



# Spotlight Initiative

## **ANNUAL NARRATIVE PROGRAMME REPORT**

**PROGRAMME TITLE: SPOTLIGHT REGIONAL PROGRAMME IN CENTRAL ASIA AND AFGHANISTAN**

**PROGRAMME START DATE: 24 JULY 2020<sup>1</sup>**

**REPORTING PERIOD: 24 JULY 2020 – 31 DECEMBER 2020**

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<sup>1</sup> Pre-funding approved as of 1 October 2019. Approval of programme by Operational Steering Committee (OSC) on 24 July 2020. Full implementation started on 01 December 2020 upon receipt of funds.





<b>Programme Title &amp; Programme Number</b>	<b>Priority regions/areas/localities for the programme</b>															
<b>Programme Title:</b> Alliances for Change – Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practice in Central Asia  MPTF Office Project Reference Number: <sup>2</sup> 00119463	Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme															
<b>Recipient Organization(s)</b>	<b>Key Partners</b>															
UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP	Governments, Civil Society, Activists, Survivors, Youth, Men and Faith-based Leaders from the five Central Asian states as well as Afghanistan.															
<b>Programme Cost (US\$)</b>	<b>Programme Start and End Dates</b>															
<b>Total Phase I approved budget as per the Spotlight CPD/RPD:</b> 4,432,461 USD  <b>Phase I Spotlight funding:</b> <sup>3</sup> 4,248,584 USD <b>Agency Contribution:</b> 183,877 USD  <b>Spotlight Funding and Agency Contribution by Agency:</b> <table><tr><th>Name of RUNO</th><th>Spotlight Phase I (USD)</th><th>UN Agency Contributions (USD)</th></tr><tr><td>UN Women</td><td>2,541,617</td><td>72,485</td></tr><tr><td>UNFPA</td><td>688,010</td><td>37,880</td></tr><tr><td>UNDP</td><td>1,018,957</td><td>73,512</td></tr><tr><td><b>TOTAL</b></td><td><b>4,248,584</b></td><td><b>183,877</b></td></tr></table> <b>TOTAL: 4,432,461 USD</b>	Name of RUNO	Spotlight Phase I (USD)	UN Agency Contributions (USD)	UN Women	2,541,617	72,485	UNFPA	688,010	37,880	UNDP	1,018,957	73,512	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,248,584</b>	<b>183,877</b>	<b>Start Date:</b> 24.07.2020*  <b>End Date:</b> 31.12.2022  
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<sup>2</sup> The Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).

<sup>3</sup> The Spotlight Contribution refers to the amount transferred to the Recipient UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).



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## Acronym List

DV	Domestic Violence
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CA	Central Asia
COP	Community of Practice
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
EU	European Union
EVAW	Elimination of violence against women
EVAWG	Elimination of violence against women and girls
GBV	Gender-based violence
NWMs/NGEMs	National Women's/Gender Equality Machineries
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OSC	Operational Steering Committee
RUNOs	Recipient United Nations Organizations
SDAW	Sexual and domestic violence against women
SG	Secretary General
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SI	Spotlight Initiative



UNW	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
VAW	Violence against women
VAWG	Violence against women and girls

## **Executive Summary**

The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan (the Regional Programme) aims to prevent, respond to, and eliminate violence against women and girls and harmful practices (VAWG+HP) in the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan. It focuses on the creation of the Central Asia Alliance as a regional mechanism that engages governments, civil society, academia and community leaders to come together across borders to transform prevention, response and the provision of services and to close the data gap on SGBV, alongside broader efforts to change discriminatory gender-based social norms and attitudes. The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan emphasises the power of collective action, cross-border networking, and unique expertise of each stakeholder group to contribute towards increased quality of state and non-state prevention and response to end SGBV and harmful practices.

The Regional Programme focuses on Pillars 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. Its main outcomes are:

- (1) Legislative frameworks in the region follow international human rights standards leading to effective sanctioning, prevention, and response to sexual and domestic violence against women (SDVAW) and harmful practices;
- (2) State institutions in Central Asia plan, fund and deliver multi-sectoral programmes that prevent and respond to SDVAW and harmful practices;
- (3) Gender equitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls, including femicide; and
- (5) Quality, disaggregated, and globally comparable data on different forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices is collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes;



(6) Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements, and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Central Asia more effectively influence and advance progress on gender equality and women's empowerment and ending SGBV. The Regional Programme intends to create synergies with the Spotlight country programmes in the region (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan), which focus on all six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative.

The OSC approved the Regional Programme Document and budget in July 2020, with the funds reaching the three RUNOs around 1 December 2020.

To ensure that the time prior to funds arrival was well utilised, the RCO and RUNOs have focused on elaborating the governance structure of the Regional Programme, recruiting the staff, developing workplans, mapping the existing and launching calls for proposals to identify new implementing partners. In this context, a permanent Civil Society Regional Reference Group, with representatives from all six programme countries was established in 2020. The Regional Programme also intends to make a translation of the kNOwVAWdata online course into Russian and make adaptation to the context of Central Asia. This training course covers key concepts related to measuring Violence Against Women, teaching how to use various tools to generate reliable, comparable data and undertake a national prevalence study.

The Regional Programme team has also formalised and implemented regular coordination meetings with various stakeholders, including the European Union and the RCOs from the countries with the national Spotlight Programmes. A detailed overview of these meetings may be found in Annex X. Furthermore, the RCO has organised two training sessions for the Regional Programme staff, on both programmatic and operational aspects of the Spotlight Programme. These foundational processes had laid the groundwork for successful implementation of the programme moving forward.

### **Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status**

On 4 October 2020, parliamentary elections took place in Kyrgyzstan. They resulted in mass protests and the President, Sooronbai Jeenbekov, resigned from his post. Sadyr Japarov was elected as the new President of the Kyrgyz Republic in early presidential elections that took place in Kyrgyzstan on January 10, 2021. During the Presidential elections, citizens of the country were asked to choose between a parliamentary or presidential form of governance. The majority voted for the presidential form. The new country leadership has initiated changes in the constitution. A referendum on a new constitution is to take place in the first half of 2021.





In Tajikistan, Presidential elections took place on 11 October 2020, resulting in the re-election of Emamoli Rahmon with 90% of the votes.

Elections for the Majilis, lower chamber of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, and local self-government bodies took place on 10 January 2021 in Kazakhstan. Three political parties will make up the new composition of the Majilis. A new government was formed as a result.

In April 2020 the UN Secretary General launched a report on the impact of COVID-19 on women. The report raised the alert that COVID-19 could reverse progress made on equality, as the response to the pandemic is accompanied by increases in violence against women, and girls are dropping out of schools.

All five Central Asian countries have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the hardest economic downturn since 1995, the COVID-19 situation is deteriorating human capital in Central Asia. The recently released World Bank Human Capital Index for 2020, based on pre-COVID-19 data, indicated that a child born in Central Asia today is likely to achieve only 50-63% of their potential human capital. This range covers all countries in Central Asia and is lower than the average for the entire Europe and Central Asia region. The figure has declined over the last decade and is likely to be further exacerbated by learning losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another consequence of confining families indoors is the increase in domestic violence and abuse. Children are particularly vulnerable, because closure of schools both increases pressure in homes and removes the checks-and-balances that come from children's regular interaction with adults outside the home. Women are also vulnerable to abuse, and there is evidence of an increase in gender-based violence during the COVID-19 lockdown (World Bank Human Capital Index for 2020). Demand for essential multisector services responding to SGBV has increased substantially compared to the pre-COVID period.

While such increases are disturbing, governments in the region are more aware and open to discuss the issue and take appropriate actions. For example, new amendments to laws on domestic violence are currently being discussed in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

It is important for the Regional Programme to capture the gender consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and, together with partners, to collect data on and analyse gender-sensitive policies and measures. In preparation for the official launch of the Regional Programme, the RCO and RUNOs have started discussion on setting up mechanisms for interaction with gender CSOs and experts, as well as representatives of other beneficiary groups. This was followed by a decision to focus on



service-provision through NGOs as one of the priority areas in the Small Grants component (Pillar 6).

The COVID-19 pandemic and the delayed start of the programme implementation have led to savings from unutilised budgetary lines (e.g. travel and in-person conferences) that may be directed towards other programmatic activities, in consultation with the Spotlight Secretariat and the EU.

### **Programme Governance and Coordination**

The SI Regional Programme for Central Asia has been developed in consultation with the six UNCTs involved. Through the support of the RUNOs Regional Offices and the UN RCO Kazakhstan, the RUNOs have begun dialogue with their agency counterparts in the countries on implementation. At all stages of the programme's implementation, the SI Regional Programme will coordinate with the six UNCTs, and in particular the SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan with a view to:

- a) ensuring the agenda-setting of the Central Asia Alliance, its scope of work, and its vision will bolster the on-going national-level work on legislative reform and services;
- b) identifying and engaging national stakeholders as members of the Alliance so as to support the investments made by the SI Country Programmes in terms of tool development, advocacy, and supporting tangible behaviour change at the national and community level;
- c) ensuring the Alliance reflects an inclusive membership of vulnerable populations, activists, survivors, and key government officials;
- d) ensuring regional women's movement building is grounded in local needs and priorities and reinforces and complements ongoing country level support to CSOs.

The SI covers the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with partnerships with national stakeholders from Afghanistan. Managed by RCO Kazakhstan, in coordination with the RCOs and RUNOs in Central Asia, the scope of work is focused entirely at the regional level with no interventions being done at country level, but with a view to supporting on-going and future national level SGBV work in these countries. The only exception to this is the provision of grants to grass-roots women's organisations, with incorporated capacity development support, as part of Pillar 6.



The SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are focused on all six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative. The investments made through the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will bolster, inform and be informed by the national work, particularly around Pillars 1, 2, 3 and 6, but also to some extent, the work under Pillar 5. To ensure the Regional Programme's continued relevance to these SI Country Programmes, the UN Resident Coordinators from these three countries will participate in the SI Regional Programme's Steering Committee.

### **Regional Steering Committee**

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC) for the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan was established to guide the implementation of the Regional Programme and to ensure adequate communication and coordination of the Spotlight Initiative at the regional level. The role of the Steering Committee is to ensure complementarity of programmes and actions among the three RUNOs. RUNOs in Kazakhstan act as main agency focal points and are in consultation with their respective offices in other participating countries. In addition, the Steering Committee approves the Regional Programme workplan and budget. The Steering Committee is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan. The members of the Committee are: a representative of the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan; UN Women Representative in Kazakhstan, UNFPA Representative in Kazakhstan; UNDP Resident Representative in Kazakhstan; and two civil society representatives nominated by and selected from the Civil Society Reference Group.

In addition, the UN Resident Coordinators from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan may be invited to participate in Steering Committee meetings when relevant. Regular consultation among RCs is envisaged as an important coordination mechanism. The RUNO and Project Management Team could also regularly meet on different matters related to the programme. Civil Society partners shall coordinate among themselves across the participating countries too. It was proposed to conduct regular meetings of member RCs, including pre-steering committee meetings of RCs, which would be formally minuted and submitted to the regional steering committee as a common input of RCs.

A modality for adequate government involvement in the management of the Regional Programme will be considered during the programme implementation, in close consultation with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan.

Partnership with the EU is the basis of the Regional Programme. Through this partnership, the UN and the EU coordinate their strategies, share relevant information and provide coherent leadership of the Initiative. Joint work is also aligned with the EU's new Action Plan on Gender Equality and



Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020–2025 (GAP III), which aims to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls, and safeguard gains made on gender equality during the 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action. Moreover, the EU-UN partnership is in line with the new EU Joint Communication on Multilateralism, which focuses on the global multilateral system that is 'fit for purpose' to address today's challenges.

In addition to the Regional Steering Committee, coordination with the EU is pursued through regular online meetings with the relevant Development Cooperation Section of the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan.

Other stakeholders may be invited to participate in the Committee's discussions related to planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme activities. This includes representatives from academic/research institutions, local communities and/or the private sector.

The Steering Committee meets twice a year. As the highest governance structure for the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia, the Steering Committee provides strategic oversight for the Programme. The Steering Committee makes decisions that are in accordance with the objectives, approach, and scope of the Regional Programme, and guides the implementing partners and responsible parties in the execution of the Regional Programme. Where consensus and/or agreement cannot be reached among the members of the Regional Steering Committee, the UN RC for Kazakhstan would make the final decision.

Recognising the absence of regional institutions that could be natural partners to the programme, the Regional Programme is striving to engage relevant international institutions on a case-by-case basis. Such institutions may include the UN Regional Preventive Diplomacy Centre for Central Asia, World Bank regional office in Almaty, and UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Special Programme for the Economies in Central Asia (SPECA), and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The first meeting of the Steering Committee is planned for the first half of 2021. By then, the implementation of the Regional Programme should have progressed enough to warrant a substantive discussion by the Committee members. Until then, the RC for Kazakhstan continues to regularly consult with UN RCs in the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan to ensure that the Regional Programme remains relevant and is supported by the stakeholders. Furthermore, the RCO Kazakhstan has been meeting on a bi-monthly basis with the RUNO representatives in Kazakhstan to discuss the Regional Programme rollout.



More details on the connection between RSC and other key players can be found in Annex X.

### **Programme Team**

Day-to-day project management is spearheaded by the members of a single, coherent Programme Management Unit sitting in the same location, consisting of the following members:

- Programme Coordinator (UN Resident Coordinator's Office), who reports to the UN RC as First Reporting Officer on strategic matters and guided day-to-day by the RC Office Team Leader and RUNOs, and who also reports as Second Reporting Officer to the RUNO in charge of Technical Coherence, UN Women;
- 1 Technical Coherence Specialist (UN Women), who reports to the UN RC and to the UN Women Representative;
- 1 Communications Officer (RCO), who reports to the Programme Coordinator, and is guided and supported by the relevant RC Office Staff (RCO Communications Specialist);
- 1 Monitoring & Reporting Officer (RCO), who reports to the Programme Coordinator, and is guided and supported by the relevant RC Office Staff (RCO Data & Reporting Analyst);
- 5 Project Officers (3 UN Women, 1 UNFPA, and 1 UNDP contract(s)), who report to the Programme Coordinator as First Reporting Officer, and to the respective RUNO representatives as Second Reporting Officer;
- 4 Administrative & Finance Assistants (2 RCO and 2 UN Women – Pillar 6) who provide services to the 5 Project Officers under the direct supervision of the Programme Coordinator.

By the end of 2020 almost all team members have been recruited with the exception of the Programme Coordinator and Monitoring and Reporting Officer.

### **Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CS-RRG)**

In order to enable the participation of CS in the design of the SI Regional Programme, the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in Kazakhstan acted quickly to establish an **interim CS-RRG**. The urgency with which the group was constituted responded to the need to engage the interim CSRG

members in the programme document development process and consultation meeting held in October 2019.

Ahead of those consultations then, invitations were sent to various organisations and umbrella bodies who were considered to have high technical capacity in the area of SGBV and HPs, wide geographical coverage, and specialised expertise working with specific issues and populations.

As a result, an **interim CS-RRG** for Central Asia and Afghanistan was established in 2019 with 15 regional CSO members.

The RCO subsequently convened several meetings with the interim CS-RRG. The objectives of the meetings were to: i) consult the group on the roadmap for the establishment of the permanent CS-RRG; ii) consult the group on possible selection criteria for the permanent CS-RRG; and iii) gather feedback and inputs on the draft outline of the Regional Programme document.

The Interim CS-RRG contributed to the design phase of the Regional Programme document and provided relevant inputs regarding possible engagement of the civil society actors in programme activities. For example, the recent expansion of on-line activism and a digitalised public sphere generated new types of civil society actors and influencers. These actors are a) often not formally registered as CSOs, b) more often cause-based (at times single cause-based) than identity-based, c) depend on crowdsourcing or small donations from highly committed donors and emphasise their independence from large donors. These groups are grass-root and increasingly influential in the region. The suggestion was to include such actors. For example, “NeMolchi” movement, which is now a partner of the programme, is one of the examples of a new type of actor that could advise on regional level online networks/groups of similar nature.

It was agreed that the permanent CS-RRG would be tasked with revisiting the discussion and finalising the ToR. A Code of Conduct was also proposed to mitigate possible conflicts of interest and ensure that the members of the CSRG adhere to the highest standards related to human rights, gender equality, and participation. The group concurred on the value of developing a Code of Conduct, which the Coordination Unit agreed to draft and consult with the permanent group, once established.

The **Permanent CS-RRG** was established in December 2020 as an institutional mechanism to facilitate systematic civil society engagement in the design and implementation of the Regional Programme and as a source of expertise. The CS-RRG serves a dual function - to advise the SI





team on the design and implementation of the programme and to be an advocate for the realisation of its objectives. The kick-off meeting of the permanent CS-RRG is scheduled for the first quarter of 2021.

In 2020, the **Selection Committee** was established with five members from regional CSOs and two members from the UN. The tasks of the Selection Committee were as follows:

- Review and agree on the details of the process and timeline for the formation of the SC-RRG, including Terms of Reference (TOR) for SC-RRG, the application format, and Code of Conduct for permanent members of SC-RRG
- Set up the deadlines for the call for applications to SC-RRG membership; approve the application review procedure
- Review and evaluate the applications, select and make decisions regarding the final list of SC-RRG members

#### *Duration of the Selection Committee operation*

The Selection Committee was active throughout the entire selection process for SC-RRG members, which included the following stages:

- Kick-off meeting to agree on procedures
- Interim meeting
- Meeting to review applications and make decisions on the final list of SC-RRG members

After the final list of SC-RRG members was confirmed, the Selection Committee ceased to exist.

#### *Selection process*

To provide administrative and organisational support to the Selection Committee, a Secretariat consisting of members of the Spotlight UN team in Kazakhstan was established. The responsibilities of the Secretariat included:

- Publication of the Call for Applications to SC-RRG membership on behalf of the Selection Committee



- Collection and registration of applications
- Preparation of the longlist of applications based on compliance with the general criteria for SC-RRG membership
- Submission of a longlist at a Selection Committee meeting (including a package of documents - an application and signed Code of Conduct)
- Preparation of official minutes on the Selection Committee decision with the final list of members of SC-RRG members.

### *Final composition*

Based on the Selection Committee evaluation process, 12 regional CSO members were selected to the permanent CS-RRG. The composition is as follows:

- 3 CSO representatives from Afghanistan
- 1 CSO representative from Kazakhstan
- 1 CSO representative from Kyrgyzstan
- 3 CSO representatives from Tajikistan
- 2 CSO representatives from Turkmenistan
- 2 CSO representatives from Uzbekistan

The workplan of the permanent CCS-RRG was not formalised in 2020 but is planned to be developed in the first half of 2021.

The Regional Programme team focused its efforts on identifying CSO-grantees in Turkmenistan that do not have the technical capacities to access funding from international organisations and/or less well-known grass-roots organisations that represent the most vulnerable and marginalised groups. To that end, the Regional Programme team initiated video calls with the Turkmenistan members of the CS-NRG and discussed the local CSOs that could be potentially selected for the Small Grants awards. As a result, four NGOs were suggested for further consideration for single source selection.





### **Inter-agency coordination, technical committees and other governance mechanisms**

To promote a more coordinated and coherent approach towards programme implementation, a joint community of practice (COP) was established with participation of all the key stakeholders (RCOs, RUNOs, EU Delegations, CSOs, government and the Regional Programme staff). The COP is designed to provide peer review and ensure continuous knowledge-sharing between different pillars of the programme. All programmatic documents and products undergo peer review with final clearance from a Technical Coherence Specialist to ensure alignment of programme components with the programme document objectives and theories of change, as well as complementarity of programme interventions designed and implemented under the lead of RUNOs. A specially created platform facilitates and streamlines knowledge exchange, including lessons learned and promising practices to build on existing evidence and create transformative change with respect to ending EVAWG. The Regional Programme will also work to develop a joint knowledge management plan.

Furthermore, meetings of various formal and informal bodies have been systematised according to their purpose, membership, and frequency. The table is available at the end of this document, in Annex X.

To facilitate greater transparency, efficiency, and good governance in the disbursement of Small Grants to CSOs, a Regional Open Coordination Group on Small Grants for CSOs (ROCG) was established under Pillar 6 of the Regional Programme. The ROCG is a platform for informal consultations for building CSOs' capacity and the women's movement in the region to ensure coordinated and coherent approaches to country and regional interventions at the strategic level. Representatives of all Central Asia RUNOs, along with UN Women colleagues in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were invited to be members of the ROCG. Given that UN Women does not have a representative in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the UN RCO in Kazakhstan was requested to facilitate the participation of interested representatives from the UN agencies there. As a result, two candidates from Turkmenistan (UNFPA) and Uzbekistan (UN RCO) kindly agreed to be members of the group. Following the selection process, the list of shortlisted candidates was further scrutinised by the ROCG to check if there were any red flags, issues or concerns with the credibility, reputation, previous experience and/or the effectiveness of the candidates' work.

The Spotlight Regional Programme has been fully integrated in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework of Kazakhstan for 2021-2025 through the annual Joint Workplan.



## **Programme Partnerships**

### **a) Government**

Initiating the process of strategic partnership under the SI CA Regional Programme required taking stock of on-going activities and cooperation with government authorities, relevant institutions, and CSOs in the relevant programmatic areas identified by SI-CA. These included inclusive development, gender mainstreaming, economic and political empowerment of women, eliminating SGBV, bridging inequality gaps, improving collection and quality of data. Once completed, the overview helped to identify themes which could be elevated to the regional level to generate guidelines, tools, models, and recommendations, building on the work already done in Central Asian countries. Additional consultations are needed to ensure engagement and promote advocacy among state actors and encourage governments to take ownership of the initiative.

In October 2020, the UN Deputy Secretary General, Amina J. Mohammed, sent an official letter to the Heads of the five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan regarding the launch of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme. Following this important momentum, the Regional Programme initiated preparation for the official launch event to ensure strategic political support from the key national partners in the region.

The Regional Programme was officially launched on 8 December 2020, within the framework of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed, the European Union Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Mukhtar Tileuberdi, and other dignitaries delivered opening remarks. In addition, the online event brought together other key partners from Central Asia and Afghanistan, including national dignitaries, the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan, UN agencies, National Women's/Gender Equality Mechanisms (NWMs/NGEMs), civil society representatives, activists, and international organisations (World Bank, ADB, OSCE). The event enabled the participants to engage and build awareness of the Regional Programme among state and non-state actors in Central Asia and secure high-level political support and commitments from the governments to joint efforts to eliminate violence against women in the region. The total number of broadcasting views was above 35,000.

### **b) Civil Society**

The Spotlight Initiative recognises that CSOs play a central role in articulating the social perspectives of various groups in society, including women, youth, marginalised groups and/or



groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination. Partnership with CSOs is at the core of the Regional Programme, ensuring that civil society and women's movements are involved in decision-making and that they participate in the design, implementation, and monitoring of interventions under the Regional Programme. Partnership with civil society is one of programme's most important constituencies aimed at accelerated achievement of rights and justice in the EVAWG, ensuring a rights-based approach to programming. This relationship is founded on the principle of leaving no one behind and premised on the reality that women and girls suffer intersectional discrimination based on their gender, race, class, sexual identity, etc. Placing the progress of the most marginalised communities through established partnerships with CSOs, especially grass-roots organisations, is a critical component of our work. The continuous engagement of CSOs in the day-to-day implementation of programme activities serves as a platform for dialogue and sustained engagement at all levels – local, national, and regional. They keep the programme focussed on the issues and constituencies that we serve. Thus, continued partnership with grass-roots women and youth has fostered their ongoing dialogue with key policymakers, ensuring that their voices are not left out of these crucial processes.

CSOs have been at the forefront of the Regional Programme, through its inception, launch and implementation. As mentioned previously, the Regional Programme itself was launched as part of the regional observance of the Global Campaign "16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence", which is an international campaign conducted annually. To support the campaign, the Regional Programme partnered with two local Kazakhstan-based CSOs to bring attention to the campaign's central theme titled "Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!"

In addition, the Regional Programme supported the woman-led public movement operating under the public fund NeMolchi (DontBeSilent) in the fight against violence in Central Asia. That movement has gained new momentum: four separate projects from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, operating under a common #NeMolchi hashtag, have joined forces to confront aggression and violence against women and girls in the region. Furthermore, the Regional Programme and NeMolchi fund organised a regional social media (SoMe) communications campaign aimed at giving voice to survivors of gender-based violence, as well as women's right activists who took concrete action in relation to violence against women (VAW), especially during the COVID pandemic.

The follow up to that campaign was a regional conference organised by the NeMolchi Movement in Central Asia: "Giving Voices and a Safe Space to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence" which highlighted results and established cross-border partnerships of CSOs to end violence



against women and girls (VAWG). It was a strategic opportunity for women's rights social movements and non-governmental organisations in the region to reach their target audience with a joint call to confront and eliminate violence against women and girls.

In partnership with the youth-led organisation "FemAgora Central Asia", the Regional Programme developed a regional communication campaign to collect, highlight, and exchange best practices from the region on the work of crisis centres and ensuring access to services provision for survivors of sexual and gender-based (SGBV) violence, especially during the COVID pandemic. In line with the key principle of "Leaving No One Behind" the youth activists collected stories of SGBV survivors from the vulnerable groups of the population, i.e. women living with HIV, migrant women, and women with disabilities.

Through a call for proposals under the Small Grants for CSOs component, the Regional Programme prioritised selection of grass-roots organisations as well as those working with the vulnerable groups. A scoring table was developed by the Small Grants Review Team to select the grass-root, non-established NGOs working with vulnerable women. The selected CSOs would otherwise not have the technical capacities to access funding from the international organisations. As stipulated in the Small Grants Policy, the grants are intended exclusively to finance a limited range of eligible activities to support the development or strengthening of a CSO's institutional capacity, including, among others, introduction and improvement of organisational systems, tools, and processes, as well as the training of the workforce in technical and managerial skills. However, taking into consideration the rise of SGBV cases during the pandemic, considerable emphasis was placed on prevention and elimination of SGBV through awareness-raising campaigns and provision of services.

The following are the approved grantees for the small grants award:

#### **Kazakhstan:**

- NeMolchi.KZ (*service provision and social norms change advocacy campaigns*)
- Zhartas Kazakhstan (*service provision, social norms change advocacy campaigns*)
- Kaysar (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training*)
- Moi Dom (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training*)
- Doktor S.N. (*monitoring of social media, service provision and awareness-raising campaigns*)

#### **Kyrgyzstan:**



- Tendesh (*awareness-raising campaigns and internal capacity-building training*)
- Pozitivnyi dialog (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns and internal capacity-building training*)
- Kaniet (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training*)

#### **Tajikistan:**

- Mumtoz (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training*)
- Lodzhvar (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training*)
- Mir Prava (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns, internal capacity-building training, monitoring and advocating for progress in cases of sexual harassment and violence*)

#### **Uzbekistan:**

- Ferganskoe oblastnoe otделение Tsentra podderzhki grazhdanskikh initsiativ (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns and internal capacity-building training*)
- Kalb Nuri (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns and internal capacity-building training*)
- Istikbol (*service provision, awareness-raising campaigns and internal capacity-building training*)
- Nihol (*service provision and awareness-raising campaigns*)

As outlined in the Regional Programme Project Document (pp. 36 – 37), grass-roots CSOs in Central Asia will be supported through the provision of small grants and capacity development, with priority given to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, as these countries do not have separate Spotlight country programmes. Nonetheless, due to a lack of quality applications from Turkmenistan for the Small Grants awards, it was decided to consult with the two Turkmenistan-based representatives of the CS-NRG on the possible local grantees that meet the requirements for single source selection. Taking into account the proposed CSOs and the political and economic context in which non-governmental organisations operate, the RUNO team reached out to its Regional Office and Headquarters to find the most optimal mechanisms for carrying out the small grants component in Turkmenistan.

### **c) EU**

Partnership with the EU is the basis of the Regional Programme. Through this partnership, the UN and the EU coordinate their strategies, share relevant information and provide coherent leadership of the Initiative. Joint work is also aligned with the EU's new Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Relations 2020–2025 (GAP III), which aims to accelerate progress on empowering women and girls, and safeguard gains made on gender equality during the 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action. Moreover, the EU-UN partnership is in line with the new EU Joint Communication on Multilateralism, which focuses on the global multilateral system that is 'fit for purpose' to address today's challenges.

In addition to the Regional Steering Committee, coordination with the EU is pursued through regular online meetings with the relevant Development Cooperation Section of the EU Delegation to Kazakhstan. For example, the Regional Programme team participates in quarterly People and Prosperity Cluster coordination meetings that take stock of the key EU-funded programmes in Central Asia. Both the EU and UN have identified focal points at the technical level for everyday communication. For example, key elements of outreach events and all visibility and communication materials content are always discussed in advance with the EU Delegation, to ensure their compatibility with the EU and SI visibility guidelines.

The latest joint activity, as mentioned above, was the official online launch of the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan, with the participation of the UN Deputy Secretary General, Amina J. Mohammed, the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen and high-level government representatives from Central Asian countries and Afghanistan. The event was also attended by representatives of EU DEVCO and EU Delegations from across Central Asia. There was a collective agreement that all stakeholders, including the UN, EU, government, women, men, girls and boys, civil society and the expert community need to be involved, in addressing the causes of violence against women.

### **Results**

#### **Capturing Broader Transformations Across Outcomes**

The implementation of the Regional Programme started in full force around 1 December 2020, and accordingly it may be too early to see its broader impact on the societies in the region. A baseline study has been conducted at the development stage of the Regional Programme document, "Theory of Change". It should be noted that the Spotlight Initiative's theory of change for programmes in





Central Asia relies on the understanding that despite significant gains in gender equality the region's response to SGBV has been slow and uneven. The approach assumes that to reach a significant breakthrough in SGBV response, Central Asian states need to focus on the pillars, representing deeply connected interventions: adopting and implementing laws and policies based on international human rights standards, developing strong and inclusive institutions, building rights-based survivor-centred coordinated response services, closing the data gap and changing harmful gendered social norms, while focusing attention on those left behind. The theory of change places SGBV within the larger system of gendered inequality, connects it to other modes of discrimination and allocates equal importance to addressing both social norms and institutions that perpetuate SGBV and reproduce the vulnerabilities of survivors and the impunity of violence perpetrators.

### *About the Baseline Study*

The study provides baseline information to bridge the data/information gaps in the Regional Programme results framework and to establish the baselines for agreed indicators, as needed. The study helped to set milestones, targets and the development of subsequent workplans in line with the principle of 'leaving no one behind'. Appropriate baseline values are generated for the identified indicators with missing data to determine the measurement of the Spotlight Initiative's impact for all stakeholders (governments, Senior Management within the UN, the donor(s) and other partners, such as civil society and the women's movement and even the general public). The baseline indicators identified by the study were used to inform strategic decisions, allowing for the refinement of programme and communication interventions through the identification of possible constraints and opportunities for programming.

All baselines corresponded to specific outcome and output indicators within the Results Matrix of the Regional Programme. The outcomes and outputs were developed by the SI Secretariat and are used by Spotlight Initiative programmes across the globe. Coherence between the baselines and the indicators is important to build on what was already achieved in the region, understand the gaps and firmly root the programme activities in local socio-economic and cultural milieu.

The programme is positioning itself as a reference programme for relevant EVAW actors in the countries of Central Asia. The RUNOs under the Regional Programme are working jointly with different sectors to ensure an integrated approach to addressing VAWG, including harmful practices. Among the UN, coordination efforts will ensure an integrated approach to strengthening the architecture of SGBV prevention and response and the system of essential services provision for survivors of SGBV based on a multi-sectoral response.

To identify any synergies between the Regional Programme and existing Spotlight country programmes in the region, joint coordination meetings with the Kyrgyzstan office and Afghanistan country programme team have been agreed for early 2021. The main objective is to explore what added value the Regional Programme can bring and potentially engage in a more meaningful way with the country programmes through provision of expertise, development of unified tools, approaches and methodologies with the following dissemination and integration at the country level. The Regional Programme will heavily engage with country programmes under the joint communication campaigns and data collection, as well as under capacitating civil society organisations from the region under Pillar 6 of the Regional Programme.

Conditions to strengthen the response to GBV were created through on-going collaborations of RUNOs with implementing partners that have extensive experience working at local, national and regional levels with groups of women and girls. These partnerships allow the Regional Programme to develop women-centred responses, focusing on women with disabilities, young women, rural women and girls. Partners are identified through internal assessments that consider technical capabilities and expertise on intersectional and inclusive methodologies necessary to ensure region-wide impact.

### **Capturing Change at Outcome Level**

#### **Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework**

The Regional Programme aims to strengthen states' capacity to address VAWG and harmful practices through reviews of legislation and other mechanisms designed to support victims and survivors. All efforts are focused on existing international human and women's rights instruments as well as intervention models and initiatives. The SI CA programme is building on the results of national efforts to strengthen legislative frameworks around SGBV and on-going developments and debates. The regional legislative review will specifically address the scope of the national SGBV laws in protecting against all forms of SGBV and some forms of harmful practices; as well as the degree to which the laws ensure availability and accessibility of essential services to women and girls subject to violence. This specifically relates to the law enforcement practices and establishing referral mechanisms introducing a victim-centred, trauma-informed approach to case management with active involvement of service providers and law enforcement outlining duties and responsibilities of different state and non-state subjects of the EVAWG.

A network of experts, representing state institutions, CSOs and professional associations from the countries of Central Asia will be set up to plan, conduct, and discuss the findings and





recommendations of the legal framework review. This network will be the first collective attempt in Central Asia to develop a roadmap for mobilising political will to address SGBV. It will also be a collective effort by state and non-state actors to accelerate the delivery on international and government commitments on strengthening gender equality and ending SGBV and harmful practices. Best practices and recommendations generated through various studies will be converted to knowledge products and publications tailored to the needs of EVAW actors, including legislators, providers of essential services, and women's organisations with the objective of strengthening knowledge and capacities for those responsible for leading the reforms in this area.

### **Outcome 2: Institutions**

A capacity strengthening strategy is underway for decision makers, government entities and civil society organisations, aimed at supporting the development and implementation of public policies, plans and programmes, in line with international standards, to address VAWG and harmful practices. It will capitalise on recent successful models, including introductory training in five Central Asian countries on the case referral/case management system; introductory work on the UN Global Essential Services Package for women and girls, and initial work in establishing standard operating procedures at the national levels in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and recently in Uzbekistan. The Regional Programme seeks to enhance the use of specialised expertise among the police, prosecution authorities and other criminal justice agencies. Furthermore, the Regional Programme aims to ensure that police officers, prosecutors and other criminal justice officials receive regular and institutionalised sensitisation training on gender and child-related issues and build their capacity to address VAWG.

### **Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change**

The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme conducted a large advocacy campaign in Central Asia to tackle existing socio-cultural norms and reach out to survivors and activists in all countries. To address stereotypical gender norms, eliminate SGBV, combat harmful practices that foster injustice, the Regional Programme will establish diverse and non-traditional partnerships with government, civil society, survivors, youth, men and cultural and religious leaders in their capacity of agents of change and providers of solutions. Joint regional awareness campaigns and work with men and boys to address negative attitudes, in particular for rural areas, and in local languages to reach the most vulnerable will be given utmost priority in the design and implementation of programme interventions.

Under Pillar 3 work on MenEngage is being planned in the Central Asian region with the support of the Eurasian Center for People Management (ECPM). The activities will include desk review of the best practices in the region, development of the strategy on the strengthening of the national capacities on MenEngage and adoption of educational materials for Husbands/Fathers for the Central Asia region.

A partnership was established with the Public Movement NeMolchi (DontBeSilent) to support and provide a dialogue platform for survivors and women's rights activists from the region to speak out and take concrete action to combat violence against women in order to bring together members of the #NeMolchiCA (DontBeSilent) Central Asia movement and share best practices to protect women's rights, especially during the pandemic. During the campaign 64 human stories about survivors and women's rights activists from the four Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) were published on the social media accounts of UN Women Central Asia, UN in Kazakhstan, and Public Fund NeMolchiKZ and NeMolchiCA highlighting the importance of breaking the silence and standing up against violence and transforming gender stereotypes as a root cause for VAWG. The campaign was concluded by a regional conference of women's rights activists and SGBV survivors from the region. On December 23, 2020, a regional conference "#DontBeSilent Movement in Central Asia: Giving Voices and a Safe Space to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence" was held online. The conference served as a platform for survivors of violence and civic activists for women's rights from Central Asia. Participants shared their personal stories, exchanged best practices in protecting women's rights, especially during the pandemic, and discussed the necessary steps to end violence against women. The event was also attended by Vice Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic, Elvira Surabaldieva, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Michaela Friberg-Storey, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Elvira Azimova, Commissioner for the Rights of the Child of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Aliya Yunusova, Member of Parliament (Committee on Law and Human Rights), Majlisi Oli of the Republic of Tajikistan, Rano Bobojonion, and participants of the project "Thank you for not being silent" with leaders of the #DontBeSilent movement from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, a representative of the Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan, and UN agencies from Central Asia.

In partnership with the youth-led organisation "FemAgora Central Asia", the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme highlighted acute challenges of increased violence against women during the COVID-19 pandemic and the importance of access to essential services for the SGBV survivors with a particular focus on the needs of the most vulnerable groups of women. Over the course of the 16 day campaign, the social media (SoMe) campaign highlighted the important work of crisis



centres in the region, and the daily work of shelters, hotlines, and direct anti-violence services as the backbone of civil society activism to end GBV. 16 human stories were published on the social media accounts of UN Women Central Asia, UN in Kazakhstan, and FemAgora. The stories also raised the issue of intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women living with HIV, migrant women, and women with disabilities, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the overall lack of access to essential services for these marginalised groups.

These personal stories helped highlight the day-to-day challenges that these women face, analysed existing gaps in service provision, and identified needs which must be addressed to ensure women's rights to a life free from violence and discrimination are observed and protected. The findings during the communication campaign reconfirmed that crisis centres are capable of intersectoral rapid response and comprehensive services. Identified human stories from the region have clearly demonstrated that despite social stigma, lack of adequate institutional policies, and even borders, crisis centres have proven that they remained the first response line during the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite facing many challenges, the crisis centres continue to promote and empower girls, women and transgender people, often in the most difficult and vulnerable situations. Taking responsibility for first contact with survivors of violence, they also document cases and collect valuable evidence on systemic human rights violations. Their full functioning is hindered by a lack of adequate and proportionate funding and the lack of inclusive and anti-discriminatory policies and regulations.

### **Outcome 5: Data**

Under Pillar 5, the Regional Programme plans to partner with Melbourne University of Australia to translate into Russian and adapt the kNowVAWdata online course to the context of Central Asia. The kNowVAWdata training course covers key concepts related to measuring Violence Against Women, teaching how to use various tools to generate reliable, comparable data and undertake a national prevalence study. The course includes ethical and safety guidelines, issues of data management, analysis and dissemination, and capacity-building for work with qualitative and administrative data. Furthermore, the course focuses on stakeholder engagement and strategies for ensuring an inclusive approach for understanding VAW. The course will be translated into Russian and some of the parts would be adjusted to the needs of the Central Asian countries. The course was initially developed for professionals involved in the measurement of VAW in countries throughout Asia and the Pacific. The course would be available for representatives from state institutions of Central Asian countries, women's machineries, gender practitioners, researchers, and international consultants addressing VAW.



## **Outcome 6: Women's Movement**

Within Outcome 6, the Regional Programme has advanced the small grants component for CSOs in Central Asia. With a focus on strengthening capacities of grass-roots organisations working on the elimination of violence against women and girls in the region, the Regional Programme identified eligible NGOs to receive the small grants. These grants were intended exclusively for strengthening the CSOs' institutional capacity, with a focus on skills needed for prevention and elimination of gender-based violence within the context of COVID-19, including domestic violence (DV) and sexual harassment at the workplace.

The priority was given to the introduction and improvement of organisational systems, tools, and processes to respond to DV within the COVID-19 context, including:

- Service provision to victims of DV;
- Development of relevant knowledge materials;
- Training the workforce to develop technical and managerial skills;
- Strengthening organisational capacity for engagement in follow up procedures related to reporting to the UN Treaty Bodies (preparation of EVAW related submissions, inter-organisational coordination, coalition building, etc);
- Implementation of recommendations related to EVAW;
- Strengthening organisational capacity in monitoring and advocating for progress in cases of sexual harassment and violence, including at the workplace, in line with international norms and standards; and
- Supporting with equipment such as copiers, scanners, printers, laptops, and computers as long as the cost of such equipment is limited to 30% of the proposed small grant budget or 5,000 USD, whichever is lower, to respond to DV.

One of the mandatory requirements for the applicants was the creation of information and knowledge materials with a further aim of building a regional knowledge hub, documenting, and sharing best practices among women's rights organisations and activists in the region.

An advertisement of the small grants award was posted on the websites of UNDP Procurement and UN Women. An additional information session to address outstanding questions and provide clarifications for possible applicants was conducted within the advertisement period. As a result, a total of 70 applications were received (Kazakhstan – 17; Kyrgyzstan – 14; Tajikistan – 25; Turkmenistan – 1; Uzbekistan – 13) and reviewed. Following the ROCG members' comments on



the shortlisted candidates, a Justification Note to support 12 CSOs (Kazakhstan – 5; Kyrgyzstan – 3; Uzbekistan – 4) was presented to and signed by the UN Women Representative in Kazakhstan.

### **Rights Holders (“Beneficiaries”) Reached**

Indicative numbers	Direct for 2020	Indirect for 2020	Comments/Justifications
<b>Women (18 yrs. and above)</b>	5,570 (the small grants component)          93	230 (the small grants component)          4.4 million	<p>Based on the consultations with the grantees, CSOs consist of 70% women, on average.</p> <p>Further, approximately 90% of beneficiaries that receive comprehensive services (psychological, legal and social counselling) are women.</p> <p>Reached via social media channels and mass media</p> <p>Online conference participants</p>
<b>Men (18 yrs. and above)</b>	736 (the small grants component)	100 (the small grants component)	<p>Based on the consultations with the grantees, CSOs consist of 30% men, on average.</p> <p>Further, approximately 10% of beneficiaries that receive comprehensive services (psychological, legal and social counselling) are men.</p>



	8	1.4 million	Reached via social media channels and mass media  Online conference participants
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,407</b>	<b>5,800,330</b>	

### **Challenges and Mitigating Measures**

The Regional Programme was supposed to start in the beginning of 2020, but due to delays, the project document was endorsed only in July 2020. The three RUNOs received the first project tranche close to the year-end closure of the accounts. As such, RUNOs could only carry out preparatory activities in the last month of 2020 and could not implement activities planned for 2020. Accordingly, the implementation rate for the Regional Programme is 5% against the Phase 1 budget. The challenge for the RUNOs moving forward is to implement activities quickly and efficiently, in order to get implementation back on track. To mitigate this challenge, the RUNOs dedicated time in 2020 to working on improving coordination, mobilising resources, and accelerating implementation of the activities. Annex B outlines additional risks.

Existing legislation on CSOs' activity in Turkmenistan that regulates mechanisms on grant provision from foreign donors has resulted in a limited pool of CSOs in the country. Moreover, the country's economic challenges have weakened the capacity of CSOs to independently conduct their work. Furthermore, the implementation of a small grants programme to build CSOs' capacity in Turkmenistan was severely affected by the existing difference between official and non-official exchange rates. The difference between the official (1 USD = 3.50 TKM) and black market exchange rates (1 USD is approximately 32 TKM) poses potentially an insurmountable obstacle for the provision of small grants. The allowed maximum of 30,000 USD per grantee (as per the UN Women Small Grants Policy) would be equivalent to around 3,280 USD in the local currency. Consequently, no CSO in the country would be willing to receive the small grant under Pillar 6.

As a result, in attempts to introduce alternative methods and mechanisms for the provision of grants, the UN Women team has been consulting and seeking guidance from its Regional Office and Headquarters to ensure Turkmenistan CSOs' participation in the programme.





Recruitment of a Regional Programme Coordinator has not been completed, as the selected candidates have declined the offer in the two rounds of recruitment. The third round is in progress at the time of writing. The Team Leader of the Resident Coordinator Office has continued to perform the role of programme coordinator.

## **Lessons Learned and New Opportunities**

### **a) Lessons Learned**

The Regional Programme is a complex programme, with many stakeholders. Only on the EU and the UN side, the stakeholders include six resident coordinator offices, RUNOs national offices, six European Union Delegations in the region, the UN HQ/Spotlight Secretariat and the EU HQ/DEVCO. A key for ensuring that such a complex organisational structure delivers is in clear organisation (*who does what when and where*) and communication.

Even before the funds were received, the Regional Programme team had developed an overview of different coordination mechanisms and shared it with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan-based RUNOs, and the two RCOs with national spotlight programmes (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). Based on their inputs, the document was revised and developed into an overall coordination structure that is functioning as planned (extract at the bottom, in Annex X).

Furthermore, the RCO continued pursuing regular communication with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan, other RCOs included in the Regional Programme and Kazakhstan-based RUNOs to ensure that these stakeholders are well informed of the developments in the programme implementation and can jointly plan ahead.

### **b) New Opportunities**

The Regional Programme has begun to plan how to capitalise on existing successful interventions and initiatives in the countries of Central Asia to expand them at the regional level taking into account common historical and cultural aspects between the countries. One of these initiatives is work on MenEngage, which was successfully implemented in Kazakhstan and could be expanded to other Central Asian countries.

Under Pillar 5, the Regional Programme laid the groundwork to partner with Melbourne University of Australia to adapt their kNOwVAWdata online course to the context of Central Asia. As described earlier, the kNOwVAWdata training course covers key concepts related to Violence Against Women,



as well as various tools needed to generate reliable, comparable data and undertake national prevalence studies. The course was initially developed for professionals, involved in the measurement of VAW in countries throughout Asia and the Pacific. The course would be available for representatives from state institutions of Central Asian countries, women's machineries, gender practitioners, researchers, and international consultants addressing VAW. The participants of the course will use knowledge and research skills to measure the prevalence of GBV in the countries of Central Asia and use this data to advocate for policy formulations.

As part of the COVID response interventions and in line with the UN Secretary General's Political Engagement Strategy, which aims to accelerate concrete policy responses to gender-based violence in the context of COVID-19, the Regional Programme under the small grants component supported 15 CSOs in Central Asia to provide comprehensive assistance to SGBV survivors, ensuring wider access to essential services.

More broadly, the Regional Programme has continued to put the issue of rising violence against women during the pandemic high on the agenda and support the joint efforts of governments and civil society to push for a shift in policy, in practice, in societal norms and in services that are required for the programme to achieve its objectives.

### **Innovative, Promising or Good Practices**

Innovative Practice: According to the UN Women Small Grants Policy, the Small Grants Review Team should consist of UN Women staff since the organisation ultimately bears the financial and management risks. However, to ensure transparency, parity, and wide participation of all RUNOs and RCOs in the region, the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme established a Regional Open Coordination Group on Small Grants for CSOS (ROCG) consisting of RUNO and RCO staff members from the region. The ROCG is a platform for informal consultations. Therefore, it does not have any oversight, monitoring, or decision-making role in SI programme activities. The ROCG members actively engage and provide valuable, constructive inputs to the work as needed, including offering independent and informed advice on the applicants in consideration, sharing and raising issues or concerns on the effectiveness of CSOs working in the areas of SGBV, domestic violence, and gender equality in their respective countries. The ROCG members serve as a communication channel between the Gender Theme Groups and their respective agencies at the country level with regard to the matters and latest developments concerning the Small Grants component.



## **Communications and Visibility**

As described earlier, the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan was launched online on 8 December 2020, within the framework of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence global campaign. In addition, two supporting campaigns, in collaboration with two Central Asian CSOs were also conducted, as well as an online regional conference on violence against women and girls that took place towards the end of December.

In total, 77 articles, TV news items and stories covering or mentioning the Regional Programme were published by 53 media outlets and websites across at least ten countries. There were 39 media hits published in Kazakhstan, 12 in Kyrgyzstan, 5 in Uzbekistan, 12 in Tajikistan, and 9 internationally. 66 (86%) of media stories directly acknowledge the EU's role in the Initiative, including 32 hits (42%) that described the amounts of investment into the Spotlight Initiative regionally and locally.

The Initiative was promoted on the social media channels (Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube) of the UN in Kazakhstan, UN Women Central Asia, UNFPA Kazakhstan, NeMolchi (DontBeSilent) movement, and FemAgora, a feminist non-government organisation in Central Asia. In October-December 2020, 597 posts were published in total, that reached at least 5.9 million views and 469,000 engagements. The total number of followers of all channels involved is 118,000. 75% of the audience were female, 25% were male.

Output Indicator 3.3.3: Number of new and other media stories/reports that sensitively report on VAWG and GEWE more broadly - 9

Output Indicator 3.2.2: Number of people reached by campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping - 5.9 million

Output Indicator 3.2.5: Number of campaigns challenging harmful social norms and gender stereotyping, including of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, developed and disseminated - 2

Other indicators are not available to count due to the early stage of the project (no public opinion surveys and marketing research have been conducted yet).

### **a) Messages**



- The Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030.
- The Initiative is responding to all forms of violence against women and girls, with a particular focus on domestic and family violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, femicide, trafficking in human beings and sexual and economic (labour) exploitation.
- The Initiative is addressing legislative and policy gaps, strengthening institutions, promoting gender-equitable attitudes, and providing quality services for survivors.

The messages targeted mass media and wide audiences. The messages had a clear structure, focussing on (a) an innovative large project's launch by (b) two high-profile, globally known organisations, and (c) a short project description and objectives. As referenced above, the messages were widely shared in the media.

### **b) Media and visibility events**

The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan was officially launched online (due to COVID-19 restrictions) on December 8, 2020, with participation of UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed, EU Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen and high-level government representatives from the Central Asian countries and Afghanistan. The event was conducted on the final stage of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence global campaign. Total broadcast reach was 35,598 views.

Furthermore, the regional conference “#DontBeSilent Movement in Central Asia: Giving Voices and a Safe Space to Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence” took place on December 23, 2020. Participants from Central Asia shared their personal stories, exchanged best practices in protecting women's rights, and discussed steps to end violence against women. High-profile representatives of the UN, the EU Commission, and the governments of the Central Asian countries attended the event as well. 101 people participated.

### **c) Campaigns**

The annual "16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence" is the culmination of an effort to analyse, report and highlight the work of women activists in the fight against gender-based violence. The 2020 campaign took the context of the COVID-19 crisis and the "shadow pandemic" as its outcome. Consequently, there is a need to reflect on the challenges and methods that women's rights



advocates face in this new reality. The importance of the campaign was also underscored by the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In this regard, the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme supported the public movement DontBeSilent in the fight against violence in Central Asia, which gained new momentum. Four separate projects from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, operating under a common #NeMolchi (DontBeSilent), joined forces to confront aggression and violence against women and girls in the region. The main objective of the campaign was to support and provide a dialogue platform for survivors and women's rights activists from the region to speak out and take concrete action to combat violence against women in order to bring together members of the #NeMolchiCA (DontBeSilent) Central Asia movement and share best practices to protect women's rights, especially during the pandemic. The campaign helped reinforce cooperation among activists, human rights defenders and government officials in the region to effectively respond to and raise public awareness on the issues of violence against women and girls.

The Regional Programme supported the "Thank you for not being silent!" campaign of the NeMolchi (DontBeSilent) movement in Central Asia. During the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, 64 human stories of different women, women's rights defenders, and victims of violence from Central Asia were published on the social media channels of the NeMolchi (DontBeSilent) movement and UN Women Central Asia. The campaign resulted in 727,000 views and 406,000 engagements.

The Regional Programme, in collaboration with FemAgora, a feminist youth-led non-government organisation in Central Asia, participated in 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence under the global theme, Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!. The social media campaign resulted in 2 million views and 9,000 engagements.

#### **d) Human interest stories**

Under Pillar 3 of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme (Outcome 3, Output 3.2, Activity 3.2.1) the programme established partnerships with local women-led feminist organisations and developed a number of human stories on the importance of challenging negative social norms reinforcing gender stereotypes and tolerance to VAWG, as well as the importance of the work of crisis centres and service providers especially during the COVID-19 pandemic taking into account the needs of most vulnerable groups of population, such as women with disabilities, HIV-positive, women-migrants, etc.

#### **1. Pillar 1, Outcome 1, Output 1.1**



“Living in XXI, we can’t be indifferent to these facts. We have to pave the way towards women’s rights protection.”

Kyrgyzstan, December 10, 2020

Elvira Surabaldiyeva is a prominent politician, reformist, ex-parliamentarian, and Vice Prime Minister of Social Affairs. People call her Joan of Arc and compare her to the historical leader, Kurmanzhan Datka. But Elvira is a heroine of today. She is always brave and fearless whether it is on a rostrum, in a square or lobby or in the minister’s chair. She speaks truth to the officials’ faces, blames the ministers for inaction and carving up portfolios, and stands up for the rights of vulnerable groups of the population and victims of all kinds of violence.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2810649302481733>

2. Pillar 6, Outcome 6, Output 6.1, 6.3 & Pillar 1, Outcome 1, Output 1.1

According to article 175 of the Kyrgyzstan Criminal Code, kidnapping of a woman for marriage against her will is punishable by imprisonment for a term of 5 to 7 years.

Kyrgyzstan, December 9, 2020

Eliza Adzhiyeva is a programme coordinator at the Women’s Help Center NGO, which is the first NGO in Kyrgyzstan, that counted the number of women who were kidnapped and impelled to marry. This local NGO created public resonance and forced public officials to prosecute a perpetrator who kidnapped a young girl and later killed her in a police department where she came to ask for help.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2809827092563954>

3. Pillar 1, Outcome 1, Output 1.1 & Pillar 6, Outcome 6, Output 6.1

“We can achieve zero tolerance to any kinds of violence in our society.”

Kazakhstan, December 9, 2020

Saltanat Tursynbekova is an active participant of a working group for developing amendments to a domestic violence bill in Kazakhstan. She has resigned from the General Prosecutor’s Office in



order to participate in developing the amendments. As a member of a working group, she actively participates in law-making, speaks about domestic violence problems from different platforms and encourages people to take part in establishing effective measures to end domestic violence.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2809364449276885>

4. Pillar 6, Outcome 6, Output 6.1-3

"I would like to see significant progress."

Uzbekistan, December 4, 2020

Aziza Umarova talks about issues of gender equality, the rights of women and girls, and women empowerment. Knowing female problems in Uzbekistan 'from the inside', Aziza Umarova tells us about difficult situations with human rights, equality and women's position in general in her country. According to her, there are a lot of problems in this area. She stresses the need to at least start talking about gender equality and rights.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2804761769737153>

5. Pillar 6, Outcome 6, Output 6.3

"Life goes on no matter what, no situation should get in the way of achieving goals."

Tajikistan, December 1, 2020

Tahmina Haidarova is one of the few individuals who has publicly disclosed her HIV status in Tajikistan. Tahmina leads the Tajikistan Network of Women Living with HIV public organisation. She was diagnosed with HIV in 2010. In 2011, she became one of the activists of the "Tajikistan Network of Women Living with HIV" and since 2013 she has been leading it.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2802485816631415>

6. Pillar 6, Outcome 6, Output 6.1, 6.3

"Psychological violence is much more common."



Uzbekistan, December 5, 2020

Shakhnoza Kurbanova is a psychologist, a psychotherapist, and a founder of the Youth Trust Centre in Uzbekistan. She focuses on problems of violence.

“Issues of gender equality and violence have always concerned public figures of all countries in the world. We are certainly no exception, and I am no exception. These problems are closely related to the protection of human interests and rights. If we talk about the Central Asian region, then we have to talk about the mentality. Since time immemorial, the role of men in a family and in a society has been dominant, men have ruled, and of course there have been inequalities. By now the situation has changed more or less, but many problems, of course, still remain,” Shakhnoza Kurbanova says.

<https://www.facebook.com/unwomen.centralasia/posts/2806099152936748>

#### e) Testimonials

##### **Mukhtar Tileuberdi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan:**

This Initiative is really timely and critical as the pandemic has led to a surge in the number of cases of violence against women worldwide. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of Kazakhstan expressed his full support for the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative, both at the national and regional level. The pandemic with its social and economic impacts has been a setback to the progress made in gender equality globally. However, in Kazakhstan, every effort is made to ensure minimal deviation from reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda by strictly following the guidelines of the Spotlight initiative and giving it priority in our national strategy, Kazakhstan 2050. The Spotlight Initiative can be the high priority for Kazakhstan’s work with the UN and other partners on a regional basis. This would have a spillover effect on the other aspects of the UN’s efforts in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

##### **Aliza Soltonbekova, Minister of Labour and Social Development of Kyrgyzstan:**

Countries must increasingly recognise the role of women in solutions and proposals they propose for the country's development. This paradigm shift is a starting point for ending violence against women. Countries where the Spotlight Initiative is implemented, such as Kyrgyzstan, need to take decisive action in this direction. Therefore, it is important to work not only at the national but also at



the regional level. It is important to raise some common problems at the regional level, jointly seek solutions, and also learn from the experience of other Central Asian countries and Afghanistan. I really hope that this programme will become a platform for uniting efforts to combat violence against women and girls, promote this agenda at the regional level, and exchange experiences. Most importantly, as a result, women and girls should feel the effect of the programme. This is what we all strive for.

**Dina Smailova, NeMolchiKZ (DontBeSilentKZ) Foundation, Kazakhstan:**

NeMolchiKZ Foundation believes that the support of the Don't Be Silent Movement in Central Asia by the Spotlight Initiative is a big breakthrough for many non-governmental organisations and the public that are at the forefront of the fight against violence. For the Central Asian region, this topic is taboo because of our mentality. Under the guise of national characteristics and culture, some try to justify violence against women and girls. Thanks to the support of the Spotlight Initiative, several civil society organisations have joined forces in the region to combat violence. There are also some ordinary, caring citizens who did not remain silent about the violence. These projects are very important for uniting the efforts of public figures and civil society in order to give a worthy rebuff to the rapists. The Spotlight Initiative raises important issues in the region. Violence against women and girls is a pressing issue that must be tackled together and decisively. We hope that through the support of the Spotlight Initiative our network will expand, and other countries will join the Movement in Central Asia.

**Leyla Zuleikha Makhmudova, Co-founder of FemAgora Central Asia:**

Considering the tipping point in the development of feminist movements in the region and a special agenda on countering gender-based violence, intensified and complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the launch of the SI programme is important. I believe that flexible funding and a focus on developing feminist initiatives and organisations will have a significant impact on strengthening the latter and feminist reality in the region.

**Sven-Olov Carlsson, EU Ambassador to Kazakhstan:**

The European Union is strongly committed to support gender equality and women's empowerment. This strong commitment is one of the reasons why the European Union teamed up with the United Nations to fight against the most prevalent forms of violence against women and girls worldwide and put forward an initial commitment of 500 million euros. For this reason, the European Union has decided to invest more than 5 million USD for a dedicated Regional Programme in Central Asia in order to counter all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices and tackle such phenomena in a comprehensive manner. We will work on legislation and institutional





strengthening, we will boost prevention efforts against violence, improve data collection, and support women's organisations. The Spotlight Initiative is about working together with partner countries, civil society, girls and boys, all traditional and religious leaders. The development of the Central Asian programme was a joint effort between all these actors in which governments and civil society play a hugely important role. The Spotlight Initiative in Central Asia aims at a region where each woman and girl realises her full potential in a violence free gender-responsive and inclusive environment, where existing national legislation must be transformed so that implementation comprehensively and meaningfully prevents and protects against sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices while providing victims with the support they require. The Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia will be a good opportunity for key actors to engage in cross-border exchange, development of tools and building of action-oriented alliances to support the work on the ground.

**Michaela Friberg-Storey, The United Nations Resident Coordinator Designate for Kazakhstan:**

With the Spotlight Initiative we want to ensure that women and girls can really contribute in their full capacity to their societies and communities, that they can live a life free from fear of violence. The Spotlight Initiative is a very important platform to bring this work forward, to support the countries as they tackle this pandemic of violence, one that threatens individual health and integrity, shatters families, breaks down communities, and global efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In the United Nations, we look forward to working with our experts in the different bodies and most importantly with our partners throughout the region.

**f) Photos**

1.1 - UNDP Training for police officers in practical guidance on response to GBV in Shymkent and Aqtobe, Kazakhstan, /Nikita Shabayev





1.2 - UNDP Training for police officers in practical guidance on response to GBV in Shymkent and Aqtobe, Kazakhstan, /Nikita Shabayev





2.1 - UNDP Training of Trainers on SGBV Course delivered for the representatives of the Police Academies and regional training centres of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan /Nikita Shabayev



### **g) Videos**

Video of the launch is available here: <https://youtu.be/uAqSF1nkzx0>

### **Next Steps**

Over the first months of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme implementation, noticeable progress has been made with establishing regional partnerships with women's rights organisations and movements. Over the next few months, RUNOs will work together in the spirit of UN Reform





through the established inter-agency COP mechanism to accelerate delivery and start generating results. This includes a critical assessment of programme workplans to review activities that cannot be implemented due to the COVID-19 context, as well as activities that need to be refocused to address new risk factors for VAWG and response efforts for victims and their families.

Ensuring that essential services are prioritised and increased during this current crisis will be given priority throughout programme interventions, particularly under the Small Grants component. Within the following six-month period, under the Pillar 6 component, the Regional Programme will assist women's rights organisations, autonomous social movements and civil society organisations to strengthen their capacity to influence, sustain, and advance progress on GEWE and end SGBV. The pursued policies and programmes will aim to respond to the needs of all women and girls, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

To that end, the development of a common vision and roadmap of CSOs' network in the Central Asia region will be facilitated. The most suitable mechanism for hosting a knowledge platform will be identified, and institutional capacities of grass-roots organisations will be further enhanced through the provision of small grants and capacity-building events.

Based on best international practices and analysis of existing forms of collaboration and networking in the region, CSOs' representatives from Central Asia and Afghanistan will gather and work on the creation of a roadmap for the establishment of Regional Network. Further, with a focus on building the capacities of CSOs that do not have the technical capacities to access funding from international organisations, several CSOs from the Central Asian countries will be awarded with small grants. Particular emphasis will be placed on activities that hone CSO personnel's technical and managerial skills, and introduce and improve the organisational systems, tools, and processes to respond to domestic violence within the COVID-19 context. Additionally, a scoping study to map regionally active CSOs and identify an existing local women's right organisation in Central Asia with potential to become a regional grant making body will be initiated.

The current workplan under Pillar 2 includes analysis of existing procedures and guidelines available to police forces to manage SDVAW offence cases, followed by the design of regional SOP Models and Tools for SGBV case referral and case management for the police and other criminal justice agencies. Special emphasis will be on promotion of effective partnerships between police and healthcare facilities. A call for proposals will be launched to engage CSOs and professional associations in the region to contribute to the exchange of knowledge, practices, and successful

models in the regional network of police and judges on effective, intersectional, evidence-based models to support the response to GBV.

The RUNOs have finalised workplans for 2021, identified implementing partners, developed interventions, and will accelerate implementation of the project to ensure a 70% implementation rate by the end of 2021.

The Regional Programme team will continue organising periodic meetings with the UN country offices in Central Asia to receive inputs, improve knowledge-sharing and ensure coordination of implementation of the activities. The links between the Regional Programme and the country level spotlight programmes in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will be further strengthened through regular communication and sharing of experiences and lessons learned.

## ANNEXES

### Annex B: Risk Matrix

Link to Annex B:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KTX3d5NNDIjFX51I5rTncdFg3v5CJSd9/edit#gid=1305618993>

### Annex C: CSO Engagement Report

Link to Annex C:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1atgD3-yNXQspMjBvI6PpOQFi2CBp\\_urs/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1atgD3-yNXQspMjBvI6PpOQFi2CBp_urs/view?usp=sharing)

### Annex D: Innovative, Promising or Good Practices Reporting Template

Link to Annex D:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O3OtYJLH3W1ZU4Iqgr51jrSEYE2Qb4-/edit#heading=h.qjdqxs>

### Annex X: List of coordination meetings of various stakeholders of the Regional Programme

Meeting type	Participants	Frequency & Agenda topics
Regional Steering Committee (RCS) meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UN RC in Kazakhstan (Chair).</li> <li>Representative of EU Delegation in Kazakhstan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Twice a year.</li> <li>As the highest governance structure, it provides strategic</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RUNOs in Kazakhstan.</li> <li>• Representative(s) of Civil Society (at least 20%) from CS-RRG.</li> <li>• Invited participants: the UN Resident Coordinators from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan may be invited to participate in the RSC when relevant.</li> </ul>	oversight for the Regional Programme.
Resident Coordinators meetings	RCs regional and country programmes, and in countries without Spotlight programmes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two months or as needed.</li> <li>• Virtual format.</li> <li>• RC Kazakhstan consults with all RCs in the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan, and through them with the UNCTs, to ensure that the Regional Programme remains relevant with country priorities and is supported by the stakeholders from their respective country and shares such information with the RSC.</li> <li>• RCs coordinate these meetings on their own. Spotlight is included in their agenda.</li> </ul>
Intra-agency Coordination between Regional and Country RUNOs	UN Women to UN Women; UNFPA to UNFPA; UNDP to UNDP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly or as needed.</li> <li>• Coordination and communication between regional and country level RUNOs.</li> </ul>
Meetings of RC KAZ and RUNOs KAZ	RC KAZ and RUNOs KAZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two months or as needed.</li> <li>• The assumption is that</li> </ul>



		<p>both the RC and RUNOs maintain regular consultations with their counterparts in other countries that participate in the Regional Programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and communication of activities.</li> <li>• Other programmatic topics stemmed from other meeting streams in this table.</li> </ul>
Regular Technical Working Group meetings	<p><b>Periodic Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings of Programme Coordinators from SI Regional and Country Programmes.</li> <li>• Members from the Resident Coordinator Offices, up to the level of team leader (if needed).</li> </ul> <p><b>Communities of Practice:</b> Communities of practice between line programme staff (communications, knowledge management, monitoring &amp; evaluation and etc.) from SI Regional and Country Programme teams, and other</p>	<p><b>Periodic Meetings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two months or as needed.</li> <li>• Virtual format.</li> <li>• Presenting and comparing regional and country level workplans.</li> <li>• Status reporting of latest developments.</li> <li>• Communications, knowledge management, monitoring &amp; evaluation and etc.</li> <li>• Workplans, formats, best practices, operational issues, guidance received from Secretariat.</li> <li>• Alignment of strategic direction between programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Communities of Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a regular basis through online platform (COSI platform, Google Drive or other, TBD) and other communication channels (WhatsApp group chats).</li> </ul>





	interested stakeholders from member countries of the Regional Programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications, knowledge management, monitoring &amp; evaluation and etc.</li> <li>• Workplans, formats, best practices, operational issues, guidance received from Secretariat.</li> </ul>
Meetings of RC KAZ / RUNO KAZ and EU Delegation KAZ	RC KAZ / RUNO KAZ and EU Delegation KAZ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two months*</li> <li>• Reporting and communication on implementation progress and further discussion on advocacy, strategic advice and positioning of the Initiative on the agenda of governments and other development partners.</li> <li>• The composition and scope of these meetings could be both general and thematic. Format could be both face-to-face and virtual (e.g. annual face-to-face; trimester virtual workshop).</li> </ul> <p><i>* The regular communication and coordination with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan (and other Delegations in the region) is a permanent function at the UN level and it is not limited to bimonthly meetings.</i></p>
Meetings of RC KAZ / RUNO KAZ and CS-RRG	RC KAZ / RUNO KAZ and CS-RRG.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two months.</li> <li>• Collaboration with civil society and understanding of the</li> </ul>



		<p>latest local trends in CS movement in participating countries. The assumption is that regional CS-RRG will also represent the interest of national CS reference groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The composition and scope of these meetings could be both general and thematic. Format could be both face-to-face and virtual (e.g. annual face-to-face; trimester virtual workshop).</li> </ul>
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INTERIM REPORT

