Japan, and as evidence emerged that the COVID-19 pandemic would have serious implications on CRSV survivors, and those at risk, UN Action submitted eight Concept Notes, to fund rapid-response projects at the nexus of CRSV and COVID-19. Though, at that time no projects were funded, a short-list of these projects were updated and re-submitted to Japan upon its invitation for funding under the 2020 Supplementary budget. As a result, one project was approved in the MENA region, and is currently under final approval.

In efforts to replenish the CRSV-MPTF, UN Action had originally planned to convene an in-person donor roundtable in mid-2020 to advocate for support to the CRSV agenda, raise the profile of the UN Action Network, and call for funding. Due to travel restrictions, UN Action decided that this initiative would be postponed to 2021. However, the SRSB-SVC led multiple efforts to raise funds for UN Action, including, in July, by sending communications to 30 member states, both traditional donors and other countries who champion the CRSV agenda, to introduce the CRSV-MPTF and appeal for resources. This was followed up with high-level bilateral engagements by the SRSB-SVC, as well as technical-level meetings by the UN Action Secretariat and the TOE.

As a result, in 2020, the UN Action window of the CRSV-MPTF, received modest seed contributions from Belgium, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Estonia and Japan. The COVID-19 crisis has undoubtedly stymied efforts to raise funds for the CRSV-MPTF on a larger scale, and as such had implications on the ability to fund comprehensive projects in countries of concern.

INITIATIVES UNDER OUTCOME 1 RELATED TO PREVENTION, PROTECTION AND SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS.

In 2020, the CRSV-MPTF only had the resources to support one country-level project. This Somalia based project, ***Leveraging the strength of women in Somalia to mitigate conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) and prevent violent extremism (CRSV UNA02)***, initiated in April, and implemented by IOM and UNSOM, supports the rehabilitation and reintegration of approximately 400 women who were formerly associated with violent extremist groups, many of whom are survivors of CRSV. The project uses culturally grounded approaches to assist women to recover from trauma, and provides economic empowerment support, ultimately ensuring that these women become active contributors to sustainable peacebuilding in their societies.

In 2020, the project reached 123 women formerly associated with Al Shabaab, who have been enrolled with women-led CSOs (Civil Society Organisations) in Kismayo and in Baidoa to receive reintegration services and participate in social reintegration and community engagement activities.

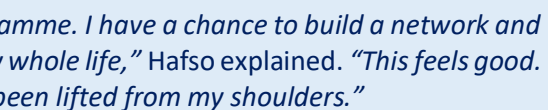
Survivors received individualised services, such as medical support and referrals, specialised counselling, and dignity kits, which include traditional Somali clothing (e.g. dresses (diric), shawls (garbosaar), headscarves (shalmad)), sanitary items, and cleaning products, as well as water buckets and mosquito nets.

The project also rapidly adjusted to the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. It has adapted to include preventative health trainings, provision of Personal Protective Equipment, and hybrid in-person and

virtual capacity development for national counterparts. This resulted in few delays, and, in fact, enhanced opportunities to test new ways of conducting capacity building and provided an avenue through which public health messages could be integrated in GBV (Gender-based violence) awareness-raising efforts, and vice-versa.

IOM and UNSOM reported, that by using survivor-centred psychosocial approaches, they have created opportunities for women to explore their identities, establish a sense of belonging within their communities, and build trust with other women. Survivors have been able, for the first time, to share their stories and open-up about their traumatic experiences, and be offered a space for healing. Therapeutic activities include arts and poetry-based expression and sports. The process of healing has helped the women to build their confidence.

Hafso* (name changed) is amongst the women participating in the programme. At the women's centre, she feels she has finally found a safe place.



"I am happy to be enrolled in this rehabilitation programme. I have a chance to build a network and share the secrets and the shame I have been hiding my whole life," Hafso explained. "This feels good. Here I am not judged. I finally feel as if a burden has been lifted from my shoulders."

Survivors are also participating in basic education, business development and livelihood skills training to enable them to rebuild their lives. Livelihood support has been tailored to adapt to women's wishes, for example, some of the women chose to pool their money and start a collaborative business including starting a small cooperative in goat-keeping and livestock trade. The programme strives to contribute to reconciliation efforts within communities by promoting economic and personal resilience, social integration, and community engagement, and is an important step to empowering the women to become active members of their community and contribute to peacebuilding processes.

The project has also engaged with government female focal points to address ongoing developments, including any challenges in the programme, and has provided training and capacity building for government counterparts, including supporting government policy development by producing rehabilitation and reintegration programme standard operating procedures (SOPs). These SOPs will serve as an implementation guide for the Government of Somalia at federal and regional levels to effectively continue the programmes in the future.

The SMSG-SVC, highlights that *"the UN-Action Network through its CRSV-MPTF can transform survivors' lives. The results are tangible and visible. In my last visit to Somalia in July 2019, I gained first-hand knowledge of the immense protection challenges faced by survivors, particularly in displacement settings. My dialogue with the national authorities was frank and constructive; they did not deny or downplay the gravity of the crimes of sexual violence. Such acknowledgement is critical as no problem in human history has ever been resolved through silence and denial."*

INITIATIVES UNDER OUTCOME 2 RELATED TO CAPACITY BUILDING AND STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT

The monthly UN Action Focal Points meetings serve as an important forum through which the UN Action Network consults with country counterparts, including Women's Protection Adviser (S/WPAs) to discuss how entities are individually and collectively engaging on the CRSV mandate in situations of concern, particularly in support of the implementation of Joint Communiqués (JCs), Frameworks of Cooperation (FoCs), and attending CRSV-related national strategies and plans. UN Action also uses this forum to identify gaps in implementation and strategise on how these can be filled. S/WPAs are encouraged to be candid in sharing challenges with the UN Action Network and recommending ways for it to further support the mandate.

Towards the latter part of 2020, discussions on specific countries of concern were incorporated as a standing item in the Focal Points meetings.

September	Somalia	The SWPA in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) briefed the Focal Points on the current situation in Somalia, including information on the increase of GBV, and barriers such as the Parliament's failure to pass the Sexual Offenses Bill, for which advocacy has been underway since 2017.
October	Mali	The SWPA in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) briefed Focal Points on the situation in Mali, including the dire security situation, and fall-out from the coup in August.
November	Central African Republic	The SWPA highlighted challenges regarding monitoring and obtaining information on cases related to CRSV owing to limited capacity and logistics, including lack of transport and road systems which have created a high barrier for victims to report CRSV.
	Democratic Republic of Congo	Progress on the draft Implementation Plan of the JC in the DRC was discussed.
December	Nigeria and Ethiopia	Focal Points shared information on the concerning situation of CRSV in Nigeria and Ethiopia in the December meeting, discussing also, the potential ways to provide rapid-response support, including engaging in high-level advocacy. Updates and reports shared at this meeting informed the development of the SRSG's press statement , released in early 2021, urging all parties to prohibit use of sexual violence and cease hostilities in the Tigray region.

Building upon the deepening of UN Action's individual and collective support for the implementation of CRSV related commitments, during UN Action's Strategic Retreat in early 2020, it identified that there is currently no common approach / methodology within UN Action for conducting joint gap assessments on the prevention and response to CRSV in countries of concern. Thus, one of the activities in the UN Action 2020 -2021 Workplan is to develop such an approach. The objectives of developing the approach for, and then conducting gap assessments are multiple, but would allow for a better understanding of which CRSV prevention and response commitments are being upheld, which ones are not and to what extent. In practical terms, this would furnish UN Action with the necessary information to plan for and support

comprehensive gap-filling initiatives in countries of concern. UN Action is currently developing a methodology for conducting this exercise, which was to be piloted through an in-person joint mission between Focal Points in 2021. However, given the ongoing travel restrictions, it decided to adapt the methodology so that it can be employed as a hybrid (virtual and in-person) or entirely virtual exercise. Consultations are under way to select a country of concern where the approach can be piloted in 2021. It is anticipated that the outputs of this exercise will be :

1. A piloted approach for conducting a gap assessment in a country of concern, for use by UN Action Network entities, and as a reference tool for the UN Action Network and wider audience to conduct similar exercises in other countries of concern.
2. The production and dissemination of an Outcome Document and an Action Plan for the UN Action Network in the country of concern, based on the gaps identified and needs prioritised during the gaps assessment exercise.
3. The development and implementation of joint comprehensive programmes by UN Action Network entities to address the needs identified.

INITIATIVES UNDER OUTCOME 3 RELATED TO KNOWLEDGE BUILDING, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND TOOLS

Since 2010, the UN Action Network has filled critical knowledge gaps, and generated policy, guidance, and training materials to inform CRSV prevention and response. This was further reiterated by the Security Council, under Operative Paragraph 34 of its resolution 2467 (2019), where it encouraged UN Action to *revise and continue development of innovative operational tools and guidance*. As the UN's knowledge-generation hub on CRSV, UN Action has initiated the development of knowledge products, guidance and tools that will allow for a more universal understanding, and context-based application of commitments made under, and new dimensions of resolution 2467 (2019), with the hope of translating these into evidence-based and best practice programmes on the ground.

To this end, in 2020, UN Action:

- Identified the implications of COVID-19 for CRSV survivors and people at-risk in humanitarian contexts. This informed and supported the SRSG -SVC to develop and publish [*a policy brief on the implications of COVID-19 for the prevention and response to CRSV.*](#)
- Initiated the development of *Guiding Principles for a Survivor-Centred Approach in Preventing and Responding to Conflict-related Sexual Violence*, which will be expanded into a guidance document outlining guiding principles on how a survivor-centred approach is applied in the context of CRSV prevention and response.
- Initiated the collation of definitions and approaches to prevention of CRSV, with the intention of developing a *Guidance Note on CRSV prevention* in 2021.

Linked to the above efforts on building knowledge in the area of CRSV prevention, in 2021 UN Action plans to develop a series of short guidance notes on 1. Addressing the root and structural causes of CRSV; 2.

The role of women in conflict resolution in post-conflict contexts and; 3. Working with men on CRSV prevention.

The UN Action Network is also committed to ensuring CRSV is sufficiently reflected and “mainstreamed” as entities develop their own mandate-specific policies, guidance, and tools. It will make concerted efforts in this area in 2021.

Across all of the areas for which the UN Action Network is currently building knowledge, it has committed to ensuring that all products will be disseminated not only through traditional channels such as websites and social media, but also through tailored webinar sessions which will provide the context of the tool, explain applicability in situations of concern, and provide hands-on support for roll-out.

INITIATIVES UNDER OUTCOME 4 RELATED TO DATA COLLECTION, MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, ANALYSIS AND HARMONISATION.

Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-related Sexual Violence

UN Action is the primary consultation forum for the [annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence](#). The Report serves not only as a public record of events, but also as a global advocacy instrument for driving the field of CRSV prevention and response forward. Annually, the report brings new concerns and information on CRSV to light, and additionally, serves as a reference tool, as well as a basis for strategic advocacy, and enhanced operational response. In 2020, as per usual practise, Focal Points worked with the OSRSG-SVC and country counterparts to bring timely and quality data into the report. The UN Action Steering Committee also met in March to review and endorse the 11th annual report. Following its publication, UN Action engaged in an “after action review” to bring to light key challenges during the process for report development, in preparation for the 12th annual Report of the Secretary-General on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. The utility of this exercise was clear, and will now become an established annual practice.

Harmonisation across the MARA, MRM, and GBVIMS

Another linked area of focus for UN Action in the coming years, will be to increase information sharing and harmonisation across data collection and analysis systems and platforms related to CRSV, namely the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA), the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and the GBV Information Management Systems (GBVIMS). Though each of these serve different purposes, intersections are clear, and more precise and standardised triangulation mechanisms are required.

As a kick-off to this ambitious initiative, an informal virtual “drop-in” session was organised for country counterparts in order to increase their understanding on the intersections between the MARA and the GBVIMS. At this session, counterparts identified the need for further training that goes beyond data gathering, but also focuses on analysis in order to identify early warnings, trends, and patterns – enabling identification and rapid response in hotspots before CRSV escalates.

In parallel, UN Action plans a long-needed update to the *Provisional Guidance Note: Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010) On Women, Peace and Security (Conflict-Related Sexual Violence)*, first published in 2011 with support from the UN Action Network.

In 2020, UN Action initiated planning for this update, including the identification of key issues, challenges, and best practices. UN Action's Core Team on this decided the UN Action Network would carry out a global assessment of the MARA, to understand whether the purpose of the MARA and the functions foreseen for it have been fulfilled, and to develop a set of recommendations that will serve to inform an update of the aforementioned Provisional Guidance Note, and strengthen the operationalisation of the MARA across various settings. This will be done through a review of the operationalisation of the MARA from 2009 to 2021 in country settings where such arrangements have been established, and, case studies of selected country settings of concern for the Security Council where the MARA has not been established. The assessment will entail a comprehensive desk review, a survey, and interviews.

It is envisaged that the recommendations from the assessment and the revision of the Provisional Guidance Note will contribute to strengthening the operationalisation of the MARA in the field, including the collection of timely information that can inform access to services for survivors, assist in engaging with Parties to Conflict to prevent and respond to CRSV, and be used to inform and engage with the Security Council to take necessary steps, including imposing of sanctions for the crime of CRSV.

INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN BY THE TEAMS OF EXPERTS IN 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, a significant and detrimental impact on all aspects of the rule of law response including accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. This includes limitations on the availability and capacity to receive and process reports on incidents of sexual violence by law enforcement and judicial authorities. Additionally, relevant investigative work, pre-trial hearings and trials have been limited causing delays in justice, undermining the confidence of survivors in judicial systems, and emboldening perpetrators.

Despite the many challenges of the reporting period, the Team of Experts was able to ensure business continuity and achieve significant progress in meeting the support needs of survivors and Member States by utilizing a variety of approaches, including strengthened partnerships, field-based experts and communications technologies to continue to collaborate with colleagues and partners both at headquarters and field levels.

The Team of Experts also used the opportunity provided by the pandemic to further refine and strengthen its workstreams, country focus, thematic engagements, and knowledge building.

OUTCOME AND OUTPUTS

In 2020, the Team of Experts pursued initiatives supporting greater accountability for conflict-related sexual violence through prompt, effective and victim sensitive criminal proceedings carried out in line

with international standards. These initiatives were undertaken in alignment with the three outputs presented in the Team's joint programme.

In terms of enhancing political will to promote accountability for conflict-related sexual violence at national, regional, and international levels, the Team advocated for the adoption and implementation of internationally compliant laws, policies, and procedures, such as in Iraq, Somalia, and South Sudan; supported accountability through criminal proceedings, such as in CAR, DRC, and Guinea; advocated for the abolishment of discriminatory gender norms and gender-based discrimination and stereotypes that negatively impact and stigmatize victims of conflict-related sexual violence; and mobilized resources to support rule of law institutions and actors, such as in CAR and DRC.

To enhance the capacity of national rule of law institutions and actors to address accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, the Team of Experts provided technical and financial support for the national judiciary in CAR, which led to three convictions for conflict-related sexual violence at the Bangui Court of Appeal. It also built the case-tracking capacity in the High Courts of Bangui and Bimbo to strengthen coordination between the national investigative units and relevant jurisdictions. In the DRC, it provided technical assistance for the investigation, prosecution, and trial of Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka, who was convicted by the Cour Militaire Opérationnelle of North Kivu in November 2020, sending a strong message that justice may be delayed but not denied. It also assessed the impact of COVID-19 on the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence in DRC. The Team continued to support the national authorities in Guinea to advance accountability for the crimes of 28 September 2009. In Colombia, the Team contributed to the development of a digest of International Standards on the Prosecution and Adjudication of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, which will support the transitional and ordinary justice systems to address these crimes. In Iraq, the Team worked with partners to strengthen the draft bill on reparations for survivors of ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) captivity and ensure its compliance with international norms and standards. In Nigeria, the Team contributed to the training of members of the Attorney-General's Office, including the Complex Case Group, the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, and the National Judicial Institute, with a view to integrating sexual violence considerations and where relevant charges into ongoing cases. In Somalia, the Team prepared a preliminary analysis of the newly presented draft bill on Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes (2020) forming a basis for UNSOM advocacy around the withdrawal of the draft bill and reintroduction of the Sexual Offenses Bill (2018). In line with the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, the Team of Experts supported the finalisation by the Republic of South Sudan Joint Defence Board of the Action Plan for the Armed Forces on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in South Sudan merging the action plans of the SSPDF (South Sudan People's Defence Forces) and the SPLA-IO (Sudan People's Liberation Movement-in-Opposition) on conflict-related sexual violence and resulting in prioritised activities and requests for strategic support.

To enhance cooperation, coordination, coherence, and build expertise and awareness among the range of actors working towards accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, the Team partnered with the Journal of International Criminal Justice to publish a landmark Special Issue on justice and accountability for sexual violence in conflict. The Special Issue provides experiences, good practices, and challenges from the past decade on how to address accountability for sexual violence in conflict from experts around the world and was downloaded more than four thousand times. The Team also launched a webinar series, the Digital Dialogue Series, reaching more than three thousand viewers including academics, policy-makers, and practitioners, fostering a community of practice that transcends national borders and institutional divides. These discussions and their follow-up postings have allowed the Team to raise awareness further with Member States and other counterparts, share good practices and tools among national level practitioners, and refine the expertise of the Team while raising the profile of its work.

These initiatives, among others during the reporting period, demonstrate that the Team is delivering on its mandate under Security Council resolution 1888 (2009) and contributing to the achievement of greater accountability for conflict-related sexual violence through prompt, effective and victim sensitive criminal proceedings carried out in line with international standards.

COUNTRY SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENTS

During the reporting period, the Team of Experts engaged in the Central African Republic, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan. Following is a summary of the work undertaken in each country.

i. Central African Republic

Objective(s)

Within the framework of Security Council resolution 2552 (2020) on CAR and the Joint Communiqué on the prevention and fight against conflict-related sexual violence signed in 2019, the Team of Experts has set up a dedicated project to deliver on the requested support for the Government of CAR to ensure accountability for conflict-related sexual violence crimes. The project which forms the bulk of the Team's action in CAR aims at strengthening the capacity of the national authorities to investigate and prosecute sexual violence in conflict. This includes building the capacity of the UMIRR (Joint Rapid Response and Prevention Unit for Sexual Violence against Women and Children), national courts and the SCC (Special Criminal Court), working collaboratively to investigate and adjudicate conflict-related sexual violence cases, and responding adequately to the demands of the citizens of the CAR.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts carried out a diagnostic analysis of the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence in CAR to assess and reflect on the progress made and the challenges remaining for law enforcement, especially the UMIRR, the national jurisdictions, and the SCC in the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence, while promoting a victim-centered approach.
- The Team of Experts provided technical advice, mentoring and material support for the UMIRR including supporting the finalization and transfer to the relevant prosecutors of the case files of the field investigation carried out by the UMIRR in February 2018 and August 2019 outside the city of Bossangoa and near the city of Kaga Bando respectively.
- The Team of Experts also provides support for judicial authorities. Notably the Team organized a joint workshop with the Ministry of Justice, UNDP, and MINUSCA to discuss the challenges limiting the efficient tracking of judicial cases in the UMIRR and the High Courts of Bangui and Bimbo, as well as to identify concrete corrective actions to be implemented. The Team also provided technical and financial support for the second criminal session of the Bangui Court of Appeal, which resulted in three convictions for conflict-related sexual violence.

Assistance and Impact

In 2020, the Team of Experts continued to support the reinforcement of the national judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence crimes through the deployment of a Technical Specialist to CAR, embedded in the Justice and Correction Services of MINUSCA. Through its expert in the UN Joint Justice Projects in CAR,¹⁰ the Team of Experts provided technical support and mentoring for the national authorities to build their capacity to investigate and prosecute conflict-related sexual violence crimes.

A primary focus of the Team's work was to build the capacity of UMIRR to ensure that cases are investigated and transferred for prosecution to relevant jurisdiction in a timely manner. To deliver on this goal, a series of mentoring sessions and two practical trainings on interview techniques targeting especially the newest staff of the UMIRR, were organized by the Team of Experts with the support of two police specialists. The Team of Experts also took part as a co-trainer in the National Training on Trafficking in Persons, organized jointly by the Central African government, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and UNODC, which allowed the UMIRR to strengthen its technical expertise to start investigating cases of trafficking in persons. Indeed, in 2020, a presidential decree, followed by the adoption of a new national action plan on the fight against trafficking in persons in CAR, expanded the mandate of the UMIRR by making it the victims' main entry point to the national criminal justice system.

Furthermore, the Team of Experts provided technical expertise for the UMIRR to support the investigation of pending conflict-related sexual violence cases. In February 2018 and August 2019, the UMIRR had launched two investigations outside the city of Bossangoa and near the city of Kaga Bandoro respectively. The first investigation focused on a mass rape incident which concerned 150 victims of conflict-related sexual violence, while the second mission allowed the UMIRR to investigate cases of conflict-related sexual violence allegedly perpetrated by members of armed groups in several locations, totalling 264 victims. Throughout the reporting period, the Team of Experts worked closely with the investigators, the heads of the field criminal investigations, and the director of the UMIRR to ensure that procedural requirements were met, making sure the referral of the case files to the relevant prosecutor's office occurred. By working closely with the national law enforcement authorities, the Team of Experts gained a better understanding of their current practices, prompting reflection and recommendations regarding the future management of case files. Thanks to the close follow-up and mentoring provided, the case file of the investigation conducted in August 2019 has officially been referred to the prosecutor of Kaga-Bandoro's High Court in January 2021. The judicial file on the Bossangoa investigation is pending finalization by the UMIRR. Since then, the Team of Experts has liaised regularly with the prosecutor making available any necessary technical expertise the prosecutor deems relevant to bring the case to trial and ensure victim's access to justice.

In order to address the challenges limiting the efficient tracking of judicial cases in the UMIRR and the High Courts of Bangui and Bimbo, a joint workshop was held with the Minister of Justice, UNDP, and MINUSCA to discuss international best practices, as well as to identify and prioritize corrective actions to implement, including technical trainings and the development of coordination mechanisms under the National Justice Sector Policy. Thanks to the participation of several high-level judicial actors, including the Director of the Judicial Services of the Ministry of Justice and the President of the Council of State, the discussions allowed for the identification of concrete actions that will be implemented by the national

¹⁰ Currently, the Team of Experts contributes with MINUSCA and UNDP to the implementation of the Joint Project titled "Project to support the restoration of the rule of law and the reform of the justice and security sectors in CAR," covering the period 2020-2023. In particular, the Team of Experts will focus on supporting the implementation of the third output of the Joint Project, aimed at improving women's access to justice and security, including through the prosecution, investigation and adjudication of sexual and gender-based violence cases.

authorities with the support of their partners, including the Team of Experts. Two workshops will be organized by the Team of Experts in 2021 to contribute to the sensitization of judicial actors and sexual violence focal points of the High Courts and Courts of Appeal of Bangui and Bimbo on the rules and procedures to be followed to ensure the efficient tracking of judicial files and improve the management of sexual violence cases transferred by the UMIRR to the relevant courts.

The Team of Experts also worked closely with the national judiciary, MINUSCA and UNDP to provide technical and financial support for the organization of the second criminal court session of 2019 at the Bangui Court of Appeal. The session which was held in December and ended in early 2020 resulted in 22 cases of sexual violence put on the docket out of a total of 25. To support successful proceedings, the Technical Specialist provided specialized mentoring for the officials and victims' representatives related to specific needs of sexual violence victims during judicial proceedings. She also provided training for the jurors on the existing national legal framework for sexual violence to support adequate deliberations.

Furthermore, in order to provide a baseline for engagement and roadmap for national authorities, the Team carried out an analysis of the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence in CAR, to assess and reflect on the progress made and the challenges remaining for law enforcement, especially the UMIRR, the national jurisdictions, and the SCC in the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence, while promoting a victim-centred approach. This assessment report was developed based on a thorough desk-review including legal analysis and on-site research with relevant stakeholders, including many interviews with key national judicial authorities, United Nations entities, and civil society organizations. This significant work led to the finalization of an in-depth assessment, "a diagnostic report" with concrete recommendations for the government to consider implementing with the support of the Team of Experts, MINUSCA and UNDP. Key among those are recommendations to adopt clear policies forbidding the re-qualification of criminal acts (e.g. incidents of rape) as misdemeanours or minor offences; revising the code of military justice to align it with international human rights law standards; adopting a prosecutorial strategy prioritizing the prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence; and continuing to strengthen the capacity of the judicial authorities investigating and prosecuting conflict-related sexual violence. The diagnostic will be officially presented and discussed with the national authorities in a workshop to be held in 2021. Its objective will be to facilitate the development and adoption of an implementation plan for the recommendations of the report. This plan would help evaluate the justice reform efforts carried out by the Central African Republic's authorities to address the fight against impunity for conflict-related sexual violence against clearly established benchmarks.

Finally, as part of its victim-centred methodology, the Team of Experts, with MINUSCA and UNDP, continued providing material and technical support for Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, for the completion of three perception surveys, aimed at collecting data representative of the adult population's perception on peace, justice and security in CAR, which are being carried out between 2019 and 2021. The first survey, which included 5,206 interviews in twelve prefectures and the city of Bangui, was finalized in February 2020¹¹. The findings demonstrate that the recorded progress in the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence has positively impacted the populations' trust in the judicial system, through increased complaints registered for such crimes. The data collection for the two remaining surveys is ongoing. These surveys provide national policy-makers, Member States, UN actors, and civil society organizations supporting the fight against impunity for conflict-related sexual violence in CAR with objective information on the perceptions of the national populations on the links between security, justice

¹¹ Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, *Peace Justice and Security Polls, Report – November 2020 (Data from February 2020)*, available at http://www.peacebuildingdata.org/sites/m/pdf/CAR_Poll5_ENG.pdf.

and peace. This information is crucial to help these stakeholders evaluate the impact of the efforts deployed to strengthen the rule of law in CAR.

Looking Ahead

Based on the findings of the assessment report by the Team of Experts, in 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) training and mentoring police investigators and police officers serving in the UMIRR, the SCC, and the sexual violence desks of police stations; (ii) providing logistical and material support for the UMIRR to conduct more investigations; (iii) providing technical advice and support for the ordinary criminal courts and the SCC, regarding the prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence cases; (iv) developing the judicial authorities' capacity to track judicial proceedings involving conflict-related sexual violence; and (v) supporting legal information and legal aid.

ii. Colombia

Objective(s)

Building on its prior engagements in Colombia, and given the SMSG-SVC's explicit mention in the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) to provide an accompanying role in the implementation of the gender provisions, the Team of Experts seeks to support the Colombian authorities in their efforts to ensure accountability for conflict-related sexual violence, and by developing tools and sharing good practices.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts participated in the drafting process, informed by consultations with national judicial authorities and civil society organizations, of a digest on International Standards for the Prosecution and Adjudication of Conflict-related Sexual Violence to further inform and support the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence by the transitional and ordinary justice systems.
- The Team of Experts supported the SMSG-SVC's participation in the Deputy Secretary-General's virtual mission to Colombia in the context of the 20th anniversary of the Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Assistance and Impact

Throughout 2020, the Team of Experts has been working closely with United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and OHCHR in Colombia on the development of a digest on International Standards for the Prosecution and Adjudication of Conflict-related Sexual Violence to assist national authorities, including the transitional and ordinary justice system, to address these crimes. The publication provides reference information, good practices and lessons learned on the legal and conceptual advances for the prosecution of sexual violence at the national, regional and international levels. The document, drafted in Spanish, has been informed by and validated through consultations with representatives of the justice sector and women's rights organizations in Colombia. To ensure its wide dissemination among policy-makers and practitioners beyond Colombia and Latin America, the Team will fund its translation into English.

The Team of Experts supported the preparation of the SRSG-SVC's meetings with Colombian authorities, women human rights defenders and victims, during the Deputy Secretary-General's virtual mission to the Colombia on 28 and 29 October 2020. Noting that the Office of the SRSG-SVC is explicitly named in the 2016 Peace Agreement as accompanying the parties in the implementation of the gender provisions, the SRSG-SVC stressed that her Office is currently looking at possibilities for political and technical re-engagement in Colombia, including through the technical support of the Team of Experts.

Building on these meetings, and in cooperation with co-lead entities and other counterparts, the Team of Experts is carrying out an internal virtual assessment to identify possible areas of technical support on the investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of conflict-related sexual violence.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) working with the UN Country Team in Colombia, as well as national justice institutions and women's rights organizations, in preparation for the launch, dissemination, and translation into English of the digest on International Standards for the Prosecution and Adjudication of Conflict-related Sexual Violence in Colombia; and (ii) following developments in Colombia and discussing possible support to national accountability efforts for conflict-related sexual violence.

iii. Côte d'Ivoire

Objective(s)

Following the Team's dedicated country engagement from 2016 to 2018 and the assistance from United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (UN Action) in 2019, the Team of Experts seeks to ensure the sustainability of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire's institutional and operational response to conflict-related sexual violence and to strengthen prevention efforts in the context of the 2020 presidential elections.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts' continued advocacy for the consolidation of institutional and operationalisation responses to conflict-related sexual violence resulted in the Office of the SRSG-SVC's support to prevention efforts in the context of the 2020 presidential elections, and the documentation of tools, trainings, and awareness raising campaigns that contributed to no new cases of sexual violence in the past three years.

Assistance and Impact

In light of the fragile political context in the lead up to the 2020 presidential elections, the Team of Experts prioritized support to the development of a proposal by the Office of the SRSG-SVC to enable the consolidation of the institutional and operational responses by defense and security forces on conflict-related sexual violence. These efforts, building on a Team of Experts' dedicated country project from 2016 to 2018, contributed to further capacity building of security forces through country-wide dissemination and implementation of prevention tools previously developed by the Team, including revised codes of conduct and command orders explicitly prohibiting sexual violence. This engagement and technical

support over the years to defence and security forces seem to have yielded positive results, as reflected in the absence of documented cases of sexual violence in the context of the 2020 presidential elections. The current support by the Office of the SRS-G-SVC will enable the documentation of processes, action plans and other tools put in place by national institutions that contributed to no new cases of sexual violence in the past three years.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, following up on the 2019 Team of Experts' assessment on the impact of presidential ordinance of 8 April 2008, on amnesty, on the judicial response to the 2010-2011 post-electoral violence, and in light of the 2019 Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW/C/CIV/CO/4) requesting the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to submit a written response on this matter within two years, the Team will reengage with justice officials, UN partners, and human rights mechanisms on the need for accountability for sexual violence crimes perpetrated during the 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis, recalling the need for exclusion of these crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes, in line with Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 2106 (2013) and 2467 (2019).

iv. Democratic Republic of the Congo

Objective(s)

In line with Security Council resolution 2556 of 2020 on the DRC and the Joint Communiqué signed by the Government of the DRC and the United Nations in 2013, renewed by the signature of an Addendum to the Joint Communiqué in December 2019,¹² the Team of Experts established a dedicated project in the DRC aimed to respond to requested support for the Government of DRC in ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual violence crimes by strengthening the capacity of the national authorities, especially the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts supported six trials and one investigation mission into cases containing charges/incidents of conflict-related sexual violence. This resulted in significant progress with regards to accountability and the delivery of justice for conflict-related sexual violence cases.
- The Team of Experts carried out an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence.
- The Team of Experts supported the conclusion of a study on the impact of the prioritization strategy for international crimes used by the Congolese judiciary.

Assistance and Impact

Building on eight years of engagement and the progress achieved, in 2020, the Team of Experts deepened its support to the reinforcement of the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence crimes through the renewal of a dedicated project and the deployment of a Technical Specialist embedded in MONUSCO – Justice and Correction Services to work with and mentor national judicial authorities to strengthen their capacity to investigate and prosecute conflict-related sexual violence.

¹² See [Addendum au Communiqué conjoint sur les violences sexuelles liées au conflit entre la République démocratique du Congo et l'Organisation des Nations-Unies](#), 9 December 2019.

The Team supported the trial of several priority cases before the military and civil courts of North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Tanganyika and Kasai Central and a fact-finding mission in the territory of Manono. The latter was related to a case pending before the Court of Appeal and led to the identification of 37 victims (including 25 women), who benefited from legal assistance and psychosocial support. The trial is expected to be conducted in 2021.

Six mobile hearings were organized in North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri and Kasai Central. Significantly, the Sheka case, regarding, *inter alia*, the mass rape of 387 civilians in 2010, was finally tried by the Operational Military Court of North Kivu leading to the life sentence of the main defendant, former militia leader, Ntabo Ntaberi Sheka, and Séraphin Nziton, alias Lionceau. Also, importantly, signalling an increased response of the judiciary to conflict-related sexual violence cases perpetrated by non-state armed groups, several cases were tried in the Eastern provinces and perpetrators were convicted. With the support of the Team, the military tribunal of Bukavu organized several hearings in Kalehe resulting in several convictions. In the “Bukanga” priority file the tribunal convicted three defendants, members of the Raia Mutomboki Chalequin armed group; in the “Hamakombo” priority file, the tribunal sentenced the Secretary General and the Intelligence Officer of the armed group Raia Mutomboki wing Hamakombo to 20 years; and, finally, in the priority case “Migamba,” the tribunal sentenced the only defendant member of the armed group Mai Mai Raia Mutomboki Chalequin to 20 years in prison.

In addition, the Team continued to support the military and civil judicial authorities as well as the Squadron for the Protection of the Child and the Prevention of Sexual Violence of the National Police by providing them with basic equipment that which otherwise would have failed to arrive in the provinces (e.g., solar kits, basic office furniture, office material, sanitary equipment). This support allowed them to maintain and improve their operational capacity, and to ensure the continuity of protection services, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, the Team of Experts carried out an assessment of the detrimental impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on all aspects of the rule of law response in the country, including accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. The report demonstrated that there are indications that COVID-19, possibly in a similar manner to Ebola, may have a significant impact on the prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence, access to information on conflict-related sexual violence cases and responses to support survivors. Particularly between March and July 2020, relevant investigative work, pre-trial hearings, and trials on conflict-related sexual violence in eastern DRC were limited, causing justice to be delayed. The findings of the report are currently used to inform a broader assessment carried out by the Team of Experts to analyse the judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence in the DRC since 2015. The recommendations listed in these two assessment reports will be discussed with the national authorities in 2021 to prioritize their implementation.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) drafting and sharing with the relevant actors an assessment report on the progress made in the legal and judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence in the last five years, identifying the challenges and opportunities ahead - this exercise is especially important, as the new Joint Justice Program, endorsed by the Government, should signal its priorities for the upcoming years and ensure that conflict-related sexual violence is adequately mainstreamed; and (ii) strengthening its work on reparations, prioritizing the definition of a strategy to secure the payment of pending judicial reparations in a selected number of cases.

v. *Guinea*

Objective(s)

In line with the Joint Communiqué signed by the Government of Guinea and the United Nations in November 2011 in which the Government welcomes the support of the Team of Experts to fight impunity for sexual violence, the Team seeks to support national authorities to ensure accountability for the crimes committed at the Conakry Stadium on 28 September 2009, in particular in the context of the Steering Committee put in place to organize the trials. As part of these efforts, the Team has dedicated resources in the deployment of a Senior Judicial Advisor in country.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts continued to raise national, regional, and international awareness on the need for accountability. This engagement resulted in a renewed public commitment at the UN Human Rights Council by the Government and senior officials to hold trials without further delay.
- The Team of Experts continued to work with the Minister of Justice and other members of the Steering Committee towards the elaboration of draft guidelines to operationalise the trials for the crimes of 28 September 2009.

Assistance and Impact

In 2020, the Team of Experts continued to support national authorities towards ensuring accountability for the human rights violations that took place at the stadium in Conakry on 28 September 2009, in which at least 156 people were killed and at least 109 women and girls were raped and subjected to other forms of sexual violence. This support included the continued deployment of a Senior Judicial Advisor to Conakry, who is serving as a member of the Steering Committee put in place to organize the trials and its Technical Follow-up Committee, and is advising the Minister of Justice and other senior government officials, representatives of the UN system, members of the diplomatic community, civil society representatives victims' associations, and other actors closely following the situation in Guinea.

The Team of Experts' Senior Judicial Advisor provided support for national counterparts in the preparation of the Guinea's Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in January 2020. This included discussions with the Government delegation led by the Minister of Justice, civil society organizations, UN entities, and diplomatic representations on the centrality of accountability for the 28 September 2009 events in the Universal Periodic Review deliberations. As a result of the Team's engagement, in his statement before the Human Rights Council in Geneva, on 21 January 2020, the Guinean Minister of Justice referred to the progress made by the Steering Committee and emphasized the unequivocal will of the President and his Government to hold the trials, indicating that they could start in June 2020. The Universal Periodic Review conclusions and recommendations, which the Government accepted, included taking action to end impunity and ensuring accountability for the 28 September 2009 events; taking all necessary measures to ensure that the trials can start in June 2020; and providing support for the organization of credible trials concerning the massacre, rapes and other abuses committed during those events.

Due both to the pandemic and to the presidential election, the work of the Steering Committee was severely delayed. In light of the difficulties of the Steering Committee to convene and COVID-19 related

travel restrictions, the Team of Experts maintained a regular virtual dialogue with the Technical Follow-up Committee to discuss the preparation of an operational plan for the trials and the continued mobilization of Government and donor support to ensure that the Court of Appeals was appropriately equipped and met the necessary security requirements. Online discussions were also regularly held with Government officials, including a virtual meeting with the Minister of Justice where the Team offered its continued support to the preparation of the trials and reiterated the offer made by SRS-G-SVC to support the training of trial magistrates and other justice officials on the prosecution and adjudication of sexual violence crimes, once appointed. This offer of support was reiterated to the new Minister of Justice immediately upon appointment, following a cabinet reshuffle in May 2020, to ensure that the trials for the 28 September 2009 events would remain a priority.

The appeasement of the political and security situation following the 2020 October presidential elections and the establishment of a new Government currently offer a window of opportunity to expedite the organization of the trials. The clearest expression of this window of opportunity is the commitment of the Minister of Justice, reappointed in his post, to ensure accountability for the 28 September 2009 events and his announcement to reconvene the meetings of the Steering Committee as early as possible in 2021 to agree on simplified operational guidelines for the preparation of the trials.

The accountability process is now at a critical crossroad and needs to be supported to reach a successful end. In this new phase, support from all members of the Steering Committee to accountability efforts at technical and political levels, and the continued involvement of civil society, particularly victims' associations and their lawyers, including in advocacy and awareness raising efforts, will be critical.

The Team of Experts has committed to supporting the ongoing process until the end of the trials, given their potential to showcase the success by an entirely national-led judicial process, with technical support from the international community, in combatting impunity for international crimes.

Looking Ahead

In the upcoming year, the Team plans to increase its engagement to ensure that trials can commence without delay. Once COVID-19 travel restrictions are lifted, the Team of Experts will deploy to Guinea and increase its engagement with the Minister of Justice and other senior level officials, UN leadership, the diplomatic community and civil society organizations. The Team will explore the possibility of increasing its technical support to the Guinean authorities and will seek to identify further sources of funding. The Team's support will focus on: (i) finalizing and operationalising a roadmap for the trials, which will include measures for the protection of witnesses, victims and justice officials; processes and methodologies for judicial cooperation; outreach with government officials, survivors, victims associations and the general public; and reparations for victims of sexual violence; (ii) strengthening the capacity of trial magistrates and other judicial officials, once appointed, on the prosecution and adjudication of sexual violence crimes, in line with international standards; and (iii) mobilizing advocacy at national, regional and international levels.

vi. Iraq

Objective(s)

In line with the Joint Communiqué between the Government of Iraq and the United Nations of 2016, the Team of Experts seeks to support the Government of Iraq (including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq) on the

implementation of its rule of law provisions. These provisions include legislative and policy reform for victims of sexual violence; ensuring accountability for sexual violence crimes in the country; and the provision of reparations.

2020 Key Result(s)

- In 2020, the Team continued advising the Government of Iraq on legislative reform affecting accountability for sexual violence, including the drafting of the Yazidi Survivors Law to, *inter alia*, cover other affected Iraqi components that suffered conflict-related sexual violence; ensure that civil society had a voice in the drafting process of this legislation; and include provisions on the survivor-sensitive delivery of reparations to survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. The draft bill was completed in 2020 and expanded eligible beneficiaries to Turkmen Shi'a, Christian and Shabak communities. The bill included compensation, land, public employment, and other rehabilitative measures for survivors. Although outside the reporting period, the bill was enacted by the Iraqi Council of Representatives in March 2021, a significant development for survivors and transitional justice in Iraq.

Assistance and Impact

Based on initial assessments in Iraq conducted from 2015 through 2017 at the request of the Government, the Team of Experts found that there were three major areas for rule of law activities in the wake of ISIL's use of both widespread and systematic sexual violence: (i) criminal accountability for the sexual violence committed in Iraq; (ii) the need for holistic transitional justice measures that benefited victims/survivors of ISIL's crimes; and (iii) the reform of law and policies relating to sexual violence. Based on these assessments, the Team formed a programme of work in the country.

On criminal accountability, efforts at collecting evidence on conflict-related sexual violence continued through UNITAD (United Nations Investigative Team to Promote Accountability Against Da'esh/ISIL Crimes) and the Team of Experts participated in delivering a remote training hosted by Physicians for Human Rights on the ethical use of medico-legal and forensic evidence in conflict-related sexual violence cases. Despite significant work undertaken on the collection of evidence, there has still yet to be a case of conflict-related sexual violence prosecuted against any member of ISIL in Iraqi courts. Prosecution cases continue to proceed exclusively through counterterrorism laws. Yet, justice for sexual violence crimes is a demand from Iraqi citizens. Indeed, according to a study conducted by the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, the University of Mosul, and the Public Policy Institute of Iraq: over two-thirds of the 5,000 respondents in northern Iraq believed that sexual violence crimes should be tried as independent crimes.¹³ While legal provisions may not fully capture such charges yet, existing domestic law such as on trafficking in persons or rape under national law could provide interim avenues for prosecutions, without undercutting the development of, serious international crimes legislation in Iraq.

On transitional justice, significant developments occurred resulting notably in the enactment of the Yazidi Survivors Bill in March 2021. The SRSG-SVC and the Team of Experts continued advocating with the Iraqi authorities on legislative efforts to adopt a framework for reparations for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. In 2019, the President of the Republic of Iraq took the first steps to create a Yazidi Survivors Law. The Team of Experts provided technical advice on the law to the President, the Prime

¹³ See <https://hhi.harvard.edu/publications/english-version-never-forget-views-peace-and-justice-within-conflict-affected>.

Minister and Council of Ministers. This technical advice included expanding the scope of beneficiaries in addition to Yazidis to other groups impacted by sexual violence by ISIL; the range and scope of available reparations measures; and methodology on how beneficiaries might receive benefits under a future law. After the establishment of the Coalition for Just Reparations in Iraq – a multi partner coalition of Iraqi civil society groups embracing the full spectrum of ethnicities and religious groups in Iraq – the Team provided technical advice to civil society on the draft reparations provisions the Coalition would share with the Government.

Given IOM and *United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq's* (UNAMI) presence in country, both entities acted as the lead on dealing with Iraqi parliamentarians in the Council of Representatives and civil society organizations in country. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Team participated remotely in sessions with parliamentarians in 2020 to present its analysis for the parliamentarians to consider adopting through their nationally led process. The Council of Representatives ultimately enacted the Yazidi Survivors Law in March 2021. This law, a landmark in transitional justice in Iraq, is more expansive than initial drafts and recognizes that genocide and crimes against humanity occurred against Yazidis, Turkmen Shi'a, Christians, and Shabak communities and provides them with concrete benefits, which include, *inter alia*, compensation, land, quotas of public employment, and rehabilitative measures. The law's adoption has been welcomed by federal and regional authorities, international organizations, CSOs and most importantly survivors. The Government has ninety days to implement the law after its publication.

There is still the need for broader legislative reform and capacity building in Iraq particularly on the penal and criminal procedure codes with respect to the prosecution of sexual violence. For example, though the statute of the Iraqi High Tribunal that dealt with crimes related to the Baath party regime had provisions on sexual violence that were in line with the Rome Statute, the focus on serious international crimes alone meant that there was no further development of the criminal code in cases of sexual violence, including provisions where perpetrators can still evade justice by offering to marry their victim – a provision that has been reformed in numerous countries throughout the Middle East & North Africa over the past decade. Reforming criminal codes, personal status laws that govern the treatment of survivors (including their children) and their identities, and strengthening institutions already empowered to deal with sexual violence crimes under Iraqi law and law of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq are necessary to guarantee that ISIL's sexual violence crimes can never recur in Iraq.

Finally, the Team of Experts identified and negotiated a partnership with IOM's Land, Property and Reparations Division to support the Government of Iraq in its efforts and advocated for funding that was ultimately provided to IOM. The Team partnered with IOM leveraging its presence in Iraq and the Land, Property, and Reparations' division experience in some of the largest reparation distribution processes post-conflict.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) advancing the ability of survivors of ISIL to have sexual violence cases prosecuted in a survivor-sensitive manner; (ii) working with the Government of Iraq (including the regional government of Kurdistan Region of Iraq) to build the capacity to within the Iraqi judicial system in complementarity with UN partners; and (iii) providing support to the full implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law and other transitional justice measures in Iraq as well as legislative and policy reform on sexual violence more broadly.

vii. Mali

Objective(s)

In line with the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, adopted in 2013, where the United Nations committed, *inter alia*, to strengthen national capacity to combat impunity and assisting the Sahelian countries to strengthen their national justice systems, including by strengthening efforts to provide justice for victims of sexual violence, and in line with the Joint Communiqué on Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, in 2019, the Team of Experts provides support for the Government of Mali in ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual violence crimes by strengthening the capacity of the national authorities, especially the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence crimes committed in the context of the 2012 and 2013 crisis.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts, in close collaboration with the MINUSMA Justice and Corrections Section, finalized and shared with national authorities a joint assessment report analysing the national judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence committed in the context of the 2012-2013 crisis, and identifying specific recommendations to ensure the conclusion of the cases.

Assistance and Impact

In 2020, the political situation in country and the COVID-19 pandemic, prevented the Team of Experts from deploying and fully engaging with authorities. Nevertheless, the Team of Experts continued to work closely with the Justice and Corrections and the Women's Protection Advisor Sections of MINUSMA to re-engage with the new Malian Government on the comprehensive joint assessment report analysing the national judicial response to conflict-related sexual violence committed in the context of the 2012-2013 crisis.

The report is based on an extensive and comprehensive review of national legal, judicial and policy documents and on more than sixty interviews with national and international stakeholders, representing a unique and accurate overview of the judicial backlog of conflict-related sexual violence cases related to the 2012-2013 crisis. The assessment identified several challenges preventing Malian jurisdictions from making any progress in the judicial response to the conflict-related sexual violence cases. Due to several changes regarding court's jurisdictional competence, cases have been filed before different courts. As a result, and due to the lack of guidance regarding the jurisdictional competence, existing cases have remained in limbo, without making any progress. Additionally, the lack of security in the central and northern Mali, has continued to prevent Malian magistrates to pursue investigations and advance in proceedings.

Initiated in 2019, the report was reviewed, consulted, and shared with national judicial and political authorities in June 2020. The conclusions and recommendations were endorsed by the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Promotion of Women, Children and Family that will, with MINUSMA and the Team of Experts, co-host a discussion to ensure the definition of an action plan and timeline to ensure their implementation. Ultimately, the recommendations of the report will work as foundation for a well-defined strategy to lead to the completion the existing case-files and the promotion of justice to the victims/survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) co-organizing a workshop with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, the Ministry of the Promotion of Women, in partnership with MINUSMA, to discuss the findings and recommendations of the assessment report and establish a timeline, benchmarks and roles of national and international stakeholders for the completion of existing case-files; and (ii) deploying relevant technical experts who will work closely with the national authorities to define a prioritization strategy for the pending case-files before the Malian Courts and provide specialised technical mentoring to national judicial authorities to ensure the completion of existing case-files.

viii. Myanmar

Objective(s)

Support the implementation of the rule of law provisions of the Joint Communiqué of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the United Nations on Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence signed on 7 December 2018.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts continued to monitor the situation in Myanmar and sought internationally for opportunities to support accountability efforts. However, no specific result was achieved during the reporting period.

Assistance and Impact

The Government of Myanmar and the Office of the SRSB-SVC conducted discussions on the implementation of the Joint Communiqué. The Team provided advice for the Office of the SRSB-SVC on rule of law aspects in the negotiation of that implementation plan. The Team also continued to follow developments within the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, and the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar. During 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic and national elections, progress on the implementation plan of the Joint Communiqué was slowed. In the aftermath of the 2020 elections, the Team of Experts continued to monitor developments in the country.

Looking Ahead

Due to the fragile political and security situation currently in Myanmar, the Team of Experts will continue to monitor developments and will engage directly in Myanmar if and when there are opportunities to do so in complementarity with its UN partners and in line with the Team's Security Council mandate.

ix. Nigeria

Objective(s)

In line with the calls made by the Security Council in 2016 and 2017 to collect and preserve evidence related to the crimes of trafficking as well as conflict-related sexual violence and other serious human rights violations committed by Boko Haram, and the calls made by the African Union Peace and Security

Council for accountability for those crimes, the Team of Experts seeks to support the judicial authorities in Nigeria in ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual violence crimes by strengthening the capacity of the relevant national authorities, especially the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence crimes committed in the context of terrorism.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts participated in delivering a Training of Trainers, organised by the Wayamo Foundation, the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, the National Judicial Institute and members of all three branches of the Nigerian Armed Forces resulting in the strengthened capacity of 25 professionals who will then strengthen the capacity of national judicial officers to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence crimes.
- The Team of Experts participated in delivering a training for prosecutors of the Complex Case Group on the use of evidence in the preparation of cases of conflict-related sexual violence in the context of terrorism resulting in enhanced capacity of national magistrates to prosecute crimes of sexual violence.
- Incidents of sexual violence have been included in trial charges.

Assistance and Impact

Despite the severe impact of the COVID-19 crisis in Nigeria, the Team of Experts continued to collaborate through innovative means with its partners, UNODC, Wayamo and the International Nuremberg Principles Academy, in their capacity building work with national judicial authorities. Following a specific invitation by the Complex Case Group of the Attorney General's Office, the Team contributed by delivering a pre-recorded video lecture addressing the investigation and prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence. Participants included members of the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, the National Judicial Institute and members of all three branches of the Nigerian Armed Forces. Additionally, and building on the work previously undertaken with the Complex Case Group, the Team participated in a remote training of prosecutors, co-hosted by the Wayamo Foundation and the Attorney General's Office, focusing on the use of evidence in the preparation of cases of conflict-related sexual violence in the context of terrorism. As a result of the different trainings, initiated in 2017, the Complex Case Group has now included incidents of sexual violence among the charges to be brought to trial in 2021, before the Nigerian national courts.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) strengthening the institutional engagement with the Nigerian authorities to ensure the mainstreaming and prioritization of sexual violence cases in the judicial response to terrorism and counter terrorism; (ii) supporting the Complex Case Group, including through strengthening its capacity of criminal analysis for, and interpretation of criminal patterns in system-crimes as terrorism; (iii) supporting the Complex Case Group in conducting missions and trials, including the first cases containing crimes of sexual violence committed by terrorists; and (iv) strengthening work on capacity building with the Attorney General's Office and with civil society to secure the participation of victims in the proceedings. Considering the emerging opportunities, the Team will explore the possibility of establishing a dedicated project to support national authorities and to raise funds for doing so.

x. *Somalia*

Objective(s)

The Team of Experts seeks to support the Government of Somalia in the implementation of the Joint Communiqué of the Federal Republic of Somalia and the United Nations on the Prevention of Sexual Violence of 7 May 2013 and in particular the rule of law provisions therein. The Team's work aims at ensuring the development of robust legislation on conflict-related sexual violence and institutional capacity building to lay the foundation for future survivor-sensitive accountability efforts.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team prepared a preliminary legal analysis of the newly presented draft bill on *Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes (2020)*, forming a basis for UNSOM advocacy around the withdrawal of the draft bill and the reintroduction of the *Sexual Offences Bill (2018)*, which had been drafted with the support of government ministries, civil society, and reflected the input of religious leaders. As a result of these efforts and the advocacy of the international community, the draft bill on *Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes (2020)* has not moved forward.

Assistance and Impact

In Somalia, persistent armed conflict, structural gender inequality and successive humanitarian crises exposed women and girls to particularly heightened levels of conflict-related sexual violence. The Federal Republic of Somalia, in partnership with the international community, has been working to address these weaknesses. In particular, the Federal Republic of Somalia and the Federal Member States have made commitments and taken steps to strengthen the legislative framework to address sexual violence. One of the most important contributions was the draft *Sexual Offences Bill* that was introduced to the Somali legislature in 2018. The *Sexual Offences Bill* was developed by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development starting in 2013. After five years of work with extensive consultation with Somali civil society, government ministries, and religious leaders, it was endorsed unanimously by the Somali Council of Ministers and sent to Parliament. In 2019, the Speaker of the House of the People returned the bill to the cabinet in a process that may have deviated from established law and procedure in Somalia and requested amendment. In an unexpected turn of events, new draft legislation, the *Sexual Intercourse Related Crimes Bill*, was introduced in June 2020 to the House of the People after the opening of the seventh session of the Federal Parliament.

The Team of Experts prepared a preliminary legal analysis of the new draft bill outlining serious concerns, including the new legislation's tying the age of consent with the maturation of an individual's reproductive organs; criminal penalties for forced marriage only if an individual was "strongly" forced into marriage and without the knowledge and consent of the individual's family; and the lack of numerous substantive offences and modes of liability that could hold perpetrators accountable for sexual violence whether as a grave domestic, transnational, or serious international crime. Concerns were also raised that the new draft was not consulted with impacted constituencies within Somalia. The analysis noted that the new draft legislation contravened established Somali legislative procedure and Somalia's human rights commitments. This analysis formed the basis for UNSOM's advocacy efforts to withdraw the 2020 bill and reintroduce the bill of 2018. Beyond UNSOM, these efforts were supported by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Office of the SRSB-SVC and OHCHR. As a result, the new 2020 draft bill did not move forward at federal level; however, progress on enacting the 2018 legislation has equally remained stalled.

There has also been retrenchment on sexual and gender-based violence legislation at state level, where in Somaliland the House of Representatives on 25 August 2020, aimed at replacing a *Rape and Offences Act* enacted in 28 September 2018 with an amended *Rape, Fornication and Other Related Offences Bill*,

which would prohibit sex outside marriage, define a child as individuals under fifteen years of age, punish homosexuality, make the use of witchcraft to obtain sex punishable by death, and permit some forms of forced marriage to minors. Advocacy efforts are still required to ensure that the new bill does not become law.

The Team's efforts in 2020 in Somalia revolved around the prevention of backsliding of important legislative initiatives that were designed to lay the foundation for accountability for sexual violence crimes and the support of victims/survivors.

Looking Ahead

The Team of Experts will continue to closely follow the situation in Somalia, provide technical support for Government partners for accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and engage when and where opportunities arise in line with the mandate of the Team of Experts. Circumstances permitting, a joint mission will be undertaken by the Office of the SRSg-SVC Programme Team, UN Action, and the Team of Experts to reinvigorate the implementation of the Joint Communiqué.

xi. South Sudan

Objective(s)

The Team of Experts seeks to support the Government of South Sudan in the implementation of the Joint Communiqué of the Republic of South Sudan and the United Nations on addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence of 11 October 2014 and in particular the rule of law provisions therein. The Team's work aims at ensuring the Government of South Sudan develops nationally owned strategic frameworks that enhance the capacity of criminal justice institutions and lay the foundation for future accountability efforts for conflict-related sexual violence.

2020 Key Result(s)

- In line with the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS), the Team of Experts supported the finalisation by the Republic of South Sudan Joint Defence Board of the *Action Plan for the Armed Forces on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in South Sudan* merging the action plans of the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO on conflict-related sexual violence and resulting in the prioritisation of activities and requests for strategic support.
- The Team of Experts supported UNMISS with the finalisation of a conflict-related sexual violence training manual for SSPDF instructors that was endorsed by the Chief of Defence Force and the Minister of Defence and piloted during a training of 25 SSPDF instructors in October leading to greater awareness and understanding of conflict-related sexual violence, particularly the categorical prohibition on sexual violence and the principle of command responsibility.

Assistance and Impact

While South Sudan experienced encouraging political developments at the national level, notably the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity in February 2020, sub-national conflicts intensified with parties perpetrating sexual violence as a tactic of war to displace and terrorize rival communities.

In 2020, the Team of Experts worked with UNMISS in line with the R-ARCSS to support the finalisation by the Republic of South Sudan Joint Defence Board of the *Action Plan for the Armed Forces on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in South Sudan* merging the action plans of the SSPDF and the SPLA-IO on conflict-related sexual violence. This process was supported by a joint committee established by the Government and SPLA-IO to lead the consolidation process. The joint committee is comprised of eleven representatives (six of whom are women), including three from the SSPDF, five from SPLA-IO, two from the Ministry of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, and one from the South Sudan Opposition Alliance. The finalized *Action Plan* includes pillars on (i) mainstreaming sexual violence considerations in security arrangements under the R-ARCSS; (ii) external communication and outreach; (iii) training, awareness raising and sensitization; (iv) accountability and oversight; (v) protection of victims, witnesses and judicial actors; and (vi) monitoring, evaluation and reporting. The anticipated launch of the *Action Plan* by the Government in early 2021 will result in the prioritization of activities and requests for strategic support.

The Team of Experts also continued to support the SSPDF in implementing its action plan on addressing conflict-related sexual violence launched on 14 March 2019. With the support of the Team of Experts and UNMISS, the SSPDF finalised a conflict-related sexual violence training manual for SSPDF instructors that was endorsed by the Chief of Defense Force and the Minister of Defence. The manual comprises four modules on (i) key concepts; (ii) impact of conflict-related sexual violence and service provision; (iii) legal frameworks on sexual violence; and (iv) strategies to address conflict-related sexual violence. The manual was then piloted with the support of the UNMISS Office of the Senior Women's Protection Advisor during a training of 25 SSPDF instructors in October and will service a practical guide for training instructors going forward.

Looking Ahead

In 2021, the Team of Experts will focus on: (i) supporting the implementation of the *Action Plan for the Armed Forces on Addressing Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in South Sudan*; (ii) supporting the implementation of the South Sudan National Police Service action plan; and (iii) supporting the establishment of the African Union Hybrid Court for South Sudan. Such support is aimed at developing nationally owned strategic frameworks and at enhancing the capacity of criminal justice institutions to lay the foundation for future accountability efforts for conflict-related sexual violence.

xii. Sudan

Objective(s)

The Team of Experts seeks to support the Government of Sudan in the implementation of the *Framework of Cooperation of the Republic of the Sudan and the United Nations on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence in Conflict* of 10 March 2020 and in particular the rule of law provisions therein. The Team of Experts, in collaboration with partners, seeks to support the Government of Sudan in developing nationally owned strategic frameworks that enhance the capacity of criminal justice institutions and lay the foundation for future accountability efforts for conflict-related sexual violence.

2020 Key Result(s)

- The Team of Experts supported the advocacy efforts of the SRSB-SVC to move forward discussions with the Government of Sudan on the implementation of the *Framework of Cooperation of the*

Republic of the Sudan and the United Nations on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence in Conflict, signed on 10 March 2020.

Assistance and Impact

Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and measures taken around the world, including worldwide travel restrictions, the Team of Experts, in line with the guidance of the UN Secretary-General and Sudan's travel restrictions, was not able to travel to Sudan during 2020.

The Team of Experts did follow and engage in discussions regarding the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) and supported the SRSG-SVC in her advocacy efforts to move forward discussions with the Government of Sudan on the implementation of the *Framework of Cooperation of the Republic of the Sudan and the United Nations on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence in Conflict*, signed on 10 March 2020.

Looking Ahead

The Team of Experts will continue to closely follow the situation in Sudan, advocate with Government partners for accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and engage when and where opportunities arise in line with the mandate of the Team of Experts. Circumstances permitting, a joint mission will be undertaken by the Office of the SRSG-SVC Programme Team, UN Action, and the Team of Experts to initiate the implementation of the *Framework of Cooperation*.

THEMATIC ENGAGEMENTS

i. Policing

Since its establishment, the Team of Experts has worked closely with national law enforcement authorities. This work has included providing mentoring, capacity building and operational support for the establishment in CAR of the first investigative unit specialized on sexual violence, the UMIRR, as well as providing training and mentoring for the Special Police for the Protection of Children and the Prevention of Sexual Violence (*Police spéciale de Protection de l'Enfant et de Prévention des Violences Sexuelles*) in the DRC. This engagement has resulted in positive outcomes, notably allowing to conclude a number of investigations into conflict-related sexual crimes opening the road to their prosecution.¹⁴

Between 2017 and 2019, the Team of Experts benefitted from the expertise of a Police Expert seconded by Sweden. The work of this Police Expert helped the Team deepen its capacity building support to national judicial institutions responsible for carrying out investigations of sexual violence cases in the countries of intervention, as well as developed new partnerships, especially with the Police Division of the UN Department of Peace Operations (UNPOL). Since 2019, the Team of Experts has not benefitted from the expertise of a dedicated Police Expert. Nevertheless, the Team of Experts continues expanding its country specific projects to improve the national capacity to investigate and prosecute conflict-related sexual violence, and the collaboration with UNPOL is growing and joint activities are currently being developed. Building on the needs identified during its field work, in 2021 the Team of Experts plans to consolidate its police expertise through a new Police Expert which will be embedded in UNPOL to allow

¹⁴ See section B. Country Specific Engagements on CAR and DRC.

the Team to provide specialised technical policing and investigation expertise and operational support for the national judicial institutions responsible for investigating sexual violence crimes in the countries of intervention, as well as to deepen the collaboration between the Team of Experts and UNPOL.

ii. Transitional Justice and Reparations

The Team of Experts is mandated to draw Member States' attention to the "full range of justice mechanisms to be considered" in the aftermath of crimes of conflict-related sexual violence. Although criminal justice is at the core of the Team of Experts' Security Council mandate and work, transitional justice including reparations are core areas where the Team focuses throughout each country situation in order to transform the underlying conditions that led to conflict-related sexual violence occurring at all. As noted above, this has included ensuring active work on reparations measures from Colombia to Democratic Republic of the Congo to Iraq. It has included working with Guinean authorities to ensure that their criminal justice procedures for the 28 September 2009 include advance thinking on transitional justice measures including reparations. Further, legislative and security sector reform, as well as amplifying the advocacy of CSOs to government officials on the full range of survivors' needs is an important part of the Team of Experts' work. In the instances outlined above, the Team of Experts has achieved concrete results in either advancing new legislation (such as in Colombia and Iraq); framing measures of reparation while pursuing criminal justice in tandem (as in Guinea); and working with CSOs that provide victims representation and the Congolese government to ensure reparations judgements are paid (ongoing). To ensure that this work is part of the holistic aspect of every assessment the Team of Experts conducts in all contexts, the Team has used 2020 to develop a policy paper on transitional justice that should be concluded in 2021.

iii. Transnational Crimes - Terrorism and Trafficking in Persons

In 2020, building on its previous work, the Team of Experts initiated a workstream specifically focusing on the judicial response to the transnational crimes of conflict-related sexual violence committed in the context of terrorism and trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation, when committed in situations of conflict.

While both crimes continued to be increasingly documented in 2020, the absence of judicial response has resulted in a significant and concerning impunity gap. Acknowledging this challenge, in 2020 the Team of Experts has initiated a comprehensive research mapping the legal and judicial response provided to conflict-related sexual violence committed in the context of terrorism in key situations, identifying gaps, opportunities and specific recommendations that should allow the relevant actors –Member States, national, regional, and international organisations– to address it. The findings of this analysis should shape discussions with relevant partners and Member States in 2021 and the Team's engagement.

In parallel to this study, the Team has actively engaged with relevant working groups –within the UN and other intergovernmental fora– in the area of terrorism and trafficking to acknowledge and respond to conflict-related sexual violence. In July 2020, the Team participated in the first Expert Consultation on Model Provisions Regarding Victims of Terrorism, hosted by UNODC. The Team provided specific inputs to the working groups focusing on the Protection and Security of Victims and Sexual Violence by Terrorist Groups and, since then, has continued to actively participate in the discussion that should lead to the adoption of the model provisions. Under the auspices of the Criminal Justice and Rule of Law Working Group of the Global Compact Terrorism Forum, the Team of Experts participated in the Expert Meeting on Criminal Justice Approaches to the Linkages between Terrorism and Sexual and Gender- Based

Violence, Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling discussing the prosecutorial challenges regarding the linkages between terrorism and sexual violence in conflict. The initiative expects to develop a Framework Document on criminal justice responses to the linkages between terrorism and international crimes, including trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants. On 10 December, the Team of Experts participated in a discussion on Sexual Terrorism hosted by the T.M.C. Asser Institute, focusing on the definition and judicial response to this form of criminality.

In its country engagement, the Team of Experts has also developed specific activities to strengthen the investigation and prosecution of conflict-related sexual violence committed in the context of terrorism. In Nigeria, the Team continued to work with the Attorney General's specialised unit focusing on crimes committed by Boko Haram, as well as other institutions. In Mali, the Team is actively working with national authorities to ensure a judicial response to the crimes of sexual violence attributed to terrorist groups that occupied Northern Mali in 2012-13. Further, the Team of Experts continues to examine ways in which to use third State jurisdiction to ensure coverage of serious international crimes, terrorism, and trafficking in persons with Member State consent.

Based on this work, the Team will develop a strategy for engagement in terrorism and counter-terrorism context, in order to provide support to the national stakeholders' efforts toward accountability for conflict related sexual violence.

KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

i. Journal of International Criminal Justice

One of the landmark activities of the Team of Expert this year was to edit and publish with the Journal of International Criminal Justice a *Special Issue on Justice and Accountability for Sexual Violence in Conflict: Progress and Challenges in National Efforts to Address Impunity*. The Special Issue which brings together 14 articles from leading practitioners and scholars on a range of settings on conflict-related sexual violence represents a landmark publication in the field of accountability for conflict-related sexual violence. The Special Issue provides an overview of the progress, good practices and challenges of the past ten year in pursuing accountability for conflict-related sexual violence including: Argentina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Syria.¹⁵ The publication has been recognized as a reference document for the field and has helped to raise the understanding and visibility of the issue. In total, the articles of the Special Issue have been downloaded collectively more than four thousand times.

ii. Digital Dialogue Series

Faced with the challenges of COVID-19, the Team set up an innovative initiative to take advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experience contained in the Special Issue of the Journal of International and Criminal Justice. Instead of an in-person launch of the Special Issue, the Team of Experts, together with partners,¹⁶ initiated a webinar series, the Digital Dialogue Series, addressing topics covered in the Special

¹⁵ Published by Oxford University Press, the Table of Contents of the Special Issue is located here: <https://academic.oup.com/jicj/issue/18/2>.

¹⁶ The Institute for Public Health, Washington University in St. Louis; Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Harvard University; the Institute for the Study of Human Rights, Columbia University; and the School of Transnational Governance, European University Institute.

Issue with some of the leading practitioners in the field. The Digital Dialogue Series was designed to ensure that academics, policy-makers, and practitioners can share their experiences including success and challenges, provide best practices examples to others, provoke critical reflections, and inspire a community of practice to deliver truly accessible and effective victim-sensitive justice. This initiative was an overwhelming success. In 2020 only, it reached more than three thousand viewers and has helped highlight the progress and challenges in addressing conflict-related sexual violence at the national level.¹⁷ During the reporting period, four webinars were held. The first session, held on 21 July, launched the series and featured the current SRSG-SVC and the former Foreign Minister of Sweden and former SRSG-SVC, Ms. Margot Wallström. The second session, on 29 September, explored prosecution and investigation of serious crimes in Latin America, with a focus on Colombia and Guatemala. The third session, on 27 October, concerned the impact of sexual violence committed in the context of terrorism and was moderated by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism. The fourth session, held on 17 November, focused on national accountability for conflict-related sexual violence in the CAR and featured officials from the Special Criminal Court as well as the Ministry of Justice.

Overall, the initiative has given the agenda of accountability for conflict-related sexual violence and the Team of Experts renewed visibility. Analysis shows that it has also resulted in creating a small community of practitioners with the same viewers regularly following the webinar. The quality of the series, including, its technical added-value to practitioners pursuing accountability for conflict-related sexual violence has been repeatedly praised.

iii. Model Legislative Provisions and Associated Guidance on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence

To meet the request of Member States and regional organizations, the Team of Expert provided technical expertise to draft model legislative provisions and guidance developed by the Office of the SRSG-SVC. This document aims to provide a tool for Member States to be used as a basis for survivor-sensitive legal reform of conflict-related sexual violence as a serious international crime. These model legislative provisions and guidance are based on international law precedents but also comparative precedents from numerous national jurisdictions. These model legislative provisions and guidance will be released in 2021.

iv. Knowledge Management

After a decade of operation, the Team of Experts has developed significant knowledge of both internal and external practice in supporting survivor-sensitive accountability for crimes of conflict-related sexual violence in some of the world's most challenging and fragile contexts. In order to improve the efficiency of delivery and to be able to share its practices with others working in the field, the Team of Experts has developed a more robust knowledge management initiative in 2020. This initiative still requires further discussion with co-lead entities and work is expected to commence on strengthening the Team of Experts' knowledge management practices in 2021.

¹⁷ The recordings of each session can be accessed at:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwtZuW_WzXHqt56ULnyhy_MKB72eIgUya.

MOVING FORWARD: CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

In 2020, for the UN Action Network, as for the entire UN system, a seismic shift occurred in previously unimaginable ways, in large part due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has had far-reaching implications across all corners of the globe, and in turn for the implementation of the CRSV agenda.

The COVID-19 crisis had undoubtedly stymied efforts to raise funds for the CRSV-MPTF on a larger scale, and as such had implications on the ability to fund comprehensive projects in countries of concern. A planned, in person donor-roundtable was delayed due to travel restrictions, however, the SRSG-SVC continued efforts to raise funds through high-level bilateral engagements, which were followed up at the technical-level by the UN Action Secretariat.

Resourcing challenges aside, the UN Action Network adapted with speed to new ways of working, demonstrating agility, resilience, and a commitment to innovation. It embarked in rapid information gathering and coordination to deal with the intersecting crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and the scourge of CRSV. It explored new methods of working through nimble Core Teams, each led by entities that are mandate-holders in their specific areas, at the intersection of CRSV prevention and response, and are chaired by Focal Points who are technical-level subject matter experts.

Not only did UN Action hold steady, as of this writing, it grew from 15 to 19 members, welcoming the Office of the Youth Envoy, the OSRSG on Violence Against Children, the Office of the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide and the Office of Counter Terrorism. These new members are already making critical contributions to areas of the CRSV mandate.

For the coming year, UN Action will continue to implement activities detailed in its 2020 – 2025 Strategic Framework and linked 2020 – 2021 Workplan, and will focus on critical dimensions and emerging challenges for addressing CRSV, particularly as outlined in [SCR 2467](#) (2019). These include addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by women and girl survivors, and children both as a result of sexual violence in armed conflict, the use of sexual violence to pursue strategies and tactics of terrorism, sexual slavery and conflict-driven trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, sexual slavery and forced marriage, as well as the need for enhanced justice and accountability, including reparations for survivors of CRSV. On the increasingly complex issue of the nexus between terrorism / violent extremism and CRSV, including how best to support survivors, UNODC is leading the way on new initiatives UN Action can collectively undertake in this area.

UN Action has also renewed its commitment to working with survivors through a survivor-centred approach; it is developing guiding principles on how a survivor-centred approach is applied in the context of CRSV prevention and response, for use by the UN Action Network, and relevant stakeholders. It is ready to support evidence-based programming, for example through the establishment of One-Stop Centres for survivors and those-at risk, and will pilot innovations to ensure comprehensive and life-saving, survivor-centred services are available where they are most needed.

In 2020, UN Action explored and implemented new modalities of staying connected to on-the-ground realities, such as through initiating the development of virtual methods for data-collection, gaps assessments and regularly consulting with S/WPAs and UNCTS, to receive guidance on where UN Action should focus its priorities. It has absorbed these lessons, and seen positive consequences of adaptations made, including time-saving and cost-efficiency. Virtual, and in-person/ virtual hybrid data collection

mechanisms such as gaps assessment exercises will be conducted in priority countries in 2021. The virtual model will also be utilised for the roll-out of new guidance and tools.

UN Action is increasingly focused on prevention of CRSV and eradicating the structural root causes of CRSV at all levels from legislative and policy to community, thus in 2021 it will produce:

- A Guidance Document containing defined principles and its practical applications for a survivor-centred approach to CRSV prevention and response.
- A Guidance Note on CRSV prevention, including a sub-set of guidance on 1). Addressing the root and structural causes of CRSV; 2. The role of women in conflict resolution in post-conflict contexts and; 3. Working with men on CRSV prevention.

On data, UN Action is updating guidance in this area, and in 2021, is planning on rolling out training on data collection, management and particularly analysis. Further, UN Action is working to bridge data systems and actors for greater synergy of action, more comprehensive reporting, and a harmonised response, particularly as relates to strengthening the MARA, and its harmonisation with the MRM and the GBVIMS.

With the finalisation of an advocacy strategy, scheduled for mid-2021, the UN Action Network plans to reinvigorate the Stop Rape Campaign, increase its reach on social media and step-up targeted resource mobilisation efforts. It will also regularly update and encourage wide use of its newly redesigned [website](#), which contains more details on the work of UN Action and its members, as well as a document library with tools, guidelines and reports produced over the years.

Finally, UN Action is a growing and thriving network with the potential for incredible reach, through its 19 members, many of whom have in-country presence, and the capacity to absorb significant resources to support the commitments made by parties to conflict and to serve survivors directly. UN Action's clear and ambitious agenda for action, and attending results-based strategic framework, is hampered in realisation, only by the resources available. Yet, the UN Action Network is unwavering in its commitment to providing support in conflict-affected countries, where survivors of CRSV are many, but resources remain scarce.

The Team of Experts fully leveraged its co-lead entities to continue working at field level in support of national authorities despite travel restrictions. It also leveraged its experts in deployment and managed to deliver support. Yet due to the challenges in travels and direct engagement with national counterparts, the Team also refocused its activities towards assessments of judicial response and producing diagnostics that will be used for upcoming engagement and the development of national roadmaps to address the gaps identified. The Team also seized the opportunity created by virtual platforms and meetings to break down silos and initiate the creation of a community of practice through its Digital Dialogue series. The success and positive impact of this series has resulted in the decision to continue this initiative as a means to deepen the knowledge, mobilisation and cross-fertilization of policy-makers, practitioners and survivors on accountability for CRSV.

In 2020 the Team conducted a strategic retreat which allowed it to identify priority countries for support as well as thematic workstreams key to advancing the accountability for CRSV. These include judicial response to CRSV in terrorism and counter-terrorism contexts, policing for CRSV accountability,

transitional justice and reparations for survivors of CRSV. These strategic priorities will be the canvas for upcoming 2021 operations.

FINANCIAL REPORTING

INTRODUCTION

This Consolidated Annual Financial Report of the **Conflict Related Sexual Violence Fund** is prepared by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) in fulfillment of its obligations as Administrative Agent, as per the terms of Reference (TOR), the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the UNDP MPTF Office and the Participating Organizations, and the Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) signed with contributors.

The MPTF Office, as Administrative Agent, is responsible for concluding an MOU with Participating Organizations and SAAs with contributors. It receives, administers and

manages contributions, and disburses these funds to the Participating Organizations. The Administrative Agent prepares and submits annual consolidated financial reports, as well as regular financial statements, for transmission to contributors.

This consolidated financial report covers the period 1 January to 31 December **2020** and provides financial data on progress made in the implementation of projects of the **Conflict Related Sexual Violence Fund**. It is posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/CSV00>).

The financial data in the report is recorded in US Dollars and due to rounding off of numbers, the totals may not add up.

2020 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

This chapter presents financial data and analysis of the **Conflict Related Sexual Violence Fund** using the pass-through funding modality as of 31 December 2020. Financial information for this Fund is also available on the MPTF Office GATEWAY, at the following address: <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/CSV00>.

1. SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS

As of 31 December 2020, 12 contributors deposited US\$ 11,715,321 in contributions and US\$ 72,410 was earned in interest.

The cumulative source of funds was US\$ 11,787,731 (see respectively, Tables 2 and 3). Of this amount, US\$ 6,345,090 has been net funded to 5 Participating Organizations, of which US\$ 2,484,872 has been reported as expenditure. The Administrative Agent fee has been charged at the approved rate of 1% on deposits and amounts to US\$ 117,153. Table 1 provides an overview of the overall sources, uses, and balance of the **Conflict Related Sexual Violence Fund** as of 31 December 2020.

Table 1. Financial Overview, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

	Annual 2019	Annual 2020	Cumulative
Sources of Funds			
Contributions from donors	3,002,908	8,712,413	11,715,321
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	37,600	34,810	72,410
Interest Income received from Participating Organizations	-	-	-
Refunds by Administrative Agent to Contributors	-	-	-
Fund balance transferred to another MDTF	-	-	-
Other Income	-	-	-
Total: Sources of Funds	3,040,508	8,747,223	11,787,731
Use of Funds			
Transfers to Participating Organizations	-	6,345,090	6,345,090
Refunds received from Participating Organizations	-	-	-
Net Funded Amount	-	6,345,090	6,345,090
Administrative Agent Fees	30,029	87,124	117,153

Direct Costs: (Steering Committee, Secretariat...etc.)	-	-	-
Bank Charges	57	98	156
Other Expenditures	-	-	-
Total: Uses of Funds	30,087	6,432,313	6,462,399
Change in Fund cash balance with Administrative Agent	3,010,421	2,314,911	5,325,332
Opening Fund balance (1 January)	-	3,010,421	-
Closing Fund balance (31 December)	3,010,421	5,325,332	5,325,332
Net Funded Amount (Includes Direct Cost)	-	6,345,090	6,345,090
Participating Organizations' Expenditure (Includes Direct Cost)	-	2,484,872	2,484,872
Balance of Funds with Participating Organizations			3,860,218

2. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

Table 2 provides information on cumulative contributions received from all contributors to this Fund as of 31 December **2020**.

The **Conflict Related Sexual Violence Fund** is currently being financed by **12** contributors, as listed in the table below.

The table below includes commitments made up to 31 December **2020** through signed Standard Administrative Agreements, and deposits made through **2020**. It does not include commitments that were made to the fund beyond **2020**.

Table 2. Contributors' Commitments and Deposits, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Contributors	Total Commitments	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019 Deposits	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020 Deposits	Total Deposits
BELGIUM	364,851	-	364,851	364,851
DENMARK	490,915	-	490,915	490,915
ESTONIA	205,373	55,280	150,093	205,373
FINLAND	235,557	112,900	122,656	235,557
GERMANY	121,091	-	121,091	121,091
ITALY	27,548	-	27,548	27,548
JAPAN	3,112,624	1,535,714	1,576,910	3,112,624
NETHERLANDS	693,176	-	693,176	693,176
NORWAY	274,219	-	274,219	274,219
SWEDISH INT'L DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION	2,806,574	-	2,806,574	2,806,574
TURKEY	2,552	-	2,552	2,552
UNITED KINGDOM	3,380,841	1,299,013	2,081,828	3,380,841
Grand Total	11,715,321	3,002,908	8,712,413	11,715,321

3. INTEREST EARNED

Interest income is earned in two ways: 1) on the balance of funds held by the Administrative Agent (Fund earned interest), and 2) on the balance of funds held by the Participating Organizations (Agency earned interest) where their Financial Regulations and Rules allow return of interest to the AA.

As of 31 December **2020**, Fund earned interest amounts to US\$ **72,410**.

Details are provided in the table below.

Table 3. Sources of Interest and Investment Income, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Interest Earned	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020	Total
Administrative Agent			
Fund Earned Interest and Investment Income	37,600	34,810	72,410
Total: Fund Earned Interest	37,600	34,810	72,410
Participating Organization			
Total: Agency earned interest			
Grand Total	37,600	34,810	72,410

4. TRANSFER OF FUNDS

Allocations to Participating Organizations are approved by the Steering Committee and disbursed by the Administrative Agent. As of 31 December **2020**, the AA has transferred US\$ **6,345,090** to 5 Participating Organizations (see list below).

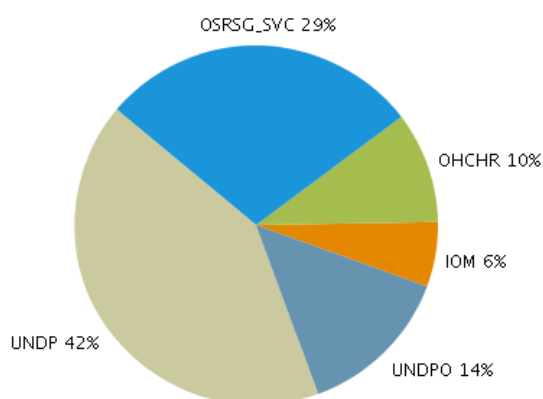
4.1 TRANSFER BY PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION

Table 4 provides additional information on the refunds received by the MPTF Office, and the net funded amount for each of the Participating Organizations.

Table 4. Transfer, Refund, and Net Funded Amount by Participating Organization, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019			Current Year Jan-Dec-2020			Total		
	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded	Transfers	Refunds	Net Funded
IOM				363,636		363,636	363,636		363,636
OHCHR				605,330		605,330	605,330		605,330
OSRSG_SVC				1,815,133		1,815,133	1,815,133		1,815,133
UNDP				2,680,650		2,680,650	2,680,650		2,680,650
UNDPO				880,340		880,340	880,340		880,340
Grand Total				6,345,090		6,345,090	6,345,090		6,345,090

Figure 2: Transfers amount by Participating Organization for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2020



5. EXPENDITURE AND FINANCIAL DELIVERY RATES

All final expenditures reported for the year **2020** were submitted by the Headquarters of the Participating Organizations. These were consolidated by the MPTF Office.

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization, and are reported as per the agreed upon categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. The reported expenditures were submitted via the MPTF Office's online expenditure reporting tool. The **2020** expenditure data has been posted on the MPTF Office GATEWAY at <http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/CSV00>.

5.1 EXPENDITURE REPORTED BY PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATION

In **2020**, US\$ **6,345,090** was net funded to Participating Organizations, and US\$ **2,484,872** was reported in expenditure.

As shown in table below, the cumulative net funded amount is US\$ **6,345,090** and cumulative expenditures reported by the Participating Organizations amount to US\$ **2,484,872**. This equates to an overall Fund expenditure delivery rate of **39** percent.

The agencies with the three highest delivery rates are: OHCHR (57%), IOM (46%) and UNDP (45%)

Table 5.1. Net Funded Amount, Reported Expenditure, and Financial Delivery by Participating Organization, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Participating Organization	Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Expenditure			Delivery Rate %
			Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020	Cumulative	
IOM	363,636	363,636		167,417	167,417	46.04
OHCHR	605,330	605,330		345,884	345,884	57.14
OSRSG_SVC	1,815,133	1,815,133		545,894	545,894	30.07
UNDP	2,680,650	2,680,650		1,200,162	1,200,162	44.77
UNDPO	880,341	880,340		225,515	225,515	25.62
Grand Total	6,345,091	6,345,090		2,484,872	2,484,872	39.16

5.2 EXPENDITURE BY PROJECT

Table 5.2 displays the net funded amounts, expenditures reported and the financial delivery rates by Participating Organization.

Table 5.2. Expenditure by Project within Sector, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Sector / Project No. and Project Title		Participating Organization	Project Status	Total Approved Amount	Net Funded Amount	Total Expenditure ¹⁸	Delivery Rate ¹⁹ %
Team of Experts and RoL							
00119269	TOE#1-JP-DRC_Criminal justice	UNDP	On Going	500,000	500,000	489,786	97.96
00119441	TOE#2_JP CAR Support to RoL	UNDP	On Going	1,029,942	1,029,942	414,592	40.25
00119442	TOE#3_JP TOE	OHCHR	On Going	605,330	605,330	345,884	57.14
00119442	TOE#3_JP TOE	OSRSG_SVC	On Going	923,074	923,074	33,810	3.66
00119442	TOE#3_JP TOE	UNDP	On Going	696,163	696,163	295,783	42.49
00119442	TOE#3_JP TOE	UNDPO	On Going	880,341	880,340	225,515	25.62
00125158	JP DRC Justice Reform	UNDP	On Going	454,545	454,545		0
Team of Experts and RoL: Total				5,089,396	5,089,395	1,805,371	35.47
UN Action							
00119677	CRSV_UNA_1	OSRSG_SVC	On Going	892,059	892,059	512,084	57.40

¹⁸ These expenditures reflect amounts reported to the MPTF Office. Any expenditure that has not yet been recorded for this reporting period will be reported in subsequent periods.

¹⁹ Delivery rates are calculated based on the total expenditure divided by the total funds received in a given year. Funds transferred at the end of the given year may result in lower delivery rates

00121092	CRSV_UNA2: Leveraging the strengthen	IOM	On Going	363,636	363,636	167,417	46.04
UN Action: Total				1,255,695	1,255,695	679,501	54.11

Grand Total				6,345,091	6,345,090	2,484,872	39.16
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5.3 EXPENDITURE REPORTED BY CATEGORY

Project expenditures are incurred and monitored by each Participating Organization and are reported as per the agreed categories for inter-agency harmonized reporting. In 2006 the UN Development Group (UNDG) established six categories against which UN entities must report inter-agency project expenditures. Effective 1 January 2012, the UN Chief Executive Board (CEB) modified these categories as a result of IPSAS adoption to comprise eight categories. All expenditure incurred prior to 1 January 2012 have been reported in the old categories; post 1 January 2012 all expenditure are reported in the new eight categories. See table below.

2012 CEB Expense Categories

1. Staff and personnel costs
2. Supplies, commodities and materials
3. Equipment, vehicles, furniture and depreciation
4. Contractual services
5. Travel
6. Transfers and grants
7. General operating expenses
8. Indirect costs

Table 5.3. Expenditure by UNDG Budget Category, as of 31 December 2020 (in US Dollars)

Category	Expenditure			Percentage of Total Programme Cost
	Prior Years as of 31-Dec-2019	Current Year Jan-Dec-2020	Total	
Staff & Personnel Cost	-	1,693,330	1,693,330	72.92
Supplies, Communication, Materials	-	61,811	61,811	2.66
Equipment, Vehicles, Furniture, Depreciation	-	107,928	107,928	4.65
Contractual Services	-	52,049	52,049	2.24
Travel	-	(8,047)	(8,047)	(0.35)
Transfers and Grants	-	71,630	71,630	3.08
General Operating	-	343,601	343,601	14.80
Programme Costs Total	-	2,322,302	2,322,302	100.00
¹ Indirect Support Costs Total	-	162,570	162,570	7.00

Total	-	2,484,872	2,484,872	
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¹ **Indirect Support Costs** charged by Participating Organization, based on their financial regulations, can be deducted upfront or at a later stage during implementation. The percentage may therefore appear to exceed the 7% agreed-upon for on-going projects. Once projects are financially closed, this number is not to exceed 7%.

6. COST RECOVERY

Cost recovery policies for the Fund are guided by the applicable provisions of the Terms of Reference, the MOU concluded between the Administrative Agent and Participating Organizations, and the SAAs concluded between the Administrative Agent and Contributors, based on rates approved by UNDG.

The policies in place, as of 31 December **2020**, were as follows:

- **The Administrative Agent (AA) fee:** 1% is charged at the time of contributor deposit and covers services provided on that contribution for the entire duration of the Fund. In the reporting period US\$ **87,124** was deducted in AA-fees. Cumulatively, as of 31 December **2020**, US\$ **117,153** has been charged in AA-fees.
- **Indirect Costs of Participating Organizations:** Participating Organizations may charge 7% indirect costs. In the current reporting period US\$ **162,570** was deducted in indirect costs by Participating Organizations. Cumulatively, indirect costs amount to US\$ **162,570** as of 31 December **2020**.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

In order to effectively provide fund administration services and facilitate monitoring and reporting to the UN system and its partners, the MPTF Office has developed a public website, the MPTF Office Gateway (<http://mptf.undp.org>). Refreshed in real time every two hours from an internal enterprise resource planning system, the MPTF Office Gateway has become a standard setter for providing transparent and accountable trust fund administration services.

The Gateway provides financial information including: contributor commitments and deposits, approved programme budgets, transfers to and expenditures reported by Participating Organizations, interest income and other expenses. In addition, the Gateway provides an overview of the MPTF Office portfolio and extensive information on individual Funds, including their purpose, governance structure and key documents. By providing easy access to the growing number of narrative and financial reports, as well as related project documents, the Gateway collects and preserves important institutional knowledge and facilitates knowledge sharing and management among UN Organizations and their development partners, thereby contributing to UN coherence and development effectiveness.