

Spotlight Initiative

FUND OPERATIONS MANUAL COMPENDIUM

Version 1 - February 2021

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



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Glossary of Acronyms

AA	Administrative Agent
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AWP	Annual Work Plan
C&V	Communications and Visibility
C4D	Communications for Development
CO	Country Office
COSI	Community of the Spotlight Initiative
CP	Country Programme
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSGRG	Civil Society Global Reference Group
CSNRG	Civil Society National Reference Group
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSRRG	Civil Society Regional Reference Group
DG DEVCO	Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (now the Directorate-General for International Partnerships)
DoA	Description of the Action
DSG	Deputy Secretary-General
EC	European Commission
ED	Executive Director
EOSG	Executive Office of the Secretary- General
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EVAWG	Eliminating violence against women and girls
FTR	Fund Transfer Request
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPTF Office	Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
MTA	Mid-term Assessment
NSC	National Steering Committee
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSC	Operational Steering Committee
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
PAGODA	EU Pillar Assessed Grants and Delegation Agreement
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PMC	Programme Management Costs
PME	Participatory monitoring and evaluation
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RBM	Results-based management
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator’s Office
RD	Regional Director
RP	Regional Programme

RPAC	Regional Project Advisory Committee
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
RUNO	Recipient UN Organization
SAA	Standard Administrative Arrangement
SC	Service Contractor
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SI	Spotlight Initiative
SMART	Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNEX	United Nations Expenditure System
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIC	United Nations Information Centre
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNTF EVAW	United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women
UN WOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VAWG	Violence against women and girls
WHO	World Health Organization
WPHF	Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund

This Operations Manual is not a legally binding document. Its purpose is to describe the governance structure and establish the operating principles, guidelines, and procedures for the day-to-day operations of the funding windows under the Spotlight Initiative.

INTRODUCTION

The Spotlight Initiative Operations Manual Compendium is a compilation of all key programmatic guidance previously issued by the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee, the Administrative Agent of the Fund the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office and the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat under the guidance of the Executive Office of the Secretary General since the Fund's inception on 20 September 2017. It contains guidance to carry out the operations of Spotlight Initiative funded programmes.

This Manual is issued by the Management Unit of the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to codify policies, rules of procedure and guidance in accordance with the signed legal agreements and to ensure compliance with those and the overall strategy of the Spotlight Initiative. It is also set to ensure that programmes funded under the Spotlight Initiative function under the United Nations Development Group standards.

This Manual replaces previously issued guidance notes and will be updated regularly to reflect additional guidance and adjustments as necessary.

1. GLOBAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND GOVERNANCE ARCHITECTURE

About this section

This section presents a summary of the legal and contractual framework under which the Spotlight Initiative has been set at global level.

It covers the governance architecture, the role of different UN entities and the key contractual documents.

This guidance was issued by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) as the main custodian of contractual obligations at the inception of the fund on 20 September 2017 with the approval of the first version of the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference.

Further related information may be found in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) (also referred to as Annex I – Description of the action in the contract with the EU).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 13 on Reporting of this Operations Manual Compendium.

See the “updates to the guidance” at the end of this section for **important additional information**.

GUIDANCE NOTE: Legal Framework summary

1. OVERVIEW

1.1. Background

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) is a global partnership launched by the European Union and United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG), backed by an initial dedicated financial envelope of €500 million¹ from 2018 to 2023.

The Spotlight Initiative galvanizes political commitment at the highest levels and contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and more specifically Goal 5 on Gender Equality, fully integrating the principle of *'leaving no one behind'* and Goal 16, to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The Spotlight Initiative focuses on forms of violence against women and girls that are prevalent or prominently emerge in specific regions: Femicide in Latin America; Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, including harmful practices, in Asia and Africa; Intimate Partner Violence in the Pacific region and Family Violence in the Caribbean. In line with the principle of universality of the SDGs, it will expand to other

¹ Approximately EUR 35 million remained with the EU for direct grant making programmes.

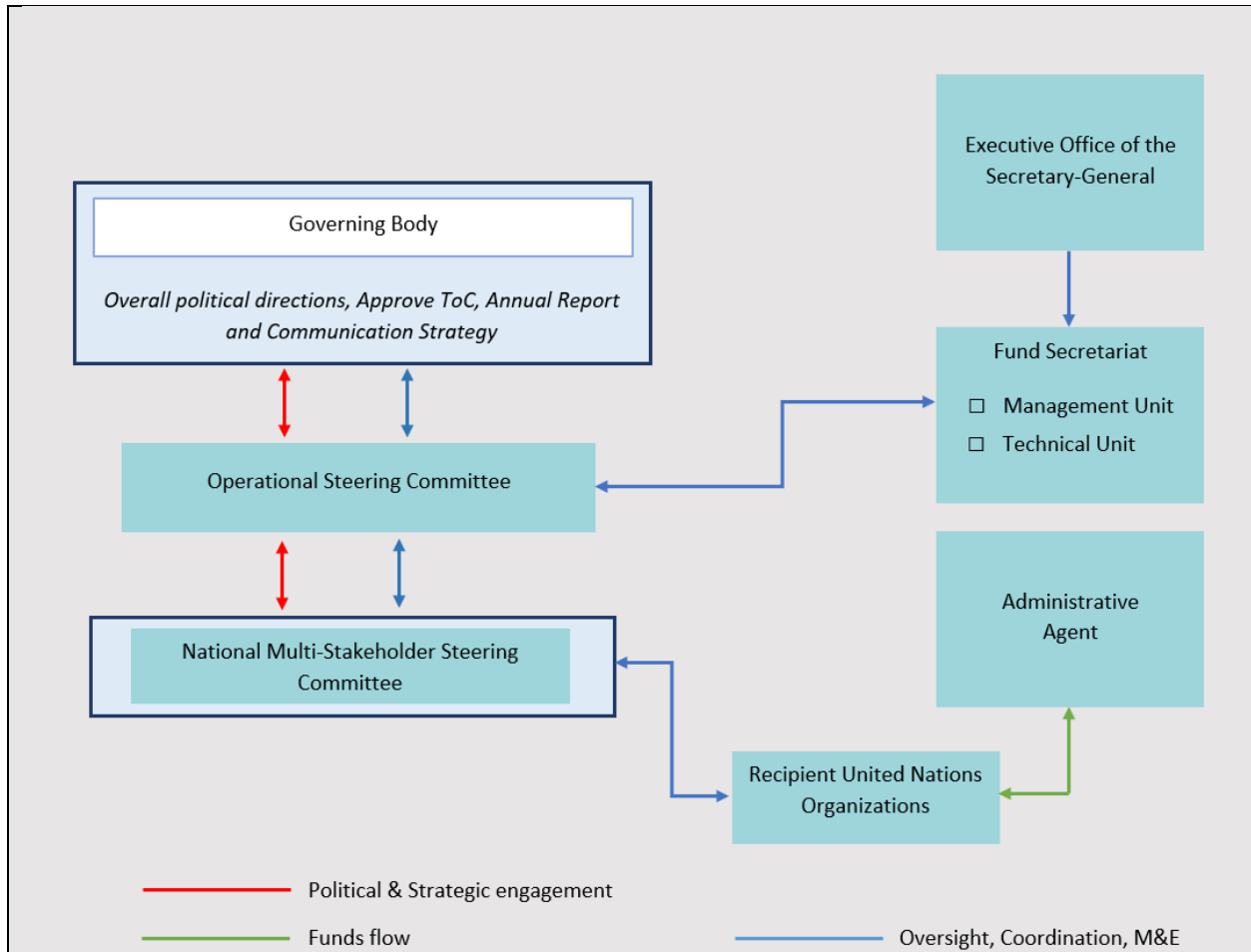
regions and focus areas as new funding partners join.

The Spotlight Initiative is implemented through a UN multi-stakeholder trust fund, established by the UN Secretary-General and administered by the MPTF Office, with the support of the following core agencies – the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – plus the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). These agencies support with fund and programme set-up but are not the only implementing agencies. Implementing agencies are identified at the country-level based on an assessment of context, capacity, and programming needs.

This guidance describes the governance structure, operating principles, and procedures required to manage the programme implementation. The guidance is applicable to all Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs), the Secretariat and the Administrative Agent, ensuring compliance with cash-flow management, budgetary revision and financial and narrative reporting and closure of project. The detailed roles and responsibilities of the governance structure is defined in Section 4.1 of the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#).

1.2. Governance Architecture and Administrative Arrangement

The Governance architecture of the Spotlight Initiative has three functions: governance by global and country decision making bodies, daily management and administration supported by dedicated teams, and implementation by the RUNOs. At the global level, it consists of a Governing Body and an Operational Steering Committee.



1.3. Governing Body

The Governing Body is the highest level of the governance structure of the Spotlight Initiative. It is co-chaired by the UN Deputy Secretary-General (DSG) and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission. Membership includes the Executive Director of UN Women on behalf of all core agencies, the EU Development Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development and one civil society representative nominated by the Global Society Reference Group.

The UN system membership position on the Governing Body rotates among UN core agencies on an annual/biannual basis.

1.3.1. Operational Steering Committee

The Operational Steering Committee ensures effective management and coordinates all operational and technical aspects of the Spotlight Initiative including the launch of programmatic cycles, provide feedback on Investment Plans of the Spotlight Initiative, advise on resource allocation, agrees upon

joint programmes and budgets, and requests the Administrative Agent to transfer funds to RUNOs, subject to United Nations regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The Operational Steering Committee is co-chaired by the representative of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and Director-General of DEVCO (the Directorate-General of International Partnerships, formerly known as the Directorate-General of International Cooperation and Development). The Committee meets quarterly and agrees upon the programmes of work by consensus.

1.3.2. The Secretariat

The Secretariat is a Fund governance support structure. The Secretariat has two units: Management Unit and Technical Units. It executes the management and coordination activities of the Fund and provides technical support to programme regions/countries. The Management Unit acts as a secretary of the Governing Body and Operational Steering Committee (OSC) and is hosted by the MPTF Office, while the Technical Unit hosted by UN Women provides technical and programmatic leadership. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General provides overall coordination of the Secretariat.

1.4. Administrative Agent

The MPTF Office is the Administrative Agent (AA) for the Spotlight Initiative Fund in accordance with the terms and conditions set out in Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) and in the standard Memorandum of Understanding signed between the AA and the Deputy Secretary-General. The administration of the Fund follows a “Pass-Through” management modality².

Specifically, the AA has the following responsibilities:

- Administration of the EU PaGODA contract and all Fund legal instruments based on standard UNDG legal agreements.
- Receive and administer donor contributions, ensure proper cash management.
- Manage payments request to the EU.
- Disburse funds to RUNOs as instructed by Co-chairs of the Operational Steering Committee.
- Reporting – consolidate regular narrative and financial reports from RUNOs for submission to the OSC and donors.
- Provide real time data through [GATEWAY](#) - governance, decision making, Fund’s finances, project implementation status, emerging results, and evaluations.

1.5. Recipient UN Organizations

In accordance with MOU signed with the AA, each RUNO assumes full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the AA as per its regulations, rules, policies and procedures, including fiduciary standards and programmatic safeguards. Other responsibilities by RUNOs include development and implementation of the Spotlight Initiative Programmes as well as timely provision of financial and narrative progress reports to the AA.

² UNDP’s Accountability when Administrative Agent in MPTFs and JPs Joint Programmes using the pass-through fund management modality (www://mptf.undp.org).

In consonance with the decision of the Operational Steering Committee, the number of RUNOs in each programme country is recommended between three to five per programme³. The RCs should take the lead for coordination to ensure effective communication flow and decision making while responsibilities for technical leadership in most programme countries and regions rests with the selected RUNO. In line with UN Development System reforms, accountability for the development and implementation of Spotlight Initiative Programmes lies with Resident Coordinators, while RUNOs carry the responsibility for the operational delivery of Country and Regional Programmes and for the achievement of results. Additional information on UN Reform may be found in Section 2 of this Operations Manual on UN Reform Implementation.

2. Legal Framework

The Spotlight Initiative Fund is framed within the UNDG standard Administrative Arrangement Agreement Framework. However, EU contractual modality needs a set of specific requirements not otherwise required by other donors under the UNDG Standard Administrative Arrangement for pass-through mechanism. This implies specific legal requirement and framework for the Spotlight Initiative Fund.

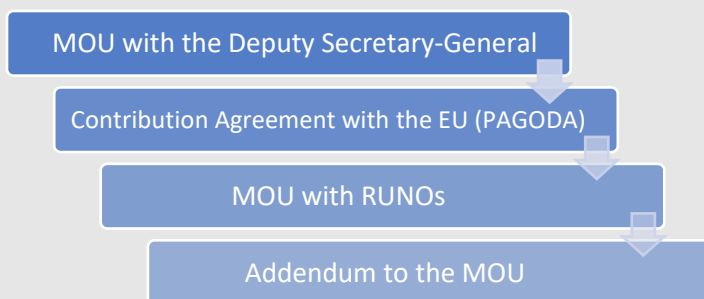
The AA is the custodian of the legal framework. The legal framework includes legal agreements covering various requirements at different level of the Fund.

2.1. MOU with the DSG

This is the first legal framework for pass-through arrangements establishing the Fund as per the [Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference](#). The MOU describes the governance structure of the Fund, accountability framework for the RUNOs and designation of the MPTF Office as an AA. The MOU was signed by the Deputy Secretary-General and the AA Executive Coordinator in September 2017.

2.2. European Union Co-delegation agreement

The EU Pillar Assessed Grants and Delegation Agreement (PAGODA) defines what constitutes the ‘Action’ (i.e. the undertaking which the EU agrees to (co-fund) and how it shall be implemented).



It also lays out the rules for implementation, the payment of the EU contribution, and defines the relations between the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent and the EU⁴.

2.2.1. Special conditions and Annexes

The Special Conditions are the cover document for the delegation agreement between the European

³ An exception was made for the Mexico and Zimbabwe Country Programmes, which include six RUNOs.

⁴ European Union PAGODA -2 CO-delegation Agreement Operationalization Guidelines for Joint Programmes and Multi- Donor Trust Funds using pass-through modalities, UNDG, November 2016.

Union and the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. The Special Conditions define the Action as described in Annex I of the Co-Delegation Agreement of the Fund and stipulates seven articles, ranging from the total cost of the action, implementation period, reporting (both financial and narrative), and list of co-delegates (RUNOs). The Special Condition also recognizes the pass-through modality for the Fund according to the UNDG standard. The Action is a multi-donor action, which also requires UN contribution and EU to be listed in the total cost. In the event of a conflict between the present Special Conditions and any Annex thereto, the provisions of the Special Conditions shall take precedence.

Annex I: Description of the Action (DoA) includes the Terms of Reference of the Fund, the ASEAN Programme⁵ (earmarked), and Regional Investment Plans (Latin America, Africa, Caribbean, Pacific and Asia). As other regional programs become available, they will be included in the DoA. The Investment Plans include summary of Country/Regional Programme documents, budget breakdown by UNDG categories and co-delegates per country and Country and Regional Programme Profiles. All subsequent narrative reporting must follow the structure of the DoA.

Annex II: General Conditions is applicable to European Union contribution agreements with international organizations. It includes the criteria for eligible cost, verification missions, budget revision, cash flow management etc. For more details RUNOs should follow their own agencies guidance on EU General Conditions.

Annex III: Budget of the Action is a high-level budget by regions and by sources of funds (EU/UN). It determines the overall structure of future financial reports to be submitted to the EU by the Administrative Agent.

The PAGODA is composed of the Special Conditions and the following seven annexes which form an integral part of the Agreement:

Annex I: Description of the Action (DoA)

Annex II: General Conditions applicable to European Union contribution agreements with International Organizations

Annex III: Budget for the Action (Budget)

Annex IV: Financial Identification Form

Annex V: Standard Request for Payment

Annex VI: Communication & Visibility Plan

Annex VII: Management Declaration

Annex IV: Financial Identification Form

Annex V: Standard Request for Payment

Annex VI: Communication and Visibility Plan (C&V Plan), aims to ensure visibility is given to the results achieved and to EU's contribution.

Annex VII: Management Declaration, the signed copy of a Management Declaration accompanies the financial and narrative reports.

⁵ Being the first programme, the ASEAN programme was exceptionally included in the DoA.

2.3. MOU with RUNOs

Each RUNO receiving funds through the pass-through needs to sign a UNDG [MOU](#) with the Administrative Agent. The Spotlight Initiative Fund [MOU](#) defines the management, accountability and reporting requirements for the programmes. The [MOU](#) with RUNOs is not part of the PAGODA Co-delegation agreement, but it establishes the legal framework of the relationship between the RUNOs and the AA.

2.4. Addendum to the MOU for EU Contributions to the Spotlight Initiative

The PAGODA co-delegation agreement creates additional responsibilities that are not covered by the standard UNDG MOU. Thus, all RUNOs will sign an Addendum that covers specific issues applicable to the European Union Co-delegation Agreement in addition to the standard MOU.

The [Addendum to the MOU](#) reflects all the special conditions set by the EU in the PAGODA that are not part of the Standard MOU such as for example eligibility criteria, evaluation, reporting cycle, verification, risk management and communication.

Updates to the guidance

Establishment of the Global Civil Society Reference Group: The Global Civil Society Reference Group was established through an open and civil society-led process in April 2019. The Group is comprised of 20 diverse women’s rights and feminist activists, with strong track records of working to eliminate violence against women and girls and achieving gender equality more broadly. The Group is represented on the **Governing Body**, where it holds an equal advisory role. The full biographies and contact information of the Civil Society Global Reference Group members can be found [here](#).

Additional membership to the Operational Steering Committee: The OSC of 17 December 2019 approved an additional member to the Operational Steering Committee to represent Civil Society. The member is selected by the Civil Society Global Reference Group.

Addendums to the PAGODA Annex I Description of the Action: As new programmatic elements are approved by the Operational Steering Committee Addendums are incorporated to update Annex I of the PAGODA. The latest addendums are found on the [MPTF Office Gateway](#).

Safe and Fair: The Safe and Fair programme is an earmarked programme [Joint Programme](#) covering the ASEAN region approved as the first Spotlight Initiative Programme in November 2017. Its programmatic set up differs from the rest of Spotlight Initiative Programmes although this Operational Manual also applies to it. The Secretariat may be consulted on any needed adjustments.

Documents

For the most updated documents consult directly the [MPTF Office Gateway](#). Here is the list of documents at the time of the last update of this Manual.

Spotlight Initiative Fund – Main Documents

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **Terms of Reference**

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **MOU UN – MPTF Office**

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **MOU with RUNOs**

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA)**

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **MOU Addendum with RUNOs**

Spotlight Initiative Fund - **Contribution Agreement with European Union (PAGODA), including all signed Addenda**

ANNEX I *Description of Action*

ANNEX I.A ASEAN ProDoc

ANNEX I.B Latin America Investment Plan

ANNEX I.C Africa Investment Plan

ANNEX I.D Pacific Investment Plan

ANNEX I.E Caribbean Investment Plan

ANNEX I.F Asia Investment Plan

ANNEX II *General Conditions – Delegation Agreement*

ANNEX II.A Provisions Co-Delegation Agreement

ANNEX III *Budget*

ANNEX IV *Financial Identification*

ANNEX V *Request for payment for PAGODA*

ANNEX VI *Spotlight Initiative Communication and Visibility Plan*

ANNEX VII *Management Declaration*

2. UN REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

About this section

This section presents an overview of implementation under the Spotlight Initiative, as a Demonstration Fund for UN Reform.

It covers the priority aim of UN Development System (UNDS) support to deliver the 2030 Agenda, changes to the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UNRC) system and the vision of a new generation of UN Country Teams (UNCTs).

This guidance was issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat in mid-2018 to the Resident Coordinators of Spotlight Initiative countries.

Further related information may be found in the [guidance package](#) shared with Resident Coordinators for the design of the Programme Documents, including the budget template and related FAQs, as well as in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) (also referred to as Annex I – Description of the action in the contract with the EU). Additional information on the UN Development System reform may be found on the UN United to Reform website [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 10 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Teams and Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Ensuring collective responsibility and accelerate the alignment of UNDS support with the 2030 Agenda

The *Spotlight Initiative*, as a flagship programme of the UN's SDG efforts, is promoting, through its programming architecture (both substantive and structural), the vision of the Secretary-General's report *Repositioning the UN Development System*. In particular, it is also enhancing the system's leadership, effectiveness, cohesion, and accountability, through its set up and operations, leading to better system-wide coordination, planning, delivery and accountability for results at the country level in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The following UNDS reform core principles have guided the design of the Spotlight Initiative:

1. Priority of efforts to support an underfunded goal and facilitate the coherence and integration of the UN system.
 - a. Establishment of a single Multi-Partner Trust Fund with three core agencies – UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF – as implementing partners, and open to any UN entities with the relevant expertise and capacities.
2. Collective responses by the UNDS covering existing gaps, overlaps and opportunities.
 - a. Development of a single programmatic framework, theory of change and clear expected results.
3. Demonstrate results through high level political engagement and catalytic impacts.
 - a. Directing major resources to key pilot countries to build a political and financial compact promoting longer term innovative and sustainable solutions.

1. Toward a more cohesive and integrated programming at country level

At the country level, the UNDS is more than ever before being asked to strengthen its cohesion in order to “expand the offer of a “whole-of-system” expertise to countries”.

The Spotlight Initiative channels its funding through outcome-based Country Programmes. Well-designed Country Programmes make more effective use of relevant Agency expertise for collective objectives and results.

Developing and implementing the Country Programmes also means enhancing joint analysis, better harnessing internal knowledge and making existing data sets and sources more accessible and utilizing the comparative advantage, and expertise of UN Agencies in a country.

Development and implementation of the Country Programmes is coordinated and overseen **by the UN Resident Coordinators**, with participation of relevant UN Organizations and in partnerships with the EU representatives, national governments, and civil society advocates and experts (in particular those working with national, local and grassroots movements and organizations). The development of the Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes is aligned with the SDG implementation efforts and advances the respective UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF, former UNDAF) at the country level. The Cooperation Framework guides the entire programme cycle, driving planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Cooperation Framework determines and reflects the UN development system’s contributions in the country and shapes the configuration of UN assets required inside and outside the country.

Selection of relevant RUNOs accountable to work towards the agreed common strategic results of Spotlight Initiative and the national priorities of the selected country, should be rigorous and transparent. RUNOs must demonstrate extensive experience and technical expertise in the specific country in the results identified in the theory of change, as well as adequate capacities to lead and implement (incl. geographical presence, past results in the thematic pillars of the Spotlight Initiative, knowledge and technical expertise, capacity to scale up and enable transformative actions). The selection of RUNOs is not based on agency mandate, but rather the capacity and experience to deliver on specific actions for eliminating violence against women and girls in the context of the programme country or region.

Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders of the Spotlight Initiative, including governmental and civil society organizations, and determination of clear distinct roles and responsibilities, following consultations, and under the overall coordination of the RC. The Spotlight Initiative seeks to model a sustainable and locally driven approach to achieving the SDGs. Accordingly, the Spotlight Initiative has made a specific investment in strengthening women’s movements, recognized as the most impactful factor in ensuring accountability on eliminating violence against women and girls. In addition, the priority given by the Spotlight Initiative to the principle of “leaving no one behind” specifically requires the meaningful consultation and engagement of, in particular, local and grassroots women’s organizations, throughout the different phases of the Spotlight Initiative, including civil society organizations representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and entities that may never have previously received UN funding.

Development of financing strategies which **promote innovative and sustainable solutions**. Country Programmes are encouraged to propose leveraging financing solutions, including through non-traditional

partnerships, engagement of private sector, mobilization of domestic resources and use of new technologies.

As envisaged in the SG report implementing such Country Programmes will require delivery by a ***“new generation of UNCTs and will entail taking new approaches to leadership (how RCs can drive system-wide support and hold entities accountable), configuration (physical presence and how agencies work together as a team) and reprofiling and capacities (resources, knowledge and skill sets).”***

2. An empowered and impartial RC system

Under the framework of the Development Coordination Office (DCO), the RC System shifts towards a more integrated working model that can better support the achievement of the SDGs, the Spotlight Initiative places greater authority in the RCs. The RC exercises overall oversight and accountability for the implementation of Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes, supported by the RUNOs, thereby establishing clearer accountability lines for the achievement of the Spotlight Initiative’s collective results. The Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) provides a blueprint for management and accountability within UN country teams for this new way of working⁶. Additionally, the RC has the responsibility for bringing together the relevant UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes in service of a joined-up approach to the UN’s work on ending VAWG in the country.

The role of the RC includes overall oversight of the implementation and coordination of Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes from the design stage to conclusion of implementation cycle. As mentioned above, the selection and resourcing of relevant RUNOs is crucial to the success of the Spotlight Initiative and the RC should be guided by the principles and vision of Initiative as well as the criteria mentioned above (experience, expertise, etc.) in an impartial and inclusive way.

The Development Coordination Office (DCO) provides managerial and oversight functions for RC’s. The Office acts as a key conduit for supporting the UN’s activities for sustainable development, which inform policy, programme and operations on the ground, including Spotlight Initiative.⁷ As such the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat works in close cooperation and coordination with the DCO to ensure the Spotlight Initiative supports and models the UN Reform.

3. “A new generation of United Nations Country Teams with enhanced skill sets, an optimized physical presence and consolidated and effective back-office support”

The RCs and the UN Agencies are requested, when developing their Country or Regional Programmes, to demonstrate a joined-up, integrated model of UN Country Teams. The RCs and UN Agencies are expected to ensure that Spotlight Initiative staff function as one core team, co-located where possible and with standard un.org email addresses. Staff are to be recruited to support all Spotlight Initiative RUNOs. The RCs and UN Agencies should propose implementation modalities including proposals on common business operations and premises and shared staffing in order to ensure greater economies of scale and reduce the burden of each agency administrative costs. It is important to note here that these arrangements should not compromise the abilities of the RUNOs to deliver on the Programme.

⁶ <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/management-and-accountability-framework-un-development-and-resident-coordinator-system>.

⁷ <https://unsdg.un.org/about/development-coordination-office>

Such implementation modalities must ensure alignment with Programme Management Principles (described in Section 10 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Teams) including: adequate Programme Oversight and Coordination, Technical Coherence, capacity for Programme Implementation by Agencies, supported by adequate resourcing.

“This is a long-standing call by Member States and a critical step to enable joint work and generate efficiencies that can be redeployed as part of programmes.”

In addition to ensuring greater effectiveness and efficiencies, **the focus on common business operations and premises as well as shared staff and minimizing any duplication, including in staff and administrative costs, also responds to a compliance imperative:** the European Union contracting modalities have many constraints on this matter and leave little room for duplication of structural costs.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS

About this section

This section presents information on key stakeholders for the Spotlight Initiative.

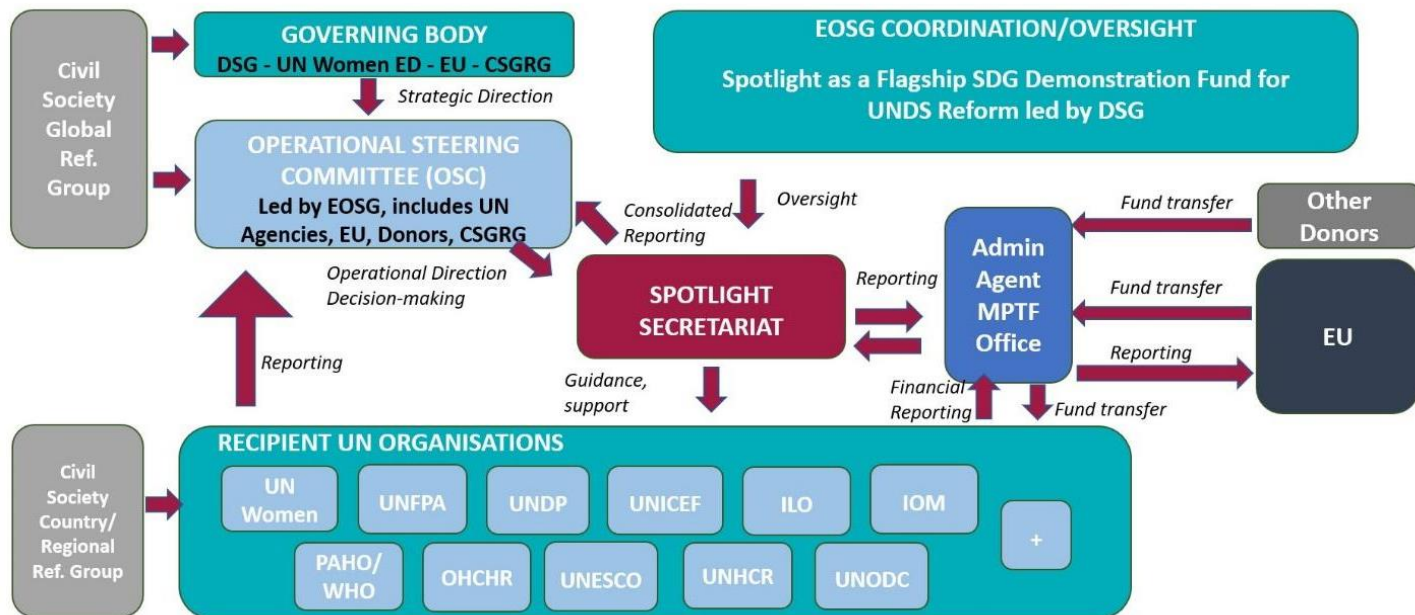
It covers the roles and responsibilities for the European Union, Deputy Secretary General, Executive Office of the Secretary General, Administrative Agent, Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, RUNOs, UN Development Coordination Office, and Civil Society.

The information is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of the fund.

Further related information may be found in the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#).

More information regarding the role of civil society in the Spotlight Initiative may be found in Section 1 on Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture and Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Key Stakeholder Overview



European Union

The EU-UN relationship is at the heart of the Spotlight Initiative. The European Union works with Spotlight Initiative and the UN beyond the traditional donor relationship and is an active partner. The EU-UN contract lies at HQ level, but at programme level, Spotlight Initiative teams are expected to foster a close relationship with the appropriate EU focal entity. The UN teams liaise with their respective EU Delegations on programming and partnerships, share information and key documents, and collaborate on communications and visibility initiatives.

Deputy Secretary-General

On behalf of the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary-General is the ultimate authority of the Spotlight Initiative Fund. The Deputy Secretary General leads the Governing Body, the highest tier of governance for the Spotlight Initiative, on behalf of the UN. UN Resident Coordinators and Regional Directors are accountable to the Deputy Secretary General for Country/Regional Programme design and implementation.

Executive Office of the Secretary-General

The Spotlight Initiative is a flagship initiative of the UN Secretary-General, coordinated by the Executive Office of the Secretary General. The Executive Office of the Secretary General provides overall guidance on the direction of the Spotlight Initiative, including on strategic vision, governance, communication, and key technical aspects. The Executive Office of the Secretary General is the primary counterpart for Resident Coordinators and Regional Directors on any strategic and operational issues. In addition, the Executive Office of the Secretary General leads the Operational Steering Committee, the second tier of governance for the Spotlight Initiative. Finally, the Executive Office of the Secretary General coordinates and has overall supervision for the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat.

Administrative Agent

The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office acts as the Administrative Agent for the Spotlight Initiative. The Administrative Agent provides the Secretary General and RUNOs with administration and other support services, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Secretary General and the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office when establishing the Spotlight Initiative. The Administrative Agent uses a pass-through modality whereby each RUNO applies its own procedures, provided they meet the minimum requirements outlined in the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) and [Terms of Reference](#) in terms of safeguards and fiduciary principles.

Spotlight Initiative Secretariat

The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat supports the Operational Steering Committee and is comprised of a Management Unit and a Technical Unit. The Management Unit is hosted by MPTF Office while the Technical Unit is hosted by UN Women. This arrangement allows the Secretariat to leverage the expertise of these entities. The two units work in close collaboration and in a complementary manner, functioning as one team in support of the UN system and under the coordination and supervision of the EOSG.

The Technical Unit of the Secretariat ensures the technical quality and coherence of all Spotlight Initiative programmes, oversees implementation, supports capacity development and knowledge management efforts, drives communications and visibility, promotes South-South cooperation and engages strategically with global, regional and national civil society partners. The Management Unit fulfills fund management functions, as well as reporting and coordination. It is responsible for overseeing programming cycles, supporting the Spotlight Initiative's programme development and budgeting, reporting on results, resource mobilization and partnerships building, operating procedures, and programme and budget revisions, including compliance and oversight. It functions as the Secretariat of the Governing Body and the Operational Steering Committee.

Recipient UN Organizations

Programme implementation is the responsibility of RUNOs. Each RUNO is programmatically and financially responsible for initiatives received in accordance with its regulations, rules, policies and procedures,

including fiduciary standards and programmatic safeguards (provided that minimum requirements are complied with).

To effectively operationalize this initiative, the Spotlight Initiative particularly relies on the capacities and expertise of the core agencies – UN Women, UNFPA and UNDP – in close cooperation with UNICEF and additional sister agencies. In total, the 11 RUNOs of the Spotlight Initiative are UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, PAHO/WHO, UNESCO, UNHCR and UNODC.

The Spotlight Initiative also collaborates with a number of other agencies in an associate role, who partner with Spotlight Initiative programmes to offer expertise or support. Spotlight Initiative has labeled these “associated agencies” to distinguish them from RUNOs.

UN Development Coordination Office

The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat liaises with the UN Development Coordination Office on UN Reform in order to increase system coherence and operational and business efficiency across the fund. The Secretariat maintains relationships with the newly established UN Development Coordination Office Regional Directors, who oversee the UN Resident Coordinators, who in turn coordinate Spotlight Initiative programmes. Additionally, the UN Development Coordination Office participates in regular Agency Focal Point meetings, organized by the Secretariat and attended by focal points from all RUNOs.

Governments

Spotlight Initiative Programmes are developed in close cooperation and coordination with national Governments and in alignment with the mutually agreed UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF, former UNDAF). The Spotlight Initiative places national ownership and sustainability of intervention as a priority. National Governments are the essential counterparts consulted from the onset and throughout the implementation of Spotlight Initiative Programmes. The Spotlight Initiative National-level Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Government and counts with key governmental Ministries and departments in its membership. Implementation is done in close coordination with relevant government entities that are also implementing partners for the execution of the programmes. For regional programmes the Spotlight Initiative will seek to equally engage relevant inter-governmental regional bodies.

Civil Society

Civil society is a central and paramount partner of the Spotlight Initiative. Civil society representatives are represented in the Spotlight Initiative’s governance and decision-making structures at national and regional levels as Civil Society Reference Group members and as representatives on National and Regional Steering Committees. At the global level, civil society is represented as a full member on the Operational Steering Committee and holds an equal seat on the Governing Body. In addition to this advisory role, the Spotlight Initiative engages civil society partners as Implementing Partners, grantees, and vendors. For more information on the Spotlight Initiative’s unique engagement civil society, refer to Section 11 of this Operations Manual Compendium.

4. PROGRAMMATIC ARCHITECTURE

About this section

This section presents an overview of programmatic architecture under the Spotlight Initiative.

It covers the Spotlight Initiative Investment Plans, the basic structure of the different types of programmes, phased programming and the Theory of Change.

The guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of the fund on 20 September 2017 with the approval of the first version of the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference.

Further related information may be found in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) (also referred to as Annex I – Description of the action in the contract with the EU).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Investment Plans

The Operational Steering Committee has approved 5 Investment plans laying out the programmatic framework for the Spotlight Initiative in five regions: Latin America, Africa, Caribbean, Pacific and Central Asia. In addition, the Safe and Fair Joint Programme document covering the ASEAN region approved by the European Union in 2017 was brought under the Spotlight Initiative Agreement. The Investment Plan documents lay out the regional focus areas, the programmatic scope, the selection of countries and the individual programme fund allocation. Investment Plans serve as the basis for Annex I - Description of the Action document and addendums to the PAGODA Agreement.

Safe and Fair

Safe and Fair is an earmarked programme Joint Programme covering the ASEAN region approved by the European Union in 2017. It was brought under the Spotlight Initiative PAGODA agreement. It is a multi-country programme covering 10 countries in the ASEAN region.

Country Programmes

Following the Investment Plan approvals Country Programmes have been designed at country level by UN Country Teams under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and in close consultation with the European Union Delegation in each country. The Country Programme Document and Budget have been approved by the Operational Steering Committee including a set budget for each RUNO. Generally, Spotlight Initiative programmes include three to five UN Agencies as RUNOs⁸. Country Programmes cover the same 6 pillars (or outcome areas) of the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change. Consultation with and engagement of civil society, including through the establishment of an interim National Civil Society Reference Group, is essential to Country Programme Development.

Regional Programmes

Following the Investment Plan approvals Regional Programmes have been designed at regional level by UN Regional Teams under the leadership of a designated UN entity fulfilling the same function as the UN

⁸ An exception was made for the Mexico and Zimbabwe Country Programmes, which include six RUNOs.

Resident Coordinator for country programmes and in close consultation with the relevant European Union counterpart in each region. Regional Programmes cover work a broader regional level and are not designed to be multi-country programmes⁹. The Regional Programme Document and Budget have been approved by the Operational Steering Committee including a set budget for each RUNO. Regional Programmes do not cover all 6 pillars (or outcome areas) of the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change depending on the context. Pillar 4 covering the provision of services is consistently not included in regional programme as there is not in country programmatic work taking place. Consultation with and engagement of civil society, including through the establishment of an interim Regional Civil Society Reference Group, is essential to Regional Programme Development.

Grant-giving Programmes¹⁰

Following the Investment Plan approvals, dedicated Grant-giving programmes to civil society organizations have been designed and approved to complement the country and regional programmes. An additional 10 per cent of the regional financial envelopes are allocated for these Grant-giving programmes. The Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee has approved the selection of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund as the implementing entities to deliver the programmes in Africa and Latin America. It was also decided to channel grants through the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund in Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea, and through the Regional Programmes (outcome 6) in the Caribbean, Central Asia and Pacific. The grant-giving programmes contribute to Outcome 6 of Spotlight Initiative’s Theory of Change and aims to support and the women’s movement through direct grants to civil society organizations.

Phased Programming

Spotlight Initiative Investments is conceptualized for approval in two Phases by the Operational Steering Committee. Phase I investments are approved for an initial period of 2-3 years depending on the time of programme approval. A mid-term assessment of all programmes will be carried out to feed into the Operational Steering Committee decision on investments for Phase II that will cover a period of 1 or 2 years. Implementation has to cease on 31 December 2022. Depending on the effective programme start date and the programme’s performance a second Phase of funding may not always be approved.

Theory of Change

The Spotlight Initiative has developed a unique Theory of Change with 6 Pillars (or outcome areas) to be implemented simultaneously and in a comprehensive manner. A menu of standardized indicators has also been put in place to allow a comparative analysis of the Spotlight Initiative portfolio and its results across programmes. Refer to Chapter 14, “Monitoring and Evaluation,” for more information on measuring results against the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change.

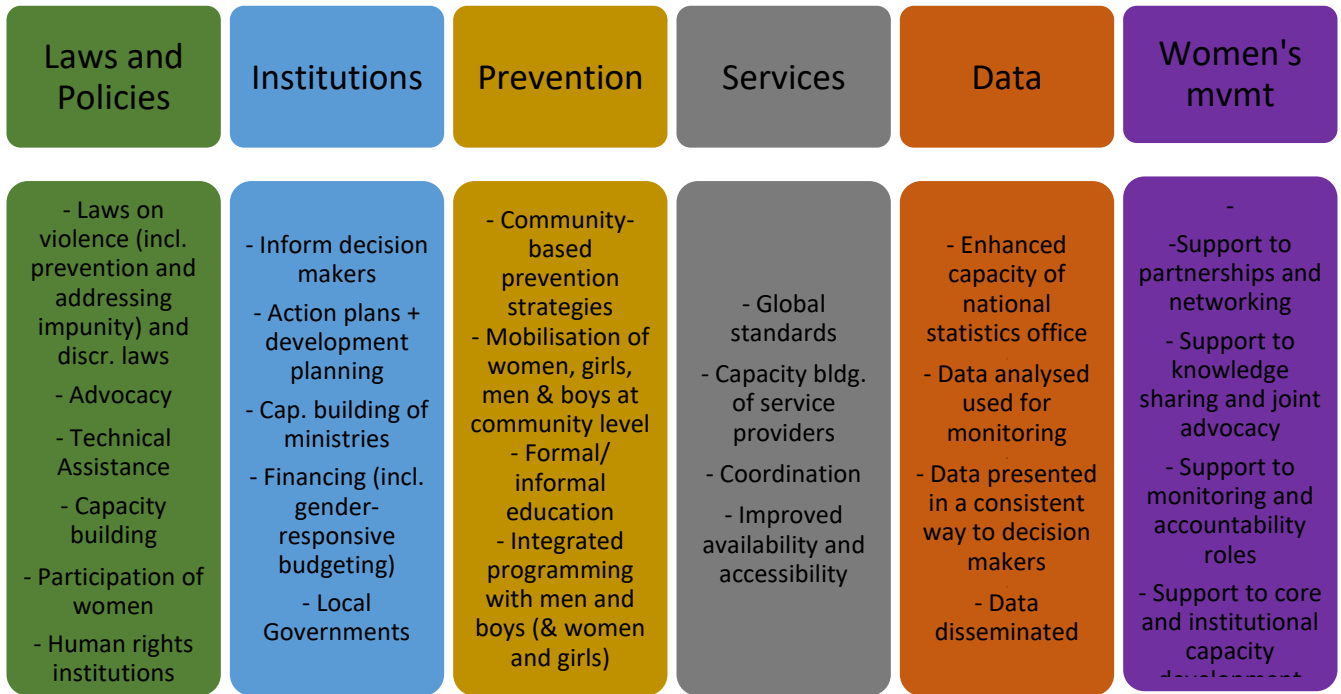
⁹ The Pacific Regional Programme includes a multi-country component in response the specific needs of the region.

¹⁰ Approximately EUR 35 million remained with the EU for direct grant making programmes.

Theory of Change with 6 Pillars

All women and girls live a life free of violence

All women and girls, particularly those most marginalized, in target countries live a life free from VAWG and Harmful Practices through prevention strategies and strengthened multisectoral responses.



5. FUNDING STRUCTURE AND PERFORMANCE-BASED ALLOCATIONS

About this section

This section presents an overview of the Spotlight Initiative funding structure and performance-based allocations.

It covers the pass-through modality, procedures for performance-based allocation and Phase I to Phase II transition.

This guidance was issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat in mid-2018 to the Resident Coordinators of Spotlight Initiative countries.

Further related information may be found in the [guidance package](#) shared with Resident Coordinators for the design of the Programme Documents, including the budget template and related FAQs.

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 1 on Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture and Section 2 on UN Reform Implementation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Pass-through modality

The MPTF Office administers the Spotlight Initiative, acting as the Administrative Agent, and provides RUNOs with administration and other support services, in accordance with the **Spotlight Initiative Memorandum of Understanding** signed between the Secretary-General and MPTF Office, when establishing the Spotlight Initiative. The Administrative Agent uses a pass-through modality whereby each RUNO applies its own procedures, provided it meets the minimum requirements outlined in **the Memorandum of Understanding between the MPTF Office and RUNOs** together with the MOU addendum that reflects the EU's Special Conditions and the TOR of the Fund in terms of safeguards and fiduciary principles. Based on the approved programme document and subject to availability of funds, the Administrative Agent transfers funds to RUNOs' Headquarters, upon instructions from the UN Co-chair of the Operational Steering Committee.

The indirect cost structure of Spotlight Initiative should be maintained **at 7% charged by each RUNO**, as negotiated in the contract between the UN and EU. In an implementation arrangement where the RUNO will be working with an Associated Agency/UN Programme Partner to jointly implement some activities of the Country Programme, **the overall indirect fees should not incur double charges and should be kept at 7%.**

Performance based allocation:

Note: The elements below may need to be adapted for programmes that have had a later start date within the Spotlight Initiative programme funding cycle.

- Each Country Programme is designed on the basis of the overall country vision and estimated financial needs to implement the Programme.
- The funding from the Spotlight Initiative is allocated by the Operational Steering Committee in two distinct phases: **Phase I entails allocating 70%** of the funding envelope; **Phase II** will only be allocated depending on the Country Programme's overall needs that have already been indicated in the overall

budget request and performance towards achieving results. The totality of the performance of the entire programme with all RUNOs working together will be assessed in determining Phase II allocation. This will include an analysis not only of progress against results, but also an assessment of progress in centering civil society at all levels of Spotlight Initiative design, implementation, and review.

- A review of all Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes performance will take place towards the end of the second year of implementation and a decision on Phase II funding will be taken by the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee.
- In line with the UNDS reform principle of promoting innovative and sustainable solutions, all Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes have designed an ambitious programme that encapsulates all necessary interventions needed to eradicate VAWG in the country. **The resulting funding gap should be filled by mobilizing donor and domestic resources at the local level.** The UN Resident Coordinator, in collaboration with relevant RUNOs, should mobilize funding for the Country Programme’s funding gap. Contributions to the Spotlight Initiative may be accepted from UN Member States, regional legislative bodies, inter-governmental organizations, foundations, businesses and individuals. There is no minimum for country-level contributions. The contribution is managed in a way similar to any other contribution agreement for Spotlight Initiative – the Standard Administrative Arrangement is signed between the Spotlight Initiative Administrative Agent (MPTF Office) and a development partner.

6. SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME BUDGETS

About this section

This section provides information regarding Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets, including an overview of key budget principles, concepts and the budget template document.

The guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat with some of the key principles having been approved or mandated either by the Operational Steering Committee, the contractual framework with the European Union, the MPTF Office requirements as the Administrative Agent following UNDG requirements for pooled funds and pass-through arrangements. This guidance has been issued from the inception of the programme design phase early 2018 and has been updated regularly to date.

Further related information may be found in the [guidance package](#) shared with Resident Coordinators for the design of the Programme Documents, including the budget template and related FAQs.

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 5 on Funding Structure and Performance-Based Allocations, Section 7 on Spotlight Initiative Annual Work Plans, Section 8 on Budget Revisions, Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement and Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Key budget principles and concepts

The Spotlight Initiative Country Programme budget should take into account that funding allocations are decided and approved by the Operational Steering Committee in two distinct phases: **Phase I entails allocating 70%** of the estimated funding envelope, **Phase II** will only be allocated depending on the Country Programme’s overall needs and performance towards achieving results. Please refer to Section 5 on Funding Structure and Performance-Based Allocations of this Operations Manual Compendium.

The funding gap in the context of the Spotlight Initiative includes potential Phase II funding allocations from the Spotlight Initiative and other unfunded activities for which resource mobilization efforts will be undertaken at country level. The funding gap should not exceed 30 percent of the EU contribution to both Phases.

UN agency contributions: It is mandatory for each RUNO to contribute to the Spotlight Initiative programme, as the Spotlight Initiative is designed as a “Multi-Donor Action” with the EU. There is no minimum amount for UN Agencies contributions. Each agency has specific regulations on what sources of funds are eligible to be reflected as UN Agency contribution, so each RUNO should verify this internally. These should be fully dedicated to the Programme:

- a. Contributions such as staff time, office space etc. the contribution should be estimated in USD.
- b. In case of cash contributions these would typically be core funding of the UN agencies dedicated to the same “action” (activities) funded by the Spotlight Initiative, but it will not be cash that goes through the Spotlight Initiative Trust Fund.

Both types of contributions should be reflected as the UN Agencies contribution amount in the Programme Document (on the Cover page and in all 3 tabs of the budget template and broken down as specified in the template).

This UN contribution is then consolidated in the contract (Annex III Budget) and the UN agencies need to report back on those expenses (by UNDG categories) once a year (the Spotlight Initiative includes those expenditures in its report to the EU).

The Administrative Agent cost related to the pass-through modality of the Spotlight Initiative has already been deducted and should not be reflected in the Country Programme budget.

Indirect Support Costs are 7% of total direct costs. Transfers between RUNOs and other UN Agencies that would result in double charging of the 7% fee are not accepted for Spotlight Initiative programming. Seven percent is calculated based on the “total direct programme costs” and not out of the “total programme costs”.

Pre-funding,¹¹ in order to facilitate preparatory activities and where possible early results, a pre-funding mechanism was approved by the Operational Steering Committee by which programmes would be allowed to spend up to USD 200,000 (indirect costs included) prior to the programme start date, with a pre-funding start date set by the Operational Steering Committee. Pre-funding is aimed at supporting the programme development process including consultants, consultations with government and civil society, coordination efforts, any time sensitive initial activities that may bring early results and a baseline survey for example. Pre-funding elements do not count toward the 18% limit on Programme Management Costs.

Programme Management Costs are direct management costs that directly support the Country Programme objectives and directly derive from implementation of the programme. These include staff costs, office supplies, furniture, rent, IT and security, etc. These are direct management costs that support all six outcomes. They **should not exceed 18% of total Direct Programme Costs**.

All **staffing** should be included under the Programme Management Costs, including all staff (UNDG 1 or UNDG 4 in the case of SC/SB contracts and all consultancies over a 6-month duration). All key functions should be ensured: Coordination, Technical Coherence, Monitoring, Communications, Operations, Finance and Admin. Although not necessarily by a dedicated full-time staff for each. Collocation of the Spotlight Initiative team is encouraged. Associated costs should be included in the PMC.

Outcome and thematic budgeting: The Spotlight Initiative is intended to focus on prevention to ensure sustainable and transformative impacts. As such, while each country will base their budget on the country strategy, it is important to programme:

- **Lower amount in Pillar 1 – Legislative and Policy Frameworks,**
- **A significant amount (around 30%) of funding on Pillar 3 - Prevention, and**
- **A minimum of 10-15% of programme funds on Pillar 6 – Women’s movement and CSOs.** The Civil Society-National Reference Group should have a dedicated budget, integrated under this pillar, to support its meetings, access to meetings and the implementation of their Work Plan. Refer to Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement of this Operations Manual Compendium for further

¹¹ In Latin America and Africa, the pre-funding process differed. Programmes were requested to submit a brief proposal and budget for pre-funding that was specifically approved by the Operational Steering Committee and funds were transferred to a single UN Agency for each programmes to this purpose ahead of the programmes’ start date.

details.

- **Operational Steering Committee decision to earmark USD 100 million for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa:** Africa programmes have been asked to ensure a minimum of 40% of Total Programme Costs are tagged for SRHR.
- **Civil Society Organizations:** Spotlight Initiative has committed to delivering **30-50% of its programmes' direct programme costs through CSOs**, under any of the programmatic or operational modalities available to UN Agencies (as grantees, implementing partners, vendors or other).

Monitoring and Evaluation: It is strongly recommended to budget sufficient resources for monitoring and evaluation activities. Refer to Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium for further details:

Monitoring

- Baselines survey (required unless justified, no minimum %)¹².
- Monitoring - 2% of total Direct Programme Costs. Including all costs associated with monitoring such as the conduct of the baseline study or field monitoring visits.

Evaluations

- Mid-term evaluation (HQ led and independent) – 1% of total Direct Programme Costs
- Periodic/thematic evaluation – 1% of total Direct Programme Costs¹³.
- End-of-programme evaluation – Phase II budget: 1% of total Direct Programme Costs.
- Evaluation costs are administered by the Secretariat at HQ level and cannot be reprogrammed at the country level
- They are not part of the 18% Programme Management Costs.

Communications and Visibility: It is strongly recommended that sufficient dedicated funds (min 2%) are budgeted to ensure a robust and impactful communications and visibility action plan is implemented under the Country Programme, including a dedicated Communications Officer. Communication and visibility costs are not part of the 18% Programme Management Costs. This includes dedicated staff costs to cover the function (full time or part time) and communication/visibility implementation costs in terms of promoting the issues of EVAWG, the brand of Spotlight Initiative and its Donor. This budget is to be available to the communications focal person to implement the agreed Communications and Visibility Work Plan. These should not be costs that are specific to an activity/output/outcome. In addition, Programmes may also use appropriate funds from the outcome cost section of the budget for communication on specific activities and for “communication for development” purposes.

Knowledge Management and Capacity Development: It is strongly recommended to budget sufficient resources for Knowledge Management and Capacity Development activities (around 1% is a good practice).

In addition, as part of programme implementation, knowledge production, dissemination, and sharing of good practices/lessons learned is envisioned and should be budgeted under the six pillars of each country/regional programme.

¹² When the baseline survey was budgeted as part of the pre-funding it did not count towards the 18% limit of the PMC.

¹³ Latin America Programmes were not requested to include budgeting for periodic/thematic evaluations in Phase I. Some exceptions have been made for countries with smaller budgets.

Summary of Spotlight Initiative Phase I Programme budget requirements

			BUDGET
TOTAL SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PHASE I COUNTRY ALLOCATION (year 1-2)			\$1,000,000
INDIRECT SUPPORT COSTS (7%)	7%		\$65,421
TOTAL DIRECT PROGRAMME COSTS			\$934,579

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT COSTS SECTION (PMC) includes:			
18% PMC Should include all staff costs, (even those dedicated to a particular Outcome area), all consultancies above 6 months duration, monitoring (see line below) , knowledge management and any other management or office related costs that are not attributable to a specific Outcome.	18%		\$168,224
Monitoring costs included in 18% PMC (including dedicated M&E staff)	Minimum required	2%	\$18,692
Additional items for PMC section (not included in 18% limit)			
Mid-Term Evaluation	1%	Required under UN Women	\$9,346
Thematic/Periodic Evaluation	1%	Required under UN Women	\$9,346
Communications costs (for visibility activities, not C4D, including dedicated communications staff)	2%	Minimum required	\$18,692
PRE-FINANCING <i>(calculated as USD 200,000 net of 7% indirect support costs=USD186,916)</i>		Maximum	\$186,916
Expanded PMC section 22% (18% PMC+ 1% MTE + 1% Thematic Eval + 2%Comms) + Pre-Financing		Maximum	\$392,523

Eligibility of costs: Refer to the Art.18 of [EU General Conditions](#) on eligibility of costs.

Common business operations: The RCs and the UN Agencies were requested, when developing their Country Programme, to propose implementation modalities including proposals on common business operations and premises and shared staffing in order to ensure greater economies of scale and reduce the burden of each agency administrative costs.

No RUNO to RUNO transfers implying revenue recognition, resulting in the total indirect costs being above 7% can be made [double charging of GMS].

Direct Support Costs

(extract from the Supplementary Information, issued in April 2020, on the Programme and Budget Revision Guidance Note from 17 December 2019, which may be found in Section 8 on Budget Revisions)

Direct support costs are eligible if duly justified and described in Annex I and meeting all the cumulative eligibility criteria as in Art. 18.1 General conditions. In practical terms this means that any logistical and administrative service any RUNO or the RCO requires from another agency [typically UNDP] must be costed and described in the budget in simple terms. Avoid jargon and do not use lumpsums of percentage fees. Those services must be directly necessary for project implementation and costed within the PMC.¹⁴

Budget document

The **Budget template document is provided in a fixed template in Excel and contains the following three elements that are annexed to the Country Programme document:**

Detailed instructions on how to complete the Budget are included in the template provided. The template may slightly vary with periodic updates and should be sources from the Secretariat ([here](#) is an example).

Table A: Workplan

The Work Plan should present the full set of activities of the Spotlight Initiative Country Programme covering all funded and unfunded activities covering the entire scope and duration of the Country Programme. The Spotlight Initiative funding column should correspond to the amount allocated for Phase I only that is indicated in the respective Investment Plan for the respective country. Phase II allocations should be included under the unfunded gap column. **In this workplan, accountability for budget planning and implementation is binding for Spotlight Initiative Phase I and Agency contributions.** The Country Programme could be revised when preparing Phase II of the Country Programme and updated budget should be prepared.

Table B: Budget by UNDG category

The Budget by UNDG category should only present costs corresponding to Spotlight Initiative Phase I funding and Agencies contributions from the Work Plan. This table presents a consolidated budget by each RUNO, and should be derived from Table C. This table is automated and locked to avoid formula errors. Each agency should ensure that they have the proper guidance at hand to map their budget categories with the UNDG budget categories before developing their budget.

Table C: Budget by Outcome

In Table C, the UN Team enters detailed information on the budget, specifying units, unit costs and providing description for each budget line.

¹⁴ The UNDP Office in Brussels is preparing a detailed note on project budget costing and EU funding, which will be made available once finalized. The Secretariat has reached out to other agencies to obtain similar guidance for other RUNOs.

The Budget by Outcome should only present costs corresponding to Spotlight Initiative Phase I funding and Agencies contributions from the Workplan. This is the detailed budget of the Country Programme. This table consists of the *Programme Outcomes Costs* and *Programme Management Costs*. The Programme Management Costs should include all Staff costs (event those dedicated to a particular outcome area), all individual consultants above six-months duration, monitoring, knowledge management and any other management or office related costs that are not attributable to a specific Outcome. Pre-funding and Evaluation budget lines should be presented within the Programme Management Costs section but do not count towards the 18% limit of the PMC section. **All staff** must be included under the Programme Management Costs section of the budget. This includes Service Contracts and long-term consultants (over 6 months).

Note on Annual Work Plans (AWPs) are discussed in Section 7 of this Operations Manual Compendium, but it important to note that AWP should align with Table C, and budget revisions should link to the AWP and table C of the originally approved budget.

7. SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE ANNUAL WORK PLANS

About this section

This section presents guidance on Annual Work Plans (AWPs) for the Spotlight Initiative.

It covers key principles and points of process, recommended submission format, and expectations for Year 1 AWP, Year 2 AWP and Year 3 AWP when a carryover for phase I had been approved, as well as a reminder on maintaining overarching Spotlight Initiative budgetary principles.

The guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and was originally shared with programmes in February 2020 and further updated in December 2020.

Example AWP may be found [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 8 on Budget Revisions of this Operations Manual Compendium.

See the “updates to the guidance” at the end of this section for **important additional information**.

GUIDANCE NOTE on Annual Work Plans (AWPs)

SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE AWP PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS

- **Immediate implementation start:** Programme implementation should start immediately upon programme approval and at the beginning of every year for subsequent years. **This should not be conditional to the approval of the AWP.** RUNO HQs have been requested to put operational measures in place to allow country teams to start/continue implementation even prior to the approval of the AWP at the beginning of each year.
- **One joint AWP:** A consolidated AWP for the Spotlight Initiative Country/Regional Programme (all RUNOs included) should be produced. The Office of Resident Coordinator RCO and the Agency nominated as Technical Coherence lead should ensure the AWP reflects an integrated effort of all RUNOs avoiding silo approaches.
- **Stakeholder involvement:** It is recommended that all key stakeholders are involved in the AWP preparation, in particular the Office of the Resident Coordinator, RUNOs, Government counterparts, the EU Delegation, the National Civil Society Reference Group and other key stakeholders.
- **Approval:** The AWP is to be approved by the Country/Regional Steering Committee and signed by the Resident Coordinator. After this approval the AWP should be shared with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat for information only.
- **Timeline:** It is recommended the AWP is approved within the 1st quarter of the year.

YEAR 1 AWP (Caribbean, Pacific and Asia)

- **Submission format:** Please use the AWP template example shared by Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. It is recommended to keep the AWP at the same level of detail as the approved budget to facilitate the process of budget revisions later on.
- **No deviations/revisions:** For year 1 there should not be any deviations from the approved budget in the Programme Document. The only new information should be the split of resources between year 1 and 2 (for phase I) and by quarter.
- **Necessary deviations/revisions:** In circumstances where the Resident Coordinator and RUNOs identifies the need for changes from the onset these should be discussed and approved by the National Steering Committee. Deviations in the AWP with respect to the approved budget should be specifically recorded during the AWP approval process by the Country/Regional Steering Committee and shared with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat for information only, together with the approved AWP. The programme will then formalize budget revisions (post-facto at the end of the year if they are below 25%, and pre-facto if they are above 25%) following the process described in “Spotlight Initiative Programme and budget revision guidance” document.

YEAR 2 AWP (Latin America and Africa)

- **Submission format:** Please use the AWP template example shared by Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. It is recommended to keep the AWP at the same level of detail as the approved budget to facilitate the process of budget revisions later on.
- **AWP and budget revisions:** To produce the Year 2 AWP, Spotlight Initiative teams will take stock of the actual expenditure for Year 1 and roll unspent funds to Year 2. To formalize the adjustments made in Year 1 and planned for Year 2 a budget revision should be processed. The Secretariat will expect to receive a Year 2 AWP as well as budget revision submission, both approved by the NSC. See the “Spotlight Initiative Programme and budget revision guidance” document on how to formalize Programme and budget revisions.
- **What constitutes a revision:** Adjustments to the split of funds between year in the AWP are not considered a budget revision, they are part of the regular updating of the AWP. Adjustments to the total cost of a budget line, the UNDG category, the delivery modality (through CSOs, through government etc.), the narrative description or the addition of new lines or new activities are considered elements for a budget revision.

YEAR 3 2021 AWP carry over Phase I only (Latin America and Africa)

- **Submission format:** Please use the same format as your current AWP. It is recommended to keep the AWP at the same level of detail as the approved budget to facilitate the process of budget revisions and transition into the phase II budget later on.
- **Phase I carry over:** A carry over of Phase I until 30 June 2021 has been authorized.

- **AWP and budget revisions:** To produce the Year 3 phase I carry over AWP, Spotlight Initiative teams will roll all phase I unspent funds to the first six months of Year 3. To formalize the adjustments made in Year 1 and 2 and planned for Year 3 a budget revision should be processed. See the [“Spotlight Initiative Programme and budget revision guidance”](#) document on how to formalize Programme and budget revisions. See also at the end of this note more information on what constitutes a budget revision.
- **Timeline:** The Secretariat would like to receive a **status update** confirming the EU Delegation is being consulted by **1 February 2021**. The Year 3 phase I carry over AWP, and its related budget revision (if relevant) should be both approved by the National Steering Committee ideally in **quarter 1 of 2021**.

Additional considerations:

- **Transition from Phase I to Phase II:** Implementation should remain uninterrupted between phases with the approval of Phase II planned before the completion of Phase I on 30 June 2021.
- **Completion of Phase I prior to 30 June 2020:** If a programme plans to complete their Phase I sooner than 30 June 2021 they should notify the Secretariat as soon as possible (no later than January 2021) and indicate so clearly in the AWP by labeling the timeline for the Phase I carry over accordingly. The Secretariat may consider the possibility of an early approval of Phase II on an exceptional basis.
- **Phase II planning: Indicative Phase II allocations have been provided for planning purposes only and are not the final approved allocations.** Final allocations will be performance-based and decided in April-May 2021 by the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee based on the results of the mid-term assessment and other parameters. Guidance on developing a Phase II budget and brief narrative proposal will be shared by the Secretariat in January 2020.
 - **Optional:** should this facilitate internal UN planning, programmes may wish to develop a tentative 2021 AWP until 31 December 2021 including both the carry-over from Phase I and a relevant portion of the indicative Phase II allocation. In this case it is recommended to keep Phase I and Phase II funds in clearly distinct columns and to keep this combined Phase I and Phase II year 3 AWP internal to the UN until a Phase II allocation amount has been approved by the Operational Steering Committee at global level.

IMPORTANT NOTE

The approval of the AWP will not constitute a budget revision for the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, any revisions will have to be formalized as stated in the “Spotlight Initiative Programme and budget revision guidance” document.

- What constitutes a revision? The carryover of Phase I unto year 3 as such does not necessitate a formal budget revision process. The Phase II part of the AWP is only indicative and will also not necessitate a budget revision. Adjustments to the split of funds between years in the AWP are not considered a budget revision, they are part of the regular updating of the AWP. Adjustments to the total cost of a budget line, the UNDG category, the delivery modality (through CSOs, through

government etc.), the narrative description or the addition of new lines or new activities are considered elements for a budget revision.

MAINTAINING KEY SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PRINCIPLES

When approving the AWP, the RC will safeguard key Spotlight Initiative principles related to budget thresholds established by the Spotlight Initiative. The RC should particularly monitor:

- (a) Changes in staffing (staff contract level only)
- (b) Changes in major assets (increase in budget or units, especially vehicles)
- (c) Changes in any of the budget requirements set in the CPD development guidance to RCs related to:
 - I. the proportion of funds delivered through CSOs (30% minimum)
 - II. the SRHR coverage (for Africa only, 40% minimum)
 - III. programme management costs (18% maximum)
 - IV. monitoring costs (2% minimum)
 - V. communications costs (2% minimum)
 - VI. evaluation costs
 - 1% fixed for the mid-term evaluation (Phase I)
 - 1% fixed for a thematic/periodic evaluation (Phase I)
 - 1% fixed for a final evaluation (Phase II)

Updates to the guidance

A “**Supplementary Information on the Programme and Budget Revision Guidance Note from 17 December 2019**” was issued in 2020 including important information related to budgeting and annual work planning. This document is included in Section 8 on Budget Revisions.

AWP guidance is likely to be regularly updated and adapted to the moment in the programme cycle and phase the programme finds itself in.

AWP template, the Secretariat does not provide a tailored template to each programme. It is recommended that AWP follow the same structure as Table C of the approved budget to facilitate budget revision processes. In order to **convert your budget to an AWP**, kindly add a column for Year 1 and column for Year 2 to Tab C of your budget to show the split of costs across years.

Carry over of Phase I into Year 3, Programmes should not expect that unspent Phase I funds will be allowed for carry over into Year 3 automatically. This is an exceptional measure that will need a decision endorsed by the EOSG. Unless otherwise confirmed programmes are expected to complete the implementation of Phase I funds within the allocated first two year in order to be considered for Phase II funding.

8. BUDGET REVISIONS

About this section

This section presents guidance on programme and budget revisions for the Spotlight Initiative.

It covers an overview of the process for initiating a revision; two scenarios for revisions, significant and insignificant; a reminder on maintaining overarching Spotlight Initiative budgetary principles; general tips and acceleration measures; information on relevant templates; and, finally, an example calculation for the revision threshold.

The guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the Multi Partner Trust Fund and was originally shared with programmes in December 2019. It was approved by the Operational Steering Committee of 17 December 2019.

Further related information, including a programme revision cover page template and an example budget revision template, may be found in [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets and Section 7 on Spotlight Initiative Annual Work Plans of this Operations Manual Compendium.

See the “updates to the guidance” at the end of this section for **important additional information**.

GUIDANCE NOTE: Programme revision requirements

Note: The following guidance note is prepared by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the Multi Partner Trust Fund and may be updated from time to time.

OVERVIEW

[The Spotlight Initiative](#) (SI) guidance is provided by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the Spotlight Initiative Administrative Agent (AA or MPTF Office) based on the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#), [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#), signed between UN and MPTF Office, as well as the [MOU](#) and [MOU Addendum for EU contribution](#) signed between the RUNOs and the AA. The Spotlight Initiative Operations Manual compiles the rules and procedures and obligations and requirements of the key stakeholders of the Spotlight Initiative Programmes (the EOSG, Secretariat, Resident Coordinators, and RUNOs).

The Spotlight Initiative Programmes (Phase I) should be implemented in line with the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee (OSC) approved Programme documents.

Regional Programmes: The initiation of a Programme Revision will be done by the UN Chair of the Regional Steering Committee and respective approvals made by the Regional Steering Committee.

The UN Resident Coordinator can initiate a Programme Revision (including the Country Programme Document and/or its Budget) under the following scenarios:

SCENARIO 1: REVISIONS BELOW 25% AND NOT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

1.1. Budget revisions made between UNDG budget lines that cumulatively amount to **25%* or less of the total approved Budget of Phase I per RUNO per country.**

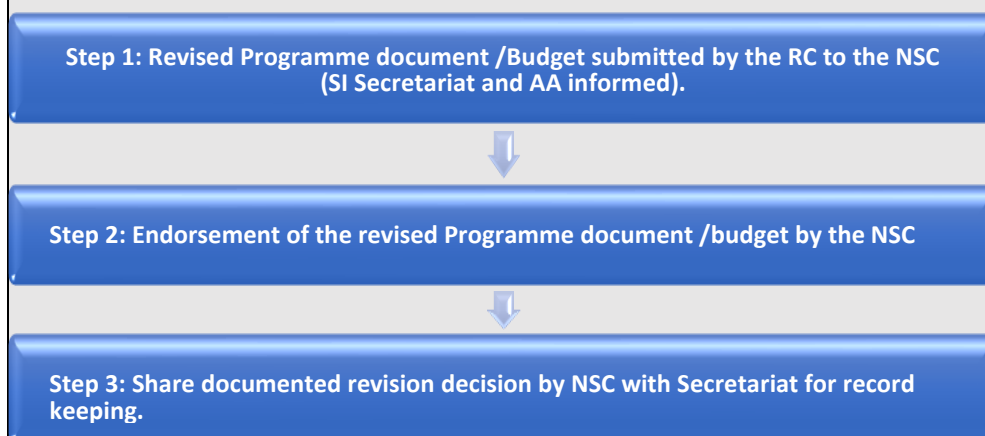
1.2. Programmatic revisions that **do not** significantly change the scope, objectives, expected results, strategy or priorities, as determined by the RC.

- PROCEDURE: Revisions will be presented **post-facto** in a cumulative way at the end of the year to the NSC for endorsement. The RC should submit the Programme Revisions, combining all RUNOs revisions, to the NSC with **copy to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the AA for information only.**

- In addition to the above it should be noted that:
 - Throughout implementation, RUNOs have the responsibility to inform on programme adjustments that may affect the implementation by other RUNOs or the overall delivery of results through the **regular Spotlight Initiative coordination mechanisms** of the UN team.
 - **RUNOs may request at any time that the RC provides a non-objection to a particular adjustment.**
 - The **RC non-objection** process should be through a simple, expedited procedure that may be delegated to the most suitable party or mechanism, as proposed at country level.

25% calculation: If a RUNO has a total country budget of \$1million, then the sum of the changes between UNDG budget lines should not exceed \$250,000. Only budget increases will count towards the 25% threshold calculation (not the off- setting reductions). **Please see example in this note.*

SCENARIO 1:



SCENARIO 2: REVISIONS ABOVE 25% AND SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

2.1. Revisions made between UNDG budget lines that **cumulatively exceed 25%* of the total approved Budget of Phase I per RUNO per country;**

2.2. Programmatic revisions that significantly change the scope, objectives, expected results, strategy or priorities as determined by the RC;

- PROCEDURE: As part of the Annual Work Plan process, the RC should submit the Programme Revision request, combining all RUNOs revisions, to:
 - The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat for a non-objection (1 week turn around by email) in parallel to consulting with the EU Delegation.
 - Then, to the **NSC for final approval** with copy to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the AA for information only.

SCENARIO 2:

Step 1: Revision of the Programme Document/ budget submitted by the RC to the SI Secretariat for non-objection and parallel consultation with the EU Delegation.



Step 2: Approval of the revised Programme document / budget by the NSC



Step 3: Share documented revision decision by NSC with Secretariat for record keeping.

**See note on 25% calculation above.*

IMPORTANT: MAINTAINING KEY SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PRINCIPLES

A non-objection by the RC is required to maintain key Spotlight Initiative principles:

- (a) changes in staffing (staff contract level only)
- (b) changes in major assets (increase in budget or units, especially vehicles)

(c) changes in any of the budget requirements set in the CPD development guidance to RCs related to:

- I. the proportion of funds delivered through CSOs (30% minimum)
- II. the SRHR coverage (for Africa only, 40% minimum)
- III. programme management costs (18% maximum)
- IV. monitoring costs (2% minimum)
- V. communications costs (2% minimum) *
- VI. evaluation costs (1% fixed for each)

PROCEDURE: Revisions related to the above key principles should be communicated, before fact, for RC non-objection through a simple, expedited procedure that may be delegated to the most suitable party or mechanism, as proposed at country level.

The RC will safeguard the overall cumulative thresholds (I through VI) established by the Spotlight Initiative.

TIPS AND ACCELERATION MEASURES:

- It is recommended the revisions are presented at the NSC at the time of the Annual Work Plan review to streamline both processes together, but the RC may decide to present Revision requests at a different time if this facilitates implementation.
- Under Scenario 2, the RC should secure the endorsement of the Programme Revision request by the NSC prior to submission to the OSC.
- To avoid implementation delays, the RC may call for a virtual NSC decision on Programme Revision proposals.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

- **Rolling of funds** from one year to the next can be done through the regular AWP process at country level. Adjustments to the annual split of funds in the AWP are not considered a programme revision.
- **RUNO to RUNO: No local transfer of Spotlight Initiative funds requiring revenue recognition between different RUNOs** can be made as these would result in double GMS [indirect cost] booking. Any budgetary or programmatic revision must follow the required procedures described above.
- In case budget revision implies **reallocation of funds between RUNOs**, such funds must be returned to the AA and recorded in the system. The AA will transfer reallocated funds back to all involved RUNOs based on the newly approved budget.
- All RUNOs shall monitor quarterly and anticipate deviations of expenditures against budget categories and the criteria set above to **inform the RC and RUNO's HQ in timely fashion.**

BUDGET REVISION TEMPLATES:

- Spotlight Initiative Programme Revision Cover Page.
- Spotlight Initiative Budget Revision Template, incorporating the Annual Workplan template.
- In case of revision of the Programme Document, please highlight all changes.

*Communications costs in the PMC section are the minimum requirement to cover overall programme communication and visibility. Country Programmes may also use appropriate funds from the outcome cost section of the budget for communication on specific activities and are encouraged to budget within the Prevention pillar (pillar 3) in particular for “communication for development” activities.

EXAMPLE FOR 25% THRESHOLD CALCULATION

Spotlight Budget Revision Example					
Country "X"					
UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES	Agency A				
	Approved Spotlight Budget	Scenario <u>below</u> 25% Threshold		Scenario <u>above</u> 25% Threshold	
		Revised Budget	Budget Variations	Revised Budget	Budget Variations
1. Staff and other personnel	150,000	100,000	(50,000)	90,000	(60,000)
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	-	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture	56,420	70,000	13,580	70,000	13,580
4. Contractual services	335,849	300,000	(35,849)	480,000	144,151
5. Travel	290,000	295,000	5,000	80,000	(210,000)
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	102,310	102,500	190	182,500	80,190
7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	-	62,079	62,079	27,079	27,079
Total Direct Costs	934,579	934,579		934,579	
8. Indirect Support Costs (Max. 7%)	65,421	65,421		65,421	
TOTAL Budget	1,000,000	1,000,000	85,849	1,000,000	270,000
25% Threshold (25% of 1,000,000)	250,000		85,849 < 250,000		270,000 > 250,000
Notes:					
1 - Total budget per RUNO after revisions should remain the same i.e. \$1,000,000					

Supplementary Information on the Programme and Budget Revision Guidance Note from 17 December 2019

This note aims to provide supplementary information to the Guidance Note on Programme Revision Requirements (see Section 8 on Budget Revisions) and to expand on clarifications related to those.

I. Important to note

1. The scenarios under which the UN Resident Coordinator can initiate a Programme Revision (including the Country Programme Document and/or its Budget) are prescribed in the guidance note from 17 December 2019.

2. Please revisit the two scenarios for budget revisions: Scenario 1: REVISIONS BELOW 25% AND NOT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES as well as Scenario 2: REVISIONS ABOVE 25% AND SIGNIFICANT CHANGES.
3. For Scenario 1, Budget revisions will be presented post-facto in a cumulative way at the end of the year to the National Steering Committee for endorsement. The Secretariat can provide a technical review upon request.
4. The Operational Steering Committee has not delegated to National Steering Committees the final approval to increase/decrease the TOTAL Allocation for each AGENCY per country. These have to be submitted for approval to the Global Operational Steering Committee via the Secretariat for its review and no objection.
5. In case budget revisions below 25% of an Agency's budget are found to be non-compliant with the budgetary provisions (as stated in the original guidance to RCs for the CPD development, the revision guidance, in this document and in other relevant Secretariat communication), the RC should seek to course correct as soon as possible, and formalize the adjustment bringing the budget back into compliance at the next AWP and budget revision process. Please note further that uncompliant budgets cannot be approved by any programme governance body or individual and can lead to ineligible expenditures.

II. Covid-19 Response Plans – Important update on Spotlight Initiative programming

1. Anticipate the need to adjust to programmatic realities and changed working modalities, to quickly respond to the uptick in gender-based violence as a result of the pandemic, and to address socio-economic conditions necessary to achieve the intended results and impact of the Spotlight Initiative.
2. The Secretariat suggests proceeding as follows:
 - a. Follow the guidance note instructions on programme and budgetary revision.
 - b. Consult with the EU delegation in country and agree on the necessary adjustments.
 - c. A formal email by the RC to the EU delegation summarizing the adjustments by pillar and corresponding financial reallocations. For purposes of completeness, attach the revised UNDG budget (table B template attached) and if requested the revised Budget by Outcome (table C template).
 - d. The counterpart at the EU delegation should concur formally with these adjustments, and if above 25% of an Agency's total budget, the Resident Coordinator should seek a non-objection from the Secretariat.
3. Please share those documents with the Secretariat and the Administrative Agent.

III. Budget revision submission format

1. Revised Table C "Budget by Outcome"
 - a. Make necessary revisions directly in your currently approved budget. Please highlight in color all lines with Covid-19 related adjustments. You may add a column on the far right to explain your adjustments.
 - b. Highlight both the lines with added funds/new lines and reduced funds. Reduced lines will either be because funds are saved, to free funds for Covid-19 work, but could also

simply be reduced because of Covid-19 not allowing that activity to take place anymore.

2. Table B “Budget by UNDG Category”
 - a. Your budget in table C is linked to Table B to produce a summary by UNDG category of the overall budget. Kindly ensure the summary by UNDG table captures the Covid-19 related adjustments. This is required in terms of the contract with the EU.
 - b. Please include the original Table B (clearly labelled as such) to ensure an easy side by side comparison of the adjustments by UNDG category.
 - c. Kindly note that the total budget allocation by Agency should remain unchanged.
3. Covid-19 adjustment Summary Table
 - a. In order to provide an easy reference summary of your Covid-19 adjustments please produce a summary table in a similar format to table C including only the lines that include Covid-19 related expenditure.
 - b. Kindly ensure that the figures of this summary table are an exact match to the adjustments shown in your revised Table C.

Reminders on previously shared guidance

IV. Programme Outcome Costs

1. No staff (UNDG 1 or UNDG 4 in the case of SC/SB contracts) may be included.
2. No consultancies over 6 months duration may be included.

V. Pillar/Outcome 6 budget

1. Pillar 6 may not be less than 10% of the Total Programme Outcome Costs (EU Funding only).
2. The Civil Society-National Reference Group should have a dedicated budget to support its meetings, access to meetings and the implementation of their Work Plan.

VI. Programme Management Costs (PMC)

1. The PMC maximum is set at 18% of Total Direct Programme Costs.
2. Staffing:
 - a. Changes of contract level require a pre-facto Resident Coordinator non-objection.
 - b. All key functions should be covered at all times: Coordination, Technical Coherence, Monitoring, Communications, Operations, Finance and Admin. Although not necessarily by a dedicated full-time staff for each.
 - c. Collocation of the Spotlight Initiative team is encouraged. Associated costs should be included in the PMC.
3. Evaluations: fixed amounts of 1% of Total Direct Programme Costs are required for each evaluation exercise as set in the original approved budget. Evaluations will be contracted at HQ level.
4. Monitoring: A minimum of 2% of Total Direct Programme Costs is required. This should at least include dedicated staff costs to cover the function (full time or part time) and

monitoring costs such as travel and other related costs such as data systems/collection costs.

5. **Communications/Visibility:** A minimum of 2% of Total Direct Programme Costs is required. This includes dedicated staff costs to cover the function (full time or part time) and communication/visibility implementation costs in terms of promoting the issues of EVAWG, the brand of Spotlight Initiative and its Donor. This budget is to be available to the communications focal person to implement the agreed Communications and Visibility Work Plan. These should not be costs that are specific to an activity/output/outcome. In addition, Programmes may also use appropriate funds from the outcome cost section of the budget for communication on specific activities and for “communication for development” purposes.
6. Direct support costs are eligible if duly justified and described in Annex I and meeting all the cumulative eligibility criteria as in Art. 18.1 General conditions. In practical terms this means that any logistical and administrative service any RUNO or the RCO requires from another agency [typically UNDP] must be costed and described in the budget in simple terms. Avoid jargon and do not use lumpsums of percentage fees. Those services must be directly necessary for project implementation and costed within the PMC.¹⁵

VII. Assets:

1. Changes in major assets (increase in budget or units, especially vehicles) require a pre-facto RC non-objection and should follow EU eligibility criteria and the respective UN Agency rules and regulations.

VIII. Delivering through Civil Society:

1. 30-50% of Programme Outcome Costs (EU Funding) should be delivered through CSOs (following any modality available to the contracting RUNO, including as Implementing Partners, as Grantees or as Vendors), of which 50-70% should go through local or grassroots CSOs as defined in the Spotlight Initiative [Grassroots Action Plan](#).

IX. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) coverage:

1. Africa only: minimum 40% of Total Programme Costs.

[Updates to the guidance](#)

Budget revision template: The Secretariat does not circulate budget revision templates tailored to each programme budget. Programmes should make changes to their respective budgets based on the [example budget revision template](#).

¹⁵ The UNDP Office in Brussels is preparing a detailed note on project budget costing and EU funding, which will be made available once finalized. The Secretariat has reached out to other agencies to obtain similar guidance for other RUNOs.

Deadline for budget revisions: There is no specific deadline for the completion of budget revisions. However, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat recommends that programmes submit a cumulative budget revision for post facto approval once a year, typically at the same time of approval of the Annual Work Plan by the NSC. For significant revisions, the deadline will be decided on a case-by-case basis depending on programme needs. It is likely that programmes will carry out the budget revision process and the Annual Work Plan process in parallel.

Revision of UNDG categories: the budget revision guidance does not set any particular limitations or thresholds in terms of shifting funds across UNDG categories other than the thresholds by total RUNO budget presented in the guidance note.

Revision of Outcome cost totals: the budget revision guidance does not set any particular limitations or thresholds in terms of shifting funds across Outcomes/Pillars other than the thresholds by total RUNO budget presented in the guidance note.

Kindly note the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat expects that Pillar 6 remains at least 10-15% of Programme Outcome Costs. Any significant change in the balance between Outcomes could be considered by the RC/RD to fall under as significant programmatic revision and require a prior approval by the Secretariat and the National Steering Committee.

Flexibility: Under the budget revision guidance, programmes have the flexibility to make small day-to-day changes, shift funding across activity lines, adjust activities and change delivery modalities as implementation progresses as long as they are under the 25% threshold set in the guidance without the need of a prior approval by the NSC.

Pre-funding: Fully integrated into the total programme budget, so programmes may use remaining pre-funding to cover activities in the Phase I budget, as long as the funds remain with the agency to which they were initially allocated.

Revisions to agency contributions: The 25% threshold of the budget revision guidance only applies to EU funding, not to agency contributions. RUNOs may choose to change their total agency contributions without the need of an NSC approval, though they may not change their EU funded agency allocation without requesting pre-facto OSC approval. Adjustments to agency contributions should be reflected in the next update of the AWP and Budget and communicated early on with the Secretariat for sharing with the Administrative Agent. Although there is no minimum amount it is recommended that each RUNO has some contribution amount.

Rolling of funds/carry over to the next year: Rolling of funds from one year to the next is allowed and is not considered a budget revision, rolling over a large amount of funding and activities signals significant delays in implementation and poses a risk of overloading the programme's capacity in the second year. For questions on contractual requirements, agency rules and regulations and EU rules for eligible costs, RUNOs are recommended to reach out to their respective **agency finance and operations colleagues**.

9. PROGRAMME GOVERNANCE

About this section

This section presents an overview of programme governance at country- and regional-level.

It covers the programme steering committees, governance framework of Safe and Fair, Civil Society Reference Groups and key documents.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of the fund on 20 September 2017 with the approval of the first version of the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference.

Further related information may be found in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) (also referred to as Annex I – Description of the action in the contract with the EU).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 1 on Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture, Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement and Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Overview

Governance takes place at two levels. At the global level, fund governance consists of a Governing Body and an Operational Steering Committee that were discussed in Section 1. At the country/regional levels, Country/Regional Level Steering Committees provide implementation oversight and coordination of the country/regional portfolio. This section will provide information on governance at the country level.

Country/Regional Programme Steering Committees

(extract from the [Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference](#))

Thematic sub-division by region calls for country/regional-level strategic direction, oversight and coordination of country joint programmes. Once a joint programme for a specific country is approved, it will be overseen and guided by a multi-stakeholder Country/Regional Steering Committee, co-chaired by the designated government official and the United Nations Resident Coordinator (or his/her designate), and with the involvement of the Gender Theme Group. To the extent possible, existing structures, such as UNDAF results groups will be used rather than establishing new ones. Connections and links will be forged with other pooled funds or joint programmes operating at the country level.

These structures may need to be adjusted to meet the participatory characteristics of the Spotlight Initiative, as indicated above. In the event a regional programme covers multiple countries, adjustments can be made to establish a regional coordination mechanism only composed of European Union-United Nations representatives from regional offices. To maintain a light governance structure, country level/regional steering committees should not be established in parallel for the same joint programme.

The main task of the Country-Level/Regional Steering Committee (where regional programmes are applicable) is to guide and oversee the implementation of each joint programme by fulfilling the following roles and responsibilities:

- Ensure proper communication and coordination on the European Union-United Nations Spotlight Initiative at the country/regional levels, and support a participatory implementation of the country-level programme, in alignment with national priorities, agreed United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (former UNDAF), and European Union priorities.
- Approve programme annual work plans, review output level results, adjust implementation set-up. Review and approve periodic and annual joint programme narrative reports submitted by RUNOs.
- Approve any programmatic or budgetary (revisions of less than 25 per cent of the value of the budget) programme revisions within the limits of the approved programme document by the Operational Steering Committee.
- Review risk management strategies and ensure the programme is proactively managing and mitigating risks.
- Manage stakeholder relationships at the country level.

Country-Level Steering Committees will be country-specific and aligned with the priorities and dynamics of each country. This reflects initiative principles, along with inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decisions, country participation and ownership. It also ensures, while ensuring as well a manageable size (about 10 persons) to permit efficient decision making. The following members should be part of Country-Level¹⁶ Programme Committees:

- United Nations Resident Coordinator
- European Union Representatives

- Government and participating national organizations
- RUNOs
- At least two self-selected representatives from feminist civil society organizations/networks with a strong track record of working on EVAWG.¹⁷

Other stakeholders may be invited to participate in planning, deliberation and monitoring roles of the Committee. This includes representatives from academic/research institutions, local communities and/or the private sector.

Governance framework of Safe and Fair: Realizing women migrant workers' rights and opportunities in the ASEAN region

Safe and Fair established a rigorous governance framework to provide strategic and technical governance to the programme at regional and national levels. The European Commission, EU Delegations and relevant ASEAN bodies are involved at appropriate level. Safe and Fair governance structure is composed by a Project Steering Committee, a Regional Project Advisory Committee and National Project Advisory Committees. Specific roles and responsibilities are outlined below.

Project Steering Committee (PSC)

The primary purposes of the PSC is to ensure coordination between ILO, UN Women and UNODC in implementation, to ensure information flow with the EU Delegations in the region facilitated through the EU Delegation in Thailand, as well as to provide an opportunity to identify and exchange good practices. The PSC provides strategic leadership, general policy and overall guidance and oversight on the programme; it also assesses and, if necessary, adapts the activities of the programme. The PSC is comprised of the ILO, UN Women and UNODC and the EU Delegation in Thailand on behalf of the European Commission and the relevant EU Delegations. The European Commission HQ representatives and representatives of the Fund Secretariat are involved in PSC meetings. The PSC meets every three months. Extraordinary meetings can be convened by each member with a due justification.

Regional Project Advisory Committee (RPAC)

The RPAC convenes at the regional level on an annual basis and comprises key tripartite plus stakeholders at the regional level including ASEAN bodies, and representatives of relevant EU Delegations and European Commission HQ. The RPAC provides guidance on the implementation of the programme and endorses a proposed annual work plan. The RPAC is also invited, on *ad-hoc* basis, to review programme research, publications and other key outputs.

National Project Advisory Committees

In each country, a tripartite plus Project Advisory Committee (PAC) convenes annually in close coordination with the EU Delegation on the ground to provide guidance on the implementation of the programme, and

¹⁶ Regional Programmes will maintain a similar composition of their Regional Steering Committee substituting national governments with a relevant inter-governmental regional body when possible.

¹⁷ In consultation with the European Union, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat made the decision to update the original Terms of Reference to state that at least 20% of the total membership of country and regional programme steering committees should be self-selected members of the Civil Society Reference Groups, representing the women's movement with a strong track record of working on EVAWG.

endorse a proposed annual work plan. The PAC is also invited, on *ad-hoc* basis, to review programme research, publications and other key outputs. The chair of the PAC is dependent on the country of focus.

Civil Society Reference Group

The meaningful engagement and partnership with civil society is a key principle of Spotlight Initiative. In line with this principle, Civil Society National, Regional and Global Reference Groups (CS-RGs) have been established as an institutional mechanism to facilitate systematic civil society engagement in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes. The establishment of and partnership with the CS-RG is guided by the Leave No One Behind principle, national ownership and a human rights-based approach.

Interim Civil Society-Reference Group (Interim CS-RG):

- In the inception of the programme document development phase, the RC convenes a meeting involving the UN and EU partners, with a wide range of CSOs from national and, especially, local and grassroots levels. The objective of the meeting is two-fold: (i) to set up the Interim CS-RG with civil society selecting the members of the Group, and (ii) to introduce and consult participating CSOs on the Spotlight Initiative in general, also informing them about the forthcoming process of Programme development, timeline and modes and points of engagement.
- Given the importance of ensuring the leadership and active contributions of civil society to the development of Spotlight Initiative Country and Regional Programmes, an **Interim** Reference Group with approximately 15 diverse members is formed. Geographic balance and adherence to the leave no one behind principle must be ensured so that all women and girls, including those facing intersecting forms of discrimination, are represented, in particular local and grassroots women's rights and feminist activists working on EVAWG. It is recommended to include representatives from important constituencies such as progressive faith-based groups, youth and male engagement experts working on EVAWG. Interim CS-RGs members join in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their organizations.
- The Interim Reference Group should have as its core tasks to (1) Advise and feed into the design and drafting of the Country/Regional Programme document from the inception, (2) for members who volunteer to be part of the formal CS-RG Selection Committee, finalize the TOR for the CS-RG and agree on a process for the nomination/selection of the members, and (3) Propose a budget to the RC for activities of the CS-RGs to be integrated in the programme budget.
- The Interim CS-RG is operational until the programme is approved and a formal CS-RG is established.

Formal Civil Society-Reference Group (CS-RG):

- The Spotlight Initiative Programme Team is expected to have a meaningful engagement and partnership with civil society that is equal, inclusive, transparent and respectful.
- A formal Group is established through an open, transparent and deliberate process that is accountable to and led by civil society to start functioning as soon as programme implementation commences. The full process to establish the CS-RG is detailed in this [Set-Up Guidance](#). Once the formal CS-RG is established, information on all members of the CS-RG and the set-up process should be submitted to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat using the templates provided in Annex A, B and C in the Guidance.
- It is recommended that at least **50 % of the members** are women's rights and feminist activists. In adherence to the principle of **Leave No One Behind**, the Reference Groups should have geographic diversity and include representatives of vulnerable groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, as well as grassroots activists and important constituencies.

- The CS-RGs serve a triple function — as **advisors** to the Spotlight Initiative Country and Regional Programmes; as **advocates** and partners for the realization of its objectives; and as **accountability holders** to ensure the Spotlight Initiative is held accountable for its commitments.
- The CS-RGs partnership rests with the entire Spotlight Initiative Programme Team. To realize a structured engagement, it is recommended that the CS-RGs and Programme Team agree on the modalities for collaboration and communication.¹⁸ The outcomes of such agreement may be documented in a jointly agreed **standard operating procedure (SOP)**.
- It is further recommended that a **focal point** from the Spotlight Initiative Programme Team is assigned to the CS-RG, who coordinates¹⁹ the group and be the first point of contact for any operational support, including procurement to execute workplan activities.
- **Governance:** Civil society has at least 20% representation on the multi-stakeholder National and Regional Steering Committees as full voting members. The civil society representatives are self-nominated by the Regional and National Civil Society Reference Groups.
- **Workplan:** The CS-RG should adopt a workplan with a known corresponding budget under Pillar 6. The workplan is best defined locally by the CS-RG, guided by the local context and the group’s roles and responsibilities. The CS-RG should have clearly allocated resources and support to meaningfully participate, e.g. budgeting CS-RGs’ workplans (including transportation and travel costs); providing adequate notice time for meetings and technical review of documents; allowing virtual meeting participation; selecting disability-friendly venues; arranging interpretation for sign language and minority languages (when needed). Read more about achieving meaningful engagement with Reference Groups, including budgeting guidance [here](#). More details on the CS-RG workplan budgeting in Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement of this Operations Manual Compendium.
- The CS-RGs members join in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their organizations. Therefore, a member of the CS-RG may be affiliated with an organization that is selected as an implementing partner (or under another contractual modality) in the programme. To manage any potential conflict of interest, it is recommended to adopt a [Code of Conduct](#).
- **Accountability:** The Resident Coordinator is the appropriate entry point to resolve any issues within the Programme and ensure that a healthy relationship is sustained between the Spotlight Initiative Programme Team and the CS-RG. If an issue remains of concern after discussions with the Resident Coordinator, the CS-RG members and Resident Coordinator’s Office are invited to bring the matter to the attention of the Global Spotlight Initiative Secretariat who will endeavor to support in resolving the matter, with support from the Executive Office of the Secretary-General where needed.

Monitoring civil society engagement in Spotlight Initiative:

- Spotlight Initiative programmes are expected to plan and budget for monitoring activities and shadow reporting as part of the Civil Society Reference Groups’ workplans. Further information may be found in Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement and Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

¹⁸ Consider communication methods that are inclusive with respect to members’ abilities, connectivity capacities, security concerns, language skills, time differences, amongst others. This may be WhatsApp for daily communication, email to share meeting invites and programme documents, Skype for virtual meetings, or any other communication method that meets the needs and accessibility of the members.

¹⁹ Coordination may include organize regular meetings, timeously invite CS-RG representatives to consultations and multi-stakeholder meetings, share documents for review with adequate time, etc.

Documents:

- [Guidance to set up **Interim** National Reference Group](#)
- [Guidance to set up National Reference Group](#)
- [Guidance to set up **Interim** Regional Reference Group](#)
- [Guidance to set up Regional Reference Group](#)
- Guidance Note on the meaningful engagement of Reference Groups ([EN](#), [FR](#), [SP](#))
- [Reference Group Workplan and Budget Template](#)
- [Reference Group Terms of Reference Template](#)
- [Reference Group Code of Conduct](#)

10. SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE PROGRAMME TEAMS

About this section

This section presents an overview of Spotlight Initiative Programme teams at country- and regional-level.

It covers programme management principles for the Spotlight Initiative and key roles and responsibilities of the Spotlight Initiative Programme staff, as well as Standard Operating Procedures.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of the fund on 20 September 2017 with the approval of the first version of the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference.

Further related information may be found in the [CPD Development Guidance to RCs](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 2 on UN Reform Implementation, Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets and Section 9 on Programme Governance of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Spotlight Initiative Programme Management Model

In line with the UN Development System Reform agenda, the configuration of the programme management model rests under the leadership, guidance and decision-making authority of the Resident Coordinator. Each model looks unique as it responds to the specific context, country/regional programme strategy, capacities and expertise in the country. To deliver on this historic SDG partnership, each programme management model should ensure sufficient resources to key Spotlight Initiative roles including programme coordination, technical coherence, monitoring and evaluation and communications.



Roles and Responsibilities of Spotlight Initiative Staff

The Spotlight Initiative Country Programme’s management structure must ensure:

- **Programme Oversight and Coordination:** Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Resident Coordinator and in collaboration with the RUNOs, the Programme Coordinator holds overall

responsibility for operational guidance and coordination, strategic engagement with Government counterparts, high-level programme oversight and monitoring, and smooth delivery of programme components, in coordination with the Civil Society National Reference Group, Government and the EU Delegation. The Programme Coordinator reports to the Resident Coordinator and works very closely with the Heads of RUNOs. Fully recognizing the roles and technical expertise of Technical Coherence Specialist and the RUNOs on respective outcome areas, the Programme Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the effective and transparent management of the Spotlight Initiative consistent with guidance from the National Steering Committee and the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. The Programme Coordinator works in close collaboration with the Technical Coherence Specialist.

- **Technical Coherence:** The Technical Coherence Specialist's overall responsibility is to provide technical advice and guidance to the Resident Coordinator, to the Spotlight Initiative Coordinator and to RUNOs. The Technical Coherence Specialist reports to the Spotlight Initiative Coordinator and is matrixed to the UN Agency with the overall technical role in the programme. S/He supports the coordination of technical assistance, guides programme technical staff and ensures coherence in the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative across RUNOs and pillars. The Technical Coherence Specialist provides technical quality assurance to ensure all elements of Spotlight Initiative programming is focused on the elimination of violence against women and girls as part of the comprehensive six pillars of the theory of change, and is aligned with the Do No Harm and Leave No One Behind principles. Fully recognizing and leveraging the technical expertise of RUNOs on respective outcome areas, the Technical Coherence Specialist provides programme technical guidance towards the planning and implementation of the Spotlight Initiative overall, including activities under the six outcome areas; Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting; Capacity Development; Knowledge Management; Communications and other relevant technical aspects of programming. The Technical Coherence Specialist works in close collaboration with the Programme Coordinator.
- **Programme Implementation by Agencies** – in line with programme commitments, as well as the agencies' rules and regulations – ensures that interventions are of high-quality, appropriately financed, and on track to meet targets. Agency implementation includes programmatic and financial accountability for the EU funding that is channeled to the Agency and reporting. As much as possible, implementation (programme and M&E) and support (administration and operations) functions should be shared across RUNOs. In general, duplication of posts is not supported, except for functions that require agency specific personnel, such as finance.
- **Adequate Resourcing** for Programme Coordination, Technical Coherence, and Programme Implementation to enable the UN system to deliver on Spotlight Initiative Country Programmes. The agencies' share of the Programme Management costs (18% of Country Programme) should be commensurate with the agencies' share of the Country Programme budget.
- The Spotlight Initiative Programme Country team should have four key basic functions under the leadership of the RC, who should take the lead for coordination to ensure effective communication flow and decision making (while responsibilities for technical leadership in most programme countries and regions rests with the selected RUNO). These basic functions are:

Programme Coordinator:

- Reports to the RC on overall programme performance; serves as Focal Point to Spotlight Initiative Secretariat
- Establishes and maintains good working relations with relevant institutional organizational partners
- Ensures the programme is implemented in compliance with the approved document and in collaboration with RUNOs, Implementing Partners and the National Steering Committee (NSC);
- Provides strategic support to achieve programme outcomes, consolidates AWP's, budgets and reports;

- Supports the RC to develop a joint resource mobilisation and sustainability strategy;
- Oversees implementation, schedules, deliverables and budgets as articulated in the programme document and liaises with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat when programme revisions are foreseen.

Technical Specialist:

- Ensures overall technical coherence of the programme across pillars and RUNOs;
- Provides strategic thinking, technical advice and innovative approaches to facilitating programme interventions;
- Provides strategic support to achieve programme deliverables;
- Guides the process of delivery of technical assistance and engagement with partners;
- Identifies/monitors risks that could interfere with programme delivery; designs mitigation measures;
- Contributes to the production of consolidated AWP and annual reports;
- Prepares analytical reviews and systematically capture lessons learnt from implementation.

M&E Officer:

- Develops a joint M&E strategy and performance reports for the country programme;
- Monitors and analyse the programme environment and progress through regular monitoring visits;
- Mainstreams key results and analyze and knowledge acquired through ongoing M&E during the life cycle of the programme;
- Provides support to all RUNOs effectively monitor their programme results;
- Based on the M&E information, advises RC, Programme Coordinator, Technical Specialist, Steering Committee and all agencies on timely readjustments of strategies and corrective actions as necessary to ensure programme delivery;
- Works with contracted evaluation agency to facilitate mid-term and final evaluations.

Communication Officer:

- Coordinates the implementation of visibility and outreach activities; plan and implement EU visibility activities;
- Ensures wide dissemination and visibility of programme achievements;
- Manages/evaluates implementation of high impact communications' products (e.g. web, electronic, etc.);
- Engages with RUNOs to facilitate C4D interventions.

Under the principle of “One UN” visibility, all Spotlight Initiative staff are expected to use one.un.org or un.org email addresses and standard email signatures. These are provided by the DCO. Further information may be found in Section 15 on Communications and Visibility of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Standard Operating Procedures

Spotlight Initiative Programme teams are encouraged to develop programme-level joint Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to document workflow, reporting lines, decision-making and coordination procedures. Programmes have found that the process of developing SOPs across RUNOs facilitates collaboration in other areas of work and fosters a sense of internal cohesion, which leads to improved interagency information-sharing, communication and coordination. Programme teams have successfully

exchanged with each other and benefitted from lessons learned regarding the SOP development process. Example SOPs are available for guidance, though SOP products should be tailored to particular Spotlight Initiative teams and regional, national or local contexts.

11. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

About this section

This section presents an overview of the Spotlight Initiative’s civil society engagement.

It covers modalities of meaningful engagement, funding thresholds related to civil society engagement, joint partner selection, Civil Society Reference Group budgets and Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and is based key principles since the inception of the fund on 20 September 2017 with the approval of the first version of the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference.

Further related information may be found in the Guidance Note on the meaningful engagement of Reference Groups, issued in July 2020 ([EN](#), [FR](#), [SP](#)); the [Grassroots Action Plan, issued in December 2019 and updated in April 2020](#); the [Spotlight Initiative-Specific Integrated Protection Approach, issued in November 2019 and updated in November 2020](#); the [Partner Selection example documents and templates, issued in April 2020](#), and the [Guidance Note on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation](#), issued in January 2021.

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets, Section 7 on Spotlight Initiative Annual Work Plans, Section 8 on Budget Revisions and Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Engaging Civil Society

Civil society organizations, in particular women’s rights and feminist organizations, are central stakeholders and partners of the Spotlight Initiative are essential to ending violence against women and girls. In order to advance the SDG principle of national ownership and to achieve sustainable results, one of the key goals of the Spotlight Initiative is to shift the balance of power to national and, in particular, local and grassroots women’s rights and feminist organizations. Civil society is supported through the following mechanisms:

Funding via Grant-giving Programmes:

An additional 10 per cent of the overall financial envelopes for each region has been allocated for **Grant-giving programmes dedicated to supporting CSOs as direct grantees**. The Spotlight Initiative channels grants through the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women in Latin America and Africa, the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund in Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea; and through the regional programmes (outcome 6) in the Caribbean, Central Asia and Pacific. Note that the UN Trust Fund grants are administered directly by the respective trust fund and should not be reflected in the Country/Regional Programme.

Funding via Spotlight Initiative Country and Regional Programmes:

- **Twin-track approach:** CSO support is ensured through a dedicated Outcome to support the women’s movement (Pillar 6) as well as through mainstreamed support across all Outcomes of the Country and Regional Programmes. Specifically, civil society organizations receive funding and support as **implementing partners, vendors and grantees** of RUNOs across all six Outcomes areas of the Country/Regional Programmes to implement activities, provide services or receive grants in

partnership with a RUNO.

- **Funding thresholds can be found in Section 7 on Spotlight Initiative Annual Work Plans and Section 8 on Budget Revisions**
 - A minimum of **10-15%** of Country/Regional Programme funds should be dedicated to Outcome 6 to support the women’s movement; and
 - **30-50%** of the Country/Regional Programme allocation must be delivered by engaging CSOs as Implementing Partners, vendors and grantees across all Outcome Areas. Of this amount, it is recommended that 50-70% is delivered by national, and in particular, by local and grassroots CSOs.

- **Joint Calls for Proposals/Joint Expression of Interest**
 - To streamline the partner selection process, programmes have innovated in joint calls for proposals/joint expression of interests processes to identify and select CSO programme partners. The process allows RUNOs to launch one call for CSO activities across all Outcome Areas. This practice aligns with the UN Development System Reform and aims to lead to greater efficiency and reduced transaction costs for the applicants and RUNOs.
 - To facilitate inclusion of new partners with low or no previous UN experience (particularly at local and grassroots levels), it is recommended that the partner selection process is combined with extensive outreach efforts and capacity building components.
 - Read more in the [Grassroots Action Plan](#). Find a standard Joint Expression of Interest template [here](#), and examples from Spotlight Initiative country programmes [here](#).

- **Civil Society Reference Group (CS-RG) Budgets:** CS-RGs are engaged to advise and guide the implementation of the programme (see Section 9 on Programme Governance).
 - All programmes must include budget lines for the CS-RG in their Annual Work Plan. If not done so yet, at the next occasion, the CS-RG workplan budget should be incorporated into the programme Annual Work Plan (AWP) and Budget, under pillar 6, following the related Secretariat-issued guidance on Spotlight Initiative [AWPs](#) and [Budget revisions](#). In the meantime, the CS-RG workplan budget can be formalized separately to ensure it can be effective without delay.
 - Reminder on Spotlight Initiative Budget revision guidance: All cumulative adjustments to the Programme’s budget that are not reflected in the Annual Work Plan can be formalized post facto (if under 25% of the RUNOs budget) with a budget revision presented to the National/Regional Steering Committee typically at the beginning of the following year.
 - The AWP and Programme budget may include only a simple summary by UNDG category of the CS-RG workplan budget that is detailed in the CS-RG Workplan document (see model in [Annex B](#)).
 - The CS-RG members jointly draft the initial workplan and budget proposal, which is reviewed by the Spotlight Initiative Programme Team through its working level coordination and decision-making process. If required, the final approval may be brought up to the Resident Coordinator.
 - The Spotlight Initiative Programme Team jointly decides on the funding source for the CS-RG workplan budget. If needed, the Resident Coordinator may designate the relevant RUNO

arrangement. The Spotlight Initiative Programme Team and Resident Coordinator may want to propose a budget range or cap.

- The budget covers all costs indicated in the workplan, including travel/transportation to meetings, rent for venues, campaign material, interpretation services, etc.
 - There may be activities in the workplan that do not require a budget allocation.
- **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - Monitoring and Evaluation under the Spotlight Initiative is guided by the principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME), which actively engages local stakeholders and community members as rights holders and agents of change. Further information on PME may be found in Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

12. PROGRAMME OPERATIONALIZATION

About this section

This section presents a summary of how Spotlight Initiative programmes are operationalized after their approval.

It covers the steps to for the initial fund transfer by MPTF Office and the correct application of funds.

This guidance was issued by the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office as the responsible party for issuing fund transfers at the inception of the fund.

Further related information may be found in the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 1 on Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture, Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets, Section 8 on Budget Revisions and Section 13 on Reporting of this Operations Manual Compendium.

GUIDANCE NOTE: Programme Operationalization

Overview

[The Spotlight Initiative](#) (SI) Secretariat and the Spotlight Initiative Administrative Agent (AA-MPTF Office), have elaborated the guidance for the Spotlight Initiative project establishment and reporting processes as described in the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#), [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#), signed between UN and MPTF Office, [MOU](#) and [MOU Addendum for EU contribution](#) signed between the RUNOs and the AA.

As outlined in the MOU and MOU Addendum (see the Legal Framework Summary), each RUNO assumes full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the AA. Project implementation is to be followed by the individual RUNO's internal rules, directives and procedures.

RUNOs are accountable to the Spotlight Initiative for results achieved and are obligated to report on their activities and expenditures in line with the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee (OSC) approved country/regional programme, signed MOU and MOU Addendum.

Steps for the Spotlight Initiative: Programme Operationalization



Operational set-up and description of projects requirements

The Spotlight Initiative projects will become operational after following the required steps below:

Step 1 and 2

- Once the Spotlight Initiative OSC has approved a country/regional programme, the MPTF Office creates a project in the MPTF Office system ([GATEWAY](#)), recording OSC approved allocations. A specific project factsheet webpage is generated in the [GATEWAY](#) and populated using the project cover page (please see the [list of the Spotlight Initiative approved projects](#));

- In order to transfer Spotlight Initiative funds to a RUNO, MPTF Office must have on file countersigned [MOU](#) and [MOU Addendum for EU contribution](#) to the Spotlight Initiative by this RUNO;

Step 3

- Based on the OSC Chair (EOSG) instructions, the AA transfers the initial allocation to each RUNO as specified in the Fund Transfer Request (FTR);

Step 4

- A payment notification is sent to all RUNOs by email once the transfer is processed by the MPTF Office. It includes transferred amount and the [MPTF Office project identification number](#) assigned to each specific Spotlight Initiative project for the entire duration of the Fund;

Step 5

- The Spotlight Initiative funding is transferred by MPTF Office to the HQs' RUNO account. To access Spotlight Initiative funding at the country level, each RUNO is to follow its individual internal rules and procedures, related to the funds application;
- The RUNOs have to establish a Separate Ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the AA from the Spotlight Initiative account. The [MPTF Office project identification number](#) must be referenced in the RUNO's system to ensure correct reporting of expenditure as per reporting guidelines. There must be a one-to-one mapping between the MPTF Office project and the RUNO's project. Please see the list of HQ RUNOs focal points below for any additional clarifications and guidance;

Step 6

- With the purpose of accurate mapping and future expenditure recording/reporting, the RUNOs have to follow UNDG budget cost breakdown of the Spotlight Initiative OSC approved country/regional Programme when establishing a project budget in their ERP system;

Step 7

- All costs must meet "eligibility" criteria under the General Conditions of the EU contract. For the costs to be considered eligible for the Spotlight Initiative funding, they must be directly attributable to the Programme implementation, in accordance with the approved ProDoc, legally incurred within the implementation period ([see the Article 18 of General Conditions for the EU contract](#)). In line with the contractual obligations agreed with the EC, all RUNOs need to ensure a sufficient level of information is provided in the financial reporting as per OSC approved Programme and to assure the eligibility of costs can subsequently be demonstrated during an EU verification mission – the importance of having scrupulous checking by RUNOs is critical;
- In the event of the cumulative expenditure of 70% of Spotlight Initiative received funds per programme (expenditures and commitments combined), programmes may request next instalment by submitting provisional narrative and [financial](#) reports to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and MPTF Office;
- MPTF Office will disburse subsequent installments to all OSC approved Programmes in line with the

EOSG instructions specified in the FTR, subject to the cumulative reported expenditure (see above) and funds availability in the Spotlight Initiative account.

Important Information

- RUNOs are accountable to the Spotlight Initiative for results achieved and are obligated to report on their activities and eligible expenditure in line with the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee (OSC) approved country/regional Programme, signed MOU and MOU Addendum.
- All financial reports must be submitted aligned with the correct [MPTF Office project reference number](#) and follow the OSC Programme approved UNDG budget structure - present expenditure using the same breakdown per lines as set out in the approved Budget (see “Guidance Note on Programme reporting requirements” in Section 13 on Reporting).
- For the purpose of releasing subsequent installments, the AA and Secretariat will assess whether the level of expenditure (‘expense’ and ‘commitments’ combined) is equal to 70% of the amount of the previously provided funds (plus 100% of any earlier ones where applicable). The indirect cost of the Programme cannot exceed 7 % of the approved Programme cost.
- **No local transfer of Spotlight Initiative funds between different RUNOs can be made.**
- **Any budgetary revision or cost extensions must follow the required procedure described in the TOR and related Guidelines** (see Guidance Note on Programme Revision Requirements in Section 8 on Budget Revisions).
- **Any deviations from the OSC approved Programme during its implementation must follow established Spotlight Initiative Programme/Budget revision procedures** (see Guidance Note on Programme Revision Requirements in Section 8 on Budget Revisions).
- Unspent balances at the end of the project are to be refunded by transfer to the MPTF Office Spotlight Initiative account (see Guidance Note on Programme Closure Requirements in Section 17 on Programme Closure).

13. REPORTING

About this section

This section presents a summary of the narrative and financial reporting requirements under which the Spotlight Initiative for all programmes under its portfolio.

It covers both narrative and financial reporting, including standard reporting, provisional reporting for cash replenishment and final reporting.

This guidance is issued by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office as the main custodian of contractual obligations. Complementary guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat on narrative reporting. Financial reporting is directly managed by the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office while narrative reporting is managed by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat.

Further related information may be found in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) and in the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) signed by each RUNO and in [Annex II – General Conditions of the Delegation Agreement](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 1 Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture, Section 12 on Programme Operationalization and Section 14 on Monitoring and Evaluation of this Operations Manual Compendium.

See the “updates to the guidance” at the end of this section for **important additional information**.

GUIDANCE NOTE: Project Reporting Requirements

Overview

[The Spotlight Initiative](#) (SI) Secretariat and the Spotlight Initiative Administrative Agent (AA or MPTF Office), have elaborated the guidance for the Spotlight Initiative project establishment and reporting processes as described in the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#), [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#), signed between UN and MPTF Office, [MOU](#) and [MOU Addendum for EU contribution](#) signed between the RUNOs and the AA.

As outlined in the MOU and MOU Addendum (see the Legal Framework Summary), each RUNO assumes full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to them by the AA. Project implementation is to be followed by the individual RUNO’s internal rules, directives and procedures. RUNOs are accountable to the Spotlight Initiative for results achieved and are obligated to report on their activities and expenditure in line with the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee (OSC) [approved country/regional Programme](#), signed MOU and MOU Addendum.

Reporting Requirements

Once the project is operational, all RUNOs have to comply with the following standard and provisional reporting cycles, all reports are to be provided and consolidated via the Resident Coordinator (except UNEX uploading where a copy should be provided to the RC). **There are 3 types of reports for the Spotlight Initiative Programmes: 1) Standard (thrice-year – Q2; Q3 and annual) reports; 2) provisional reports joint or individual (triggers disbursement of subsequent installments and/or upon OSC**

request); and 3) final joint reports. Please see below Reporting Summary Table.

Standard Reporting

- In line with the MOU Addendum for EU contribution to the Spotlight Initiative ([art. 3.2](#)), provide financial progress reporting twice a year (expenditure as of 30 June; and of 30 September) via AA web-interface reporting tool system UNEX for the financial update and via the Secretariat for the narrative update;
- In line with the MOU signed between RUNOs and the AA ([Sec. IV](#)), the Annual financial report (expenditure as of 31 December) is submitted via UNEX by the 30 of April by RUNOs with respect to the Spotlight Initiative disbursed funds;
- The UNEX submission is to be made by RUNO HQs, by referencing the [MPTF Office project identification](#) and following UNDG budget structure in accordance with the Spotlight Initiative approved country/regional programme;
- In line with the MOU Addendum ([art. 3.7](#)), RUNO HQs will provide the AA with annual [Management Declaration](#);
- Additionally, to the Annual financial report via UNEX, an e-copy of the expenditures reports of RUNO's approved contribution must be submitted to the MPTF Office and Secretariat (please see the [template](#)). This report is to be signed by the RUNO's responsible representative in the country/region;
- Submit joint annual narrative progress reports no later than three months (31 March) after the end of the calendar year to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and MPTF Office focal points, the RC office ensures consolidation and transmission.

Steps for standard reporting schedule

Step 1: All expenditures are recorded in RUNOs' ERPs following the SI approved UNDG budget structure & linked with the MPTF Office project ID.



Step 2: Financial reports include eligible expenditures of the SI funding received.



Step 3: Expenditures reported by RUNOs HQ to MPTF Office thrice-yearly (30 Jun, 30 Sep and 31 Dec) via UNEX.



Step 4: In addition to the Annual UNEX reporting, RUNOs submit an e-copy of the report with expenditures and commitments of RUNO's contribution.



Step 5: RUNOs HQ provide the AA with annual Management Declaration.



Step 6: MPTF Office evaluates submitted reports to become publically available on the GATEWAY.

Provisional Reporting

- In the event where the RUNOs expenditures and commitments combined for a programme reach 70% of the previously provided pre-financing payment (plus 100% of any earlier ones where applicable), the RC may request the next instalment by submitting provisional joint narrative and [financial](#) reports to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and MPTF Office for further decision of the OSC Chair;
- In line with the MOU Addendum for EU contribution to the Spotlight Initiative ([art. 3.3](#)), upon request from the OSC, RUNOs shall provide joint progress reports (both narrative and [financial](#)) to the AA to accompany any requests for release of subsequent EU instalments. Such reports to be provided within a month following the OSC request and should be accompanied by the [Management Declaration](#) (if applicable). The RC office is to consolidate those reports per country.

Final Reporting

- Submit final financial report to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and MPTF Office focal points no later than five months (31 May) after the end of the calendar year in which the financial closure of the approved Programme activities occur;
- Submit final narrative report no later than four months (30 April) after the end of the calendar year to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and MPTF Office focal points;

Steps for provisional reporting

Step 1: Cumulative expenditure of 70% of SI received funds (expenditures and commitments combined) is reached.



Step 2: Reports (narrative and financial, incl. RUNOs contribution) are submitted by RUNOs' COs to MPTF Office and Secretariat



Step 3: MPTF Office and Secretariat evaluate submitted reports for the decision of the OSC Chair.



Step 4: Submitted reports are publically available on the GATEWAY.

Important Information

- RUNOs are accountable to the Spotlight Initiative for results achieved and are obligated to report on their activities and expenditure in line with the Spotlight Initiative Operational Steering Committee approved country/regional Programme;
- With the purpose of accurate mapping and expenditure reporting, all financial reports from RUNOs must be aligned with the correct [MPTF Office project identification number](#) and follow UNDG budget structure of the Spotlight Initiative approved country/regional Programme - present expenditure using the same lines as set out in the approved Budget;
- All costs must meet “eligibility” criteria. For the costs to be considered eligible for the Spotlight Initiative funding (i.e. charged to the EU contribution), they must be legally incurred within the Implementation Period. In line with the contractual obligations agreed with the EC, all RUNOs need to ensure that a sufficient level of information is provided in the financial reporting (as per OSC approved Programme) and to assure the eligibility of costs can subsequently be demonstrated ([see Article 18 of General Conditions for the MPTF Office/EU contract](#));
- All consolidated reports and related documents will be posted and become public on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#);
- **Any deviations from the OSC approved Programme during its implementation must follow the established Spotlight Initiative Programme/Budget revision procedures** (see Guidance Note on Programme Revision Requirements in Section 8 on Budget Revisions);
- **No transfer of Spotlight Initiative funds between different RUNOs can be made. Any budgetary revision or cost extensions must follow the required procedure described in the TOR and related Guidance Note** (see Guidance Note on Programme Revision Requirements in Section 8 on Budget Revisions);
- The MPTF Office will inform additionally RUNOs focal points (HQ and country levels) regarding the actual opening dates for the AA web-interface reporting system UNEX;
- Unspent balances at the end of the project are to be refunded to the MPTF Office Spotlight Initiative account. The transfer notification should be sent to the MPTF Office, no later than six months (30

June) after the end of the calendar year following the completion of the activities;

- The indirect cost of the Programme cannot exceed 7 % of the approved Programme cost.

Reporting Summary Table

Type of Report	Format	Mode /Submitted by	Reporting period (as of)	Submission Date	Joint or RUNO report
Standard	Financial Q2²⁰: UNEX eReport by HQ	<u>UNEX Upload only by RUNO HQ</u>	30-Jun	by 15 August*	RUNO
Standard	Inception Narrative using Secretariat template	Submission to the Secretariat by RC office	30-Jun**	by 31 July**	Joint
Standard	Financial Q3: UNEX eReport by HQ	<u>UNEX Upload only by RUNO HQ</u>	30-Sep	by 15 Nov*	RUNO
Standard Annual	Annual Financial: UNEX eReport by HQ + <u>“Outside UNEX” Report</u>	UNEX Upload + <u>“Outside UNEX” Report</u> with Commitments and RUNO Contribution by RUNO HQ	31-Dec	by 30 April*	RUNO
	Annual Narrative using Secretariat template	Submission to the Secretariat by RC office	31-Dec	by 31 March	Joint
Provisional Reports	Financial: <u>“Outside UNEX” Report</u>	<u>“Outside UNEX” Report</u> with Commitments and RUNO Contribution	On the OSC request or if Programme reaches 70% threshold	Within one month of the OSC request or if Programme reaches 70% threshold	Joint

* MPTF Office will notify RUNOs’ HQs additionally regarding the exact dates of UNEX open/closure

** Inception reports are due 6 months after the start date of the programme, the dates in the table are for a start date of 1 January.

Further information on Narrative Reports

There are four types of narrative reports:

Inception narrative reports

- Cover first 6 months and is applicable to first year programmes only. Provides a snapshot of the programme’s implementation status, and information on, inter alia, governance structures, partnerships, initial results, challenges, and ways forward.
- Consolidated and submitted by the Resident Coordinator.
- Due one month after the first 6 months of implementation.
- Reach out to Secretariat to confirm timeline and template, as these may vary depending on the programme start date.

²⁰ **Mandatory Financial Quarterly reporting:** Following the decision and agreement between the DSG and Heads of Agency, restated between the MPTF Office Executive Director and the Assistant Secretary-Generals of UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF, all RUNOs are requested to submit financial updates including expenditure and commitments within a month of the completion of each quarter including quarter 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Annual narrative reports

- Annual narrative reports are contractually obligated.
- Provides detailed information on the contributions of the programme during the reporting year, as well as on governance structures; partnerships; results; challenges and lessons learned; innovative, promising, or good practices; opportunities for the Spotlight Initiative; communications efforts and ways forward.
- Consolidated and submitted by the Resident Coordinator.
- Cover the calendar year from 1 January-31 December and is due by 31 March of the year following the reporting period (or sooner if so communicated in advance by the Secretariat to allow for quality assurance prior to submission to the EU).
- Reach out to Secretariat to confirm timeline and template, as these may be updated from one year to the next.
 - Feeds into the Spotlight Initiative Global Annual Report, produced by the Secretariat, due 31 May of the year following the reporting period.
 - Contains four annexes (these may be updated by the Secretariat annually as needed):
 - Annex A, produced by the Secretariat on behalf of the programmes, provides detailed reporting against programme indicators, reflecting the information input by programmes in SMART (Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool), the Spotlight Initiative online monitoring and reporting system for indicators, previously known as Jotform;
 - Annex B, the Risk Management Matrix;
 - Annex C, requires detailed information on all financial awards and payments to CSOs. This document is required to monitor commitment of 30-50% Spotlight Initiative funding being delivered through CSOs - as Implementing Partners, Grantees, vendors or other (all operational or programmatic modalities); and
 - Annex D, a template to capture innovative, promising or good practices.

Provisional narrative reports (for tranche payment requests)

- These reports are submitted anytime a Programme reaches 70% delivery (commitment and expenditure, as a weighted average of all RUNOs combined) of the previously transferred amount (and 100% of any transfers prior) in order to request the next payment.
- Depending on the point in time in the programme cycle and how recent the last Programme Annual Report is, the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat will advise on the format for a joint provisional narrative report to accompany the tranche payment request. If the last Annual Report does not cover the relevant reporting period, the Secretariat will request that the programme submit a very brief narrative provisional report to complement the last Annual Report.
- The provisional narrative report should cover implementation status per pillar as well as updates on the programme context, partnerships, challenges, lessons learned, knowledge management and communications.
- Programmes are not required to submit annexes to the provisional narrative report but are welcome to share updated annexes if there have been significant changes since the submission of the last Annual Report.

- The provisional narrative reports accompany a financial report and are presented by the Resident Coordinator on behalf of the respective programme.
- The submission is to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the AA for further decision of the OSC UN Co-Chair. The Secretariat reviews the provisional narrative report and submits brief notes and non-objections as justification for the fund transfer request to the OSC UN Co-Chair.
- Programmes are not required to receive validation from the CSNRG or NSC on the provisional narrative report, but the Secretariat does strongly recommend that the programme share the report for the CSNRG’s feedback and inputs, as well as for transparency. The provisional report should be presented to the NSC for information after approval by the Secretariat.

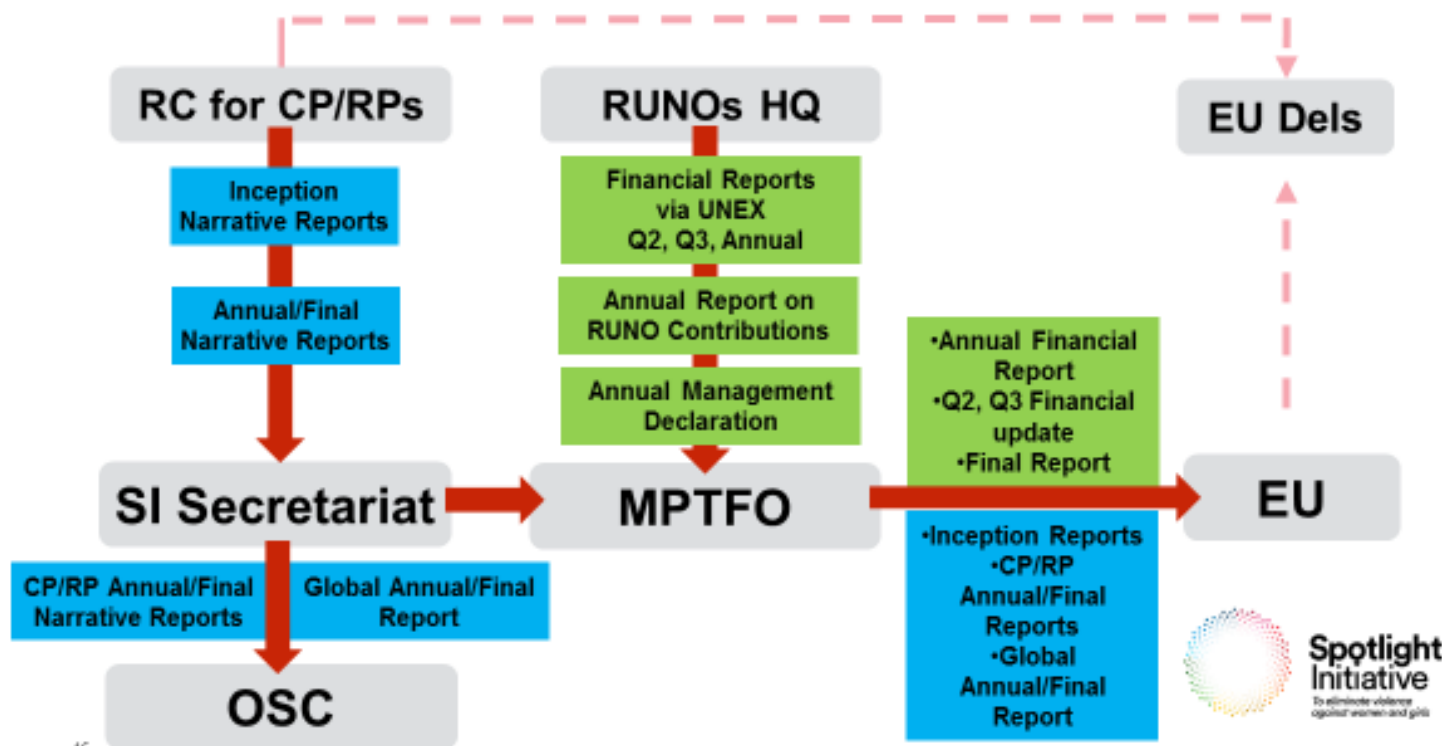
Final narrative reports

- Final narrative report to be endorsed by the Operational Steering Committee resulting in the Operational closure of the Programme. Similar format and guidance as for the annual narrative reports (see above), with a submission deadline of 30 April after the completion year. Note the guidance on narrative reports may be updated in the future.

Reporting Timelines + Submission Modes

	Q2	Q3	Annual	Final	Provisional	Submission Mode
Financial	By 15 Aug	By 15 Nov	By 30 April	By 31 May	Within 30 days of OSC request or if 70% threshold reached.	RUNO HQ uploads to UNEX for MPTFO
Narrative	Inception Report 6 months in		CP/RP by 31 March Global by 31 May	CP/RP by 30 April Global by 30 June	Within 30 days of OSC request or if 70% threshold reached.	RC/RD submits to Secretariat & Secretariat consolidates global report
Management Declaration/ Certified Financial Report			At the time of annual report submission	At the time of final report submission		RUNO HQ submits electronically to MPTFO
RUNO Approved Contributions			At the time of annual report submission	At the time of final report submission		RUNO HQ submits electronically to MPTFO
NOTE: This table complements the “Reporting Summary Table” included earlier in this chapter.						

REPORT FLOW



NOTE: The solid red arrows represent formal submission of reports. The dotted pink arrows represent sharing of reports for information and feedback. CP = Country Programme. RP = Regional Programme.

Reporting roles

The respective roles of various stakeholders in reporting are included below:

- **UN RC:** With the overall oversight/accountability for the Programme, the UN RC endorses and ensures a quality submission to the Secretariat. The UN RC submits narrative reports (as well as provisional financial reports) on behalf of all RUNOs.
- **RUNOs:** Collectively input into the narrative reports and provisional financial reports, with quality assurance support provided by their regional and HQ teams.
- **RUNOs at HQ level:** Provide support and quality assurance to country and regional teams on narrative reporting. RUNOs at HQ level are responsible for all financial reporting (except for provisional financial reports), including uploading financial reports to UNEX.
- **Spotlight Initiative Coordinator:** Together with the Technical Coherence lead, the SC is responsible for quality assurance, coherence and comprehensiveness, ensuring that all the necessary data is included in the narrative report, and data for indicators is provided for the SMART platform (for M&E Officer to input)
- **Secretariat:** Produces reporting templates and provides quality assurance of country/regional narrative reports; and reflects the information presented in country/regional narrative reports into the global annual report (submitted annually to the EU on May 31).
- **MPTF Office:** As the Administrative Agent of the Spotlight Initiative, MPTF Office produces consolidated annual financial reports, financial updates as well as financial provisional reports accompanying funding requests to the EU based on the submission provided by each RUNO's

Headquarters. Consolidated reports are submitted by MPTF Office to the donor, as well as the Governing Body and Operational Steering Committee.

- **National Steering Committee:** Is presented with the annual programme report after approval from the Secretariat.
- **Operational Steering Committee:** Global oversight and decision-making based on reports.
- **EU:** Recipient of narrative and financial reports, including provisional reports for tranche disbursement from the Secretariat. The EU delegation provides comments/feedback on inception and annual narrative reports.
- **Civil Society National Reference Group:** As a key stakeholder, the Civil Society National Reference Group provides feedback on reports. Final versions of narrative reports are to be circulated with the Civil Society National Reference Group.

Updates to the guidance

Mandatory Financial Quarterly reporting: Following the decision and agreement between the DSG and Heads of Agency²¹, restated between the MPTF Office Executive Coordinator and the Assistant Secretary-Generals of UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF²², all RUNOs are requested to submit financial updates including expenditure and commitments within a month of the completion of each quarter.

Adjustments to timelines: The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat may adjust narrative reporting timelines to ensure a timely submission of global compiled narrative reports and meet contractual deadlines with the European Union. These adjustments would be communicated with advance notice to allow programmes to meet those deadlines.

Adjustments to narrative reporting templates: The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat may adjust narrative reporting templates from cycle to cycle in order to incorporate emerging information needs, including from the European Union, and learning based on previous reporting exercises. These adjustments would be communicated with advance notice to allow programmes to adapt their reporting process.

Safe and Fair: This programme reports to the Spotlight Initiative following the same requirements of all other programmes based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the respective RUNOs involved, Memorandum of Understanding Addendum and all further adjustments as per OSC decisions noted in this Operations Manual Compendium.

Grant-giving programmes: These programmes report to the Spotlight Initiative following the same requirements of all other programmes based on the Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Understanding Addendum and all further adjustments as per OSC decisions noted in this Operations Manual Compendium signed by the respective UN Agency administering the Civil Society granting Funds implementing these Spotlight Initiative Programmes.

²¹ 24 July 2019 meeting notes: “The DSG requested all Spotlight Initiative UN Agencies to report financially on the quarterly basis to promote full transparency of Spotlight Initiative operations.”

²² 27 September 2020 meeting notes: “MPTF Office will request agencies to report quarterly, to allow the Secretariat to maintain quarterly financial dashboards to share figures with the Deputy Secretary-General to inform future Heads of Agency meetings.”

14. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

About this section

This section presents an overview of Monitoring & Evaluation Operations under the Spotlight Initiative, as well as the corresponding allocations in programme budgets.

It covers general principles, participatory monitoring & evaluation, programme budget allocations, the SMART platform, monitoring roles and plans and evaluation roles, practices and cycles.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of Spotlight Initiative programmes, except for the Guidance Note on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, which was issued in January 2021.

The following are recommended for further guidance:

- The Monitoring & Evaluation guidance package is available [here](#).
- SMART Platform Training and SMART Platform Tutorial video is available [here](#) and the PPT version is [here](#).
- Methodological notes are available [here](#).
- Global Results Framework and Country-level frameworks are available [here](#).
- The Guidance Note on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation is available [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets, Section 8 on Budget Revisions, Section 11 on Civil Society Engagement and Section 13 on Reporting of this Operations Manual Compendium.

General Principles

By generating timely, accurate and reliable data, M&E is a key component of and aims to contribute to a robust results-based management (RBM) system, ensuring that the right decisions are taken at the right time to strengthen programming and achieve results. More specifically, M&E aims to ensure programmes are:

1. Relevant to and aligned with (varied) national and local needs.
2. Implemented according to plan and contributing to defined result(s).
3. Sustainably managed and owned by communities (to ensure benefits of the Spotlight Initiative's contribution continue once programming ends).
4. Monitored to identify unintended effects, challenges, or bottlenecks early on (facilitating course correction).

Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation

As the Spotlight Initiative implements its M&E activities, a participatory approach is strongly encouraged. Participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) is an inclusive process whereby a wide range of local stakeholders and community members are actively engaged in the monitoring and evaluation phases of a programme. PME is critical to the realization of the Spotlight Initiative's goals and is fully aligned with the principles of Leaving No One Behind. For example, participatory M&E centers stakeholder involvement in M&E processes, particularly the meaningful engagement of rights holders and communities

("beneficiaries" of Spotlight Initiative programming). Through PME, primary stakeholders are seen as rights holders and agents of change, with their knowledge, experience and expertise acknowledged: participants share control over the content, the process and the results of the monitoring and evaluation activity observe, document and analyze changes at the community-level; and actively contribute to decision-making processes. PME shifts the practice of monitoring from one of "policing" to one of mutual engagement and learning. PME reflects a rights-based approach to programming, monitoring and evaluation – where a plurality of knowledge is valued, and mutually reciprocal (rather than extractive) relationships are forged. Data disaggregation is prioritized, to ensure those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination are reached and engaged (in both M&E processes, and by programming interventions).

More specifically, PME espouses the following:

- Meaningful participatory monitoring and evaluation of Spotlight Initiative's programme results is critical to ensure a comprehensive and balanced approach to programming - an approach that is set not only by the UN, but jointly established with local partners and community members who are primary stakeholders, rights holders and agents of change.
- The active involvement of stakeholders from the onset is crucial to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of results and to forge a deepened and improved understanding of specific contexts (and attendant attitudes, skills and behaviors), monitor changes over time, and adapt programmatic interventions to address the needs of individuals and communities.

It's the Spotlight Initiative's hope that monitoring, reporting and evaluation exercises are conceptualized and implemented accordingly (i.e. in line with the upcoming PME guidance, to the greatest extent possible). Toward this end, the Secretariat has developed a PME guidance note. The guidance defines PME, discusses its key principles and objectives, and offers practical steps to implement PME at local level providing examples and best practices. For more information on this, please review the PME guidance (to be finalized in early 2021).

M&E within the Programme Budget

It is strongly recommended that a minimum of 4% of the programme Phase I budget be budgeted for monitoring and evaluation activities, including a minimum of 2% for monitoring and 1% each for the mid-term evaluation and thematic/periodic evaluations (managed at HQ level). More details on budgeting for monitoring and evaluation can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets and Section 8 on Budget Revisions.

The Spotlight Initiative Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART)

The SMART Platform enables Country Programmes, Regional Programmes, RUNOs and the Secretariat to provide a full picture of Spotlight Initiative and tell a compelling story of the work and achievements of the Spotlight Initiative.

- Roles and Responsibilities for data entry using the SMART platform:
 - The Spotlight Initiative country M&E Focal Point/Officer is responsible for facilitating the reporting of baseline, milestones and targets on the SMART platform. He/She either directly enters the data or ensures that individual RUNOs fill in the forms for each individual pillar.
 - Once all the data is entered, the Secretariat reviews the data and provides feedback to the country M&E Focal Point/Officer, as quality assurance.

- Once this is done, the Secretariat asks the Country Team to confirm, in writing, that this data is endorsed by the Resident Coordinator. This is a way to confirm that all data entered is validated at country level.

Monitoring Roles

The respective roles of various stakeholders in monitoring are included below:

- **M&E Focal Point/Officer:** The Resident Coordinator designates an M&E Focal Point/Officer for each programme. This individual can be located within the Resident Coordinator Office or within a designated RUNO. S/He is responsible for supporting RUNOs in the design and implementation of the M&E plan, in line with the Spotlight Initiative’s guidelines and in coordination with M&E Officers across Spotlight Initiative’s partners (including government, UN, EU, Civil Society). M&E Focal Points also work closely with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat’s M&E colleagues in uploading their results framework (baseline, milestones and targets), and subsequent reporting, in the SMART platform (the Spotlight Initiative monitoring and reporting online reporting system).
- **RUNOs:** Under the oversight of the Country Representatives and through the designated M&E Focal Point/Officer for each programme, RUNOs design and carry out the country or regional programme’s monitoring plan. RUNOs are responsible for implementing programmes of high technical quality and for delivering results as per the approved programme documents and annual workplans, using the monitoring plan, results framework, and the SMART platform as tools for results-based management.
- **The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat (HQ):** The Spotlight Initiative’s Secretariat provides support and advice to country and regional programme teams in 1) the development and review (quality assurance) of their results frameworks, 2) the data input into the SMART platform and 3) any other activities included in their respective M&E plans. The Secretariat is responsible for managing fund wide reporting against the global monitoring/results framework and consolidating data from country and regional programmes to produce a global aggregate snapshot of Spotlight’s contributions. The Secretariat also provides technical assistance to programme teams and assures adherence to quality standards in M&E and reporting writ large.
- **UN Resident Coordinator:** The UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) oversees the overall M&E function and M&E focal point or Officer at programme level and is responsible for the final check/ quality assurance of monitoring and reporting data shared (communicating any potential bottlenecks related to monitoring to the Secretariat). The UN Resident Coordinator, in the role of Co-Chair of the National Steering Committee, is also responsible for sharing key monitoring (and reporting) updates, and facilitating the political aspects of monitoring, including dimensions related to progress achieved, oversight and decision-making.

Monitoring Plans

- There are three monitoring levels: **output, outcome, and impact monitoring.**
 - Monitoring against outputs and outcomes entails monitoring shifts in, for example, laws and policies, capacity and knowledge, and accessibility of services. Impact monitoring entails monitoring progress against SDG indicators and targets. As noted, while shifts in levels of violence against women and are often non-linear and take significant time, the Spotlight Initiative aims to monitor (and report) at the highest level of the results chain; outcome and impact monitoring is therefore given special attention.
 - Data disaggregation should be prioritized across outputs and outcomes, to ensure that the programme is able to track who is being reached, and importantly, groups that may be left

out. The Spotlight Initiative endeavors for data to be disaggregated at a minimum by age and sex and, in time, by income, ethnicity, disability, geographic location. Data disaggregation is also pursued for other characteristics relevant in national contexts over the lifespan of the country programmes. “Other status” or characteristics include discrimination on the basis of age (with attention to youth and older persons), nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status (including HIV), place of residence, economic and social situation, and civil, political or other status.

- The Global Results Framework and [Country-Level Results Framework](#) help shape the monitoring plans. The [Country-Level Results Framework](#) should be thought of as a “menu” to select from, and no changes to the indicator language should be made.
 - Exceptionally, more flexibility is granted to Regional Programmes, who can develop some specific/custom indicators to reflect the specific work undertaken at regional level.
 - All other programmes utilize fixed indicators.
- Methodological Notes for Outcome Indicators as well as Methodological Notes for Output Indicators are available for each pillar, to guide programmes in their monitoring and evaluation plans.
 - These cover all 90 indicators as well as their methodology for consolidation and disaggregation by age, sex and when possible “Leaving No One Behind” categories. They also cover instructions on data entry requirements for the SMART platform.

Monitoring Civil Society Engagement

As one of the primary stakeholders of the Spotlight Initiative, it is vital that civil society partners have the opportunity and support to independently monitor, evaluate and report on Spotlight Initiative’s processes and implementation. It is therefore strongly recommended to adequately plan and budget for monitoring activities and shadow reporting in the CS-RG’s workplan. Reference Groups have developed a monitoring toolkit that captures the achievements and challenges of Spotlight Initiative’s engagement with civil society at the national, regional and global levels. The tool reports against tailored quantitative and qualitative indicators and is envisioned to produce an annual civil society shadow report/report card.

Mid-Term Assessment

The Mid-term Assessments (MTA) are commissioned by the Operational Steering Committee upon reaching the 70% disbursement threshold for the first phase, as stated in the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference. They are designed as an independent review to provide a brief snapshot on the implementation of Spotlight Initiative’s interventions at a given moment. The MTA serves as an opportunity to assess the performance of the programme upon reaching the end of Phase I, improve its management, contribute to identifying lessons-learned, and test the Spotlight Initiative’s structures, new ways of working, theory of change, and coordination mechanisms. A main purpose of this assessment is to provide critical information that will guide the Operational Steering Committee’s decision on the allocation of Phase II funding (the remaining 30% that was initially planned but remains subject to performance) and/or reallocation.

As per recommendation from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and in line with EU practice, Mid-term Assessment of performance is conducted according to the principles of “Results-Oriented monitoring” (ROM). [ROM](#) aims at enhancing accountability and management capacities with a strong focus on results, and supports decision makers by providing an external, independent review of implementation. ROM assesses programming across 4 criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

The Mid-term Assessment are conducted in three stages:

- **Desk Review:** A preparatory desk review is performed based on the programmes' results frameworks, budgets, planning of activities, and progress reports by implementing partners. This phase also includes the development of the MTA workplan, identification of issues to be addressed during fieldwork, and the development of a stakeholder map (the basis for identifying individuals to interview).
- **Field Work:** ROM experts conduct field missions with the aim of ascertaining credible information on progress toward achieving outputs and outcomes (results), as well as their quality and sustainability. During these missions, experts interview a range of stakeholders, using a standard set of monitoring questions to structure the analysis of primary and secondary data. Parties interviewed are expected to include rights holders/agents of change (beneficiaries), civil society organizations and local and national authorities, among other key stakeholders involved in or impacted by the implementation of the programme. The purpose of all interviews is to obtain key stakeholders' reactions and suggestions which can confirm, refute or complete information already gathered on the project by the desk review.
- **Reporting:** At the end of each mission, the ROM experts produce an individual Mid-term Assessment report for each country and regional programme, which includes recommendations for improved programme implementation. Additionally, one global and three regional Meta-Analysis reports are also produced. The first regional meta-analysis covers Africa and Latin America; the second includes Central Asia, Pacific and Caribbean; and the third covers all regional programmes. The Meta-Analyses assess cross-cutting issues, level of progress, and provide recommendations for the Spotlight Initiative globally and across regions.

Evaluation Roles

The respective roles of various stakeholders in evaluation are included below:

- **M&E Focal Point/Officer:** The Resident Coordinator designates an M&E Focal Point/Officer for each programme. This individual can be located within the Resident Coordinator Office or within a designated RUNO. S/He, in coordination with M&E Officers in all participating entities (Government, UN, EU, Civil Society), is responsible for supporting the implementation of the mid-term assessment, final/end-line evaluation, and thematic assessment in direct collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, including by facilitating the work of the Evaluation Entity contracted to conduct the assessment or evaluation.
- **Spotlight Initiative Secretariat:** The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat designs and supports the implementation of the M&E strategy. It also drafts terms of reference for all evaluations/assessments conducted at global level, as well as contracts and oversees the Evaluation Entity. Additionally, the Secretariat is responsible for following up on evaluation recommendations, ensuring that they are implemented across the Spotlight Initiative and corrective actions are taken, as necessary.
- **Evaluation Entity:** The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat identifies an entity (or entities) to conduct the Spotlight Initiative mid-term and final/end-line evaluation, as well as the thematic assessment.
- **UN Resident Coordinator:** The UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC), in the role of Co-Chair of the National Steering Committee, facilitates the political aspects of a Spotlight Initiative evaluation exercise and overall coordination at country level. For Regional Programmes the UN Co-Chair of the Regional Steering Committee fulfils the UNRC's role. S/He also oversees the M&E Focal Point/Officer's work on evaluation and can call the attention of the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat, as needed or relevant on any evaluation related matters.

Evaluation Practices

A key component of RBM alongside monitoring and reporting, evaluations examine the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of interventions/support provided. In so doing, evaluation contributes to learning, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making.

Evaluations offer the opportunity to test the theory of change underpinning a programme, as well. By testing its assumptions, and analyzing the drivers of change, an evaluation can surface what works, what does not and, importantly, why, allowing a programme to change course if needed to accelerate progress toward its intended results.

By providing credible, reliable, and useful findings, recommendations and lessons, evaluation demonstrates accountability, generates knowledge and learning, and informs the Spotlight Initiative’s decision-making and programming (including its strategic direction, gaps, and opportunities for the Spotlight Initiative’s work on EVAWG (and the evidence base more broadly) going forward).

The Spotlight Initiative conducts evaluations and assessments that are gender and human rights responsive, in line with United Nations Evaluation Group guidance on ["Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations"](#) and UNEG's Handbook ["Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation: Towards UNEG Guidance"](#). Gender and human rights responsive evaluation (aligned with a participatory approach to M&E) ensures that evaluation - both in its conduct and its outcomes - contributes to the fulfillment of human rights (and, critically, does not reproduce discrimination or exclusion).

Evaluation Cycles

MTA	Final Eval	Thematic Eval
<p>“Results-oriented” monitoring methodology (EU), assessing the continued relevance of interventions and progress</p>	<p>Analyze level of achievement of results examining following criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.</p>	<p>demonstrate qualitative impact in areas unlikely to show immediate quantitative changes + generate knowledge on Spotlight Principles</p>
<p>At the end of Phase I</p>	<p>At the end of Phase II</p>	<p>Throughout</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on progress • Opportunity to address issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform OSC on Phase II • Lessons for and promising practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • credible, evidence-based information on achievements • Analysis of results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality • Key lessons-learned and good practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study “innovative and transformative approaches” • knowledge on: focus on Prevention and Social Norms Change, LNOB principle, a new way of partnering with CSOs, and other.

15. COMMUNICATIONS AND VISIBILITY

About this section

This section presents an overview of Communications and Visibility under the Spotlight Initiative.

It covers key guidance, standard email addresses and signatures and frequently asked questions.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of Spotlight Initiative Programmes.

Further related information may be found in the communications and visibility guidance package [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets and Section 8 on Budget Revisions of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Overview

All Spotlight Initiative communications and visibility activities at global, regional and country levels are centered around four mutually reinforcing objectives:

- Raise global awareness to end violence against women and girls
- Illustrate and promote stories of impact
- Shift global attitudes and norms
- Ensure visibility for the Spotlight Initiative and its partners

Key Guidance on Communications and Visibility

The following are recommended for further guidance:

- 1. Communications and Visibility Guide:** The Spotlight Initiative Communications and Visibility Guide has been developed by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to empower global, regional and country-level communications officers and focal points with the tools necessary for a credible and consistent flow of information about the Spotlight Initiative, its partners — and most importantly — its impact on eliminating violence against women and girls. [\[link\]](#)
- 2. Brand Guidelines:** This Guide establishes the Spotlight Initiative’s brand identity and provides guidelines for designers and communicators working with the brand. [\[link\]](#)
- 3. Event Planning Guidelines:** The Event Planning Guidelines have been developed to help the Spotlight Initiative country and regional event focal points organize high-quality events and launches that support the Spotlight Initiative’s overall communications and visibility objectives. The Guidelines set out minimum standards for each national and regional programme to consider before organizing an event, including the guiding principles, objectives, activities and outputs expected from every Spotlight Initiative-related event. [\[EN | FR | SP\]](#).
- 4. Guidelines for Social Media:** This document gives tips and tool and outlines the Spotlight Initiative’s social media objectives, which are to; increase engagement with Spotlight Initiative content on social media; grow social media audiences on owned channels; promote stories, programmes and events

that position the Spotlight Initiative and its partners as credible and visible actors in ending violence against women and girls. [\[link\]](#)

5. **Web-writing Guidelines:** The Spotlight Initiative Web-writing Guidelines have been developed by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to provide the editorial direction to communications focal points responsible for providing stories and content to the website. The Guide outlines the content, anatomy and style of the stories to be posted on the website and provides samples and tools to guide writers. [\[link\]](#)
6. **Guidelines on UN System Photos Use:** The consistent use of photographs plays a crucial role in the Spotlight Initiative’s identity. The right photographs can instantly communicate our work and values, goals and mission. This guidance has been adapted by the Secretariat to provide information on the appropriate purchase, distribution and copyright for photography. [\[link\]](#)
7. **Global Messages:** This document is a living catalogue of messages and data points to inform the development of talking points and public statements about the Spotlight Initiative. They are updated by the Secretariat. [\[link\]](#)

Standard Email Addresses and Signatures

As agreed between the Deputy Secretary-General and the Heads of Agencies at a meeting on 24 July 2019, all personnel working under the Spotlight Initiative, regardless of the percentage of time spent working on the Spotlight Initiative and regardless of funding source (i.e. EU funding or agency contributions), are expected to use a un.org email address for all external communications. This decision is in keeping with the concept of One UN visibility. Programmes may request support from their local IT teams to set up their un.org email addresses. Personnel are only expected to use a un.org address (or one.un.org addresses as well where those still apply). These addresses are issued by the DCO.

Additionally, all staff working on the Spotlight Initiative are expected to use a standard signature format with their name, role, and contact information. This signature should not include an agency logo, as the Spotlight Initiative brand should not be combined with any other logos or branding elements, including logos of UN agencies or EU delegations. Instructions on how to set up this signature may be found [here](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Q. How much should be budgeted for communications activities?

A: There is a 2% required minimum Communications allocation in the programme budget, which is derived from the Total Direct Programme Cost. This is not part of the 18% limit of PMC cost, but is counted in the Expanded PMC / Additional Items for PMC section. This 2% is earmarked for communications, outreach and visibility activities, including dedicated communications staff. It does not include C4D (Communication for Development). The Secretariat requests that communications officers develop an annual communications plan, complete with budget, to guide implementation. Further details can be found in the Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets and Section 8 on Budget Revisions.

2. Q. Should we use the European Union’s branding requirements for Spotlight Initiative?

A: No. Spotlight Initiative has its own distinct branding. The Spotlight Initiative brand identity was jointly developed by the United Nations and the European Union. The Spotlight Initiative brand conforms with UN and EU branding and visibility policies.

3. Q. Can the logos of other UN agencies or EU delegations appear with the Spotlight Initiative logo?

A: No. The Spotlight Initiative logo may not be combined with the individual logos of other UN agencies, funds and programmes, or EU entities, missions and delegations (See [Brand Guidelines](#)).

4. Q. Does the Secretariat need to clear national/regional programme visibility materials?

A: No. Clearance of national visibility materials is the responsibility of the Resident Coordinators Office in consultation with the national communications group - which should include RUNOs and the EU Delegation. The exception to this rule is the use of logos for co-branding, which should be approved by the Secretariat.

5. Q. Can national/regional teams create their own websites or social media accounts?

A: No. The Spotlight Initiative's web presence is centralized under one website. Please do not create any other regional or country Spotlight Initiative websites. In close consultation with the Secretariat, regional and country-level communications focal points may determine which social media platforms to use based on their local contexts and capacity. Teams are strongly advised to use existing social media channels of the RCO, UNICs or RUNOs as they may have established audiences.

6. Q. How many stories do national/regional teams have to send to HQ?

A: Each Spotlight Initiative team is expected to submit a minimum of five human interest stories per calendar year [using this platform](#).

16. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

About this section

This section presents an overview of the Spotlight Initiative’s Knowledge Management strategy.

It covers guiding principles, key knowledge management activities at all levels, budget allocations, knowledge management focal points and workplans, the Spotlight Initiative Community of Practice and additional resources.

This guidance is issued by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat as of the inception of Spotlight Initiative Programmes.

Further related information may be found on the [COSI Extranet](#) and in the knowledge management guidance package [here](#).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets of this Operations Manual Compendium.

Overview

The Spotlight Initiative Knowledge Management Strategies at global, regional, and country levels aim to cultivate, document, analyze and disseminate knowledge, lessons learned, and innovations generated from the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative. The strategies aim to: (i) capture knowledge and innovation to support EVAWG advancement, improve Spotlight Initiative results and sustainability, and for further analysis and documentation on EVAWG programming; (ii) share and disseminate knowledge to inform effective EVAWG programming and policy interventions and (iii) ensure uptake of the knowledge shared, displayed through changes in programming and policies, and ultimately in the lives of women and girls.

Guiding Principles

The Knowledge Management Strategy includes five Guiding Principles:

1. In order to drive transformative change, knowledge management must be a **central and integrated activity** at all programme levels. This is critical for identifying lessons learned and good practices, fostering innovation, and facilitating knowledge generation to continuously improve the quality of technical programming and advance the field of EVAWG.
2. Knowledge management activities and products must be **contextually varied** and customized to target different audiences and stakeholders, and to best serve women and girls with various lived realities at global, regional, and country levels.
3. Effective knowledge management **demonstrates** to the public that a significant, concerted and comprehensive investment in ending violence against women and girls and gender equality can make a transformative difference in the lives of women and girls, as well as contribute to the achievement of all the SDGs.
4. **Partnerships** should be promoted to engage in circular processes of learning, valuing practice-based knowledge by EVAWG partners as well as sharing knowledge generated through the Spotlight Initiative. Partnerships at all levels, including local, national, regional, and international – are encouraged to engage key stakeholders and the global public in developing solutions.

5. Spotlight Initiative recognizes the wealth of knowledge generated by the women’s movement in the field of EVAWG. **Collaboration with CSOs** enables access, dissemination and sharing of knowledge on EVAWG, ensuring the work of the Spotlight Initiative is directly informed and shaped by civil society at the forefront of efforts to EVAWG.

Key Global, Regional & Country-level Knowledge Management Activities

It is recommended that the Spotlight Initiative Knowledge Management Workplan be completed by the Knowledge Management Focal Point, in line with country/regional annual work planning in order to fully integrate knowledge management at all country/regional programme levels.

Knowledge Management activities are based upon three focus areas: (i) knowledge generation, learning and innovation; (ii) knowledge sharing and dissemination; and (iii) uptake and capacity development. Knowledge Management activities may include:

- Capturing and documenting knowledge generated from Spotlight Initiative programme implementation, including good practices and lessons learned at the global, regional, and country levels.
- Developing practical, technical guidance to build the capacities of Spotlight Initiative teams to deliver comprehensively and efficiently during implementation.
- Conducting regular analysis, reflection and learning sessions on various aspects of implementation, such as on each of the six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change and where a knowledge/technical gap has been identified.
- Setting up relevant communities of practice across diverse stakeholders to support various aspects of programming and strengthen the Spotlight Initiative community.
- Regularly contribute to the various platforms of the Community of the Spotlight Initiative (COSI) and global Knowledge Management Focal Points Network to strengthen knowledge management integration throughout implementation.
- Undertaking needs assessments to determine existing knowledge gaps and develop capacity development initiatives and knowledge production plans that address these gaps.
- Assisting the set-up of knowledge platforms in-country, regionally and globally.
- Organizing south-south/north-south exchanges.
- Establishing and strengthening partnerships with research institutions, universities, CSOs and other stakeholders to foster knowledge management on EVAWG.

Knowledge Management within the Programme Budget

It is strongly recommended to budget sufficient resources for Knowledge Management and Capacity Development activities (around 1% is a good practice). In addition, as part of programme implementation, knowledge production, dissemination, and sharing of good practices/lessons learned is envisioned under the six pillars of each country/regional programme. Further details can be found in Section 6 on Spotlight Initiative Programme Budgets.

Knowledge Management Focal Point and Work Plan

Programmes are required to designate a Knowledge Management Focal Point. It is recommended that a Country/Regional Knowledge Management Workplan be developed and that the Knowledge Management Focal Point oversees and ensures implementation of this workplan. It is recommended that Coordinators and Programme/Technical officers work closely with Focal Points to ensure that knowledge management is integrated into programme implementation at all levels.

It is recommended that the Spotlight Initiative **Knowledge Management Workplan** be completed by the Spotlight Initiative programme Knowledge Management Focal Point at the beginning of every year or bi-annually.

Further Guidance on Knowledge Management

The following are recommended for further guidance:

- **[Global Knowledge Management Strategy and Workplan](#)**: The Spotlight Initiative Global Knowledge Management Strategy guides all Knowledge Management initiatives and aims to analyze, cultivate, document, and disseminate knowledge, lessons learned and innovations generated from implementation of the Spotlight Initiative to serve as a knowledge platform on EVAWG. Regional and Country-level Knowledge Management Strategies and Workplans are based off the Global Strategy.
- **[Guidance and Template – Knowledge Management Workplan](#)**: Each Regional/Country programme is highly encouraged to develop a Knowledge Management workplan with a budget in line with the country programme document, as well as the Knowledge Management and Monitoring & Evaluation Country and Global strategies. The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat has developed this guidance and template that provides key sample activities that can be undertaken as part of the Regional/Country Knowledge Management Workplan.
- **[Innovative, Promising and Good Practices Guidance and Reporting template](#)**: This brief guidance and template was developed to ensure a common understanding of “Innovative, Promising and/or Good Practices”, providing a set of criteria and a template for documentation and reporting. It is critical that these practices are documented and shared widely for uptake and continuous improvement to contribute to the evidence base and for the elimination of violence against women and girls.
- **[Knowledge Product Guidelines](#)**: This guideline developed by the Spotlight initiative Secretariat aims to create a common understanding of how to analyze and produce knowledge under the Spotlight Initiative; facilitate the capture of critical lessons learned; and to support the production and dissemination of relevant, accurate and impactful knowledge. These guidelines also serve to ensure quality assurance and consistency across Knowledge Products under the Spotlight Initiative. The guidelines include annexes to determine the level of peer review and Knowledge Product typology and provides a checklist and Knowledge Product template.
- **[Spotlight Initiative Knowledge Management Officer TOR](#)**: This sample Terms of Reference provides guidance to support Spotlight Initiative teams with recruiting a Knowledge Management Officer for their programme. This TOR can be adapted depending on the specific contexts of each Regional/Country Programme.

Community of Practice and Knowledge Exchange

- **[Community of the Spotlight Initiative \(COSI\)](#)**: This platform created by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat is the global community of practice involving all UN colleagues involved in day-to-day implementation of Spotlight Initiative programmes. COSI’s critical function is to foster a dynamic global Spotlight Initiative community and encourage the exchange of knowledge as insights emerge throughout the Spotlight Initiative’s programming cycle so knowledge captured or generated in one country can advise and strengthen all Spotlight Initiatives programmes globally.
 - The **[COSI Extranet](#)** is a one-stop-shop for all of COSI’s virtual spaces that are available for regular use to accelerate and improve the quality of programming in the Spotlight Initiative.
 - **[Virtual Library](#)**: The Virtual Library is used to upload, store and disseminate relevant country and regional documents. Each regional/country programme is responsible for managing and

ensuring their country/regional programme folder stays up-to-date and is continuously populated. Additionally, all guidance and materials produced by the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat can be found in the Virtual Library.

- **COSI Email Group:** The COSI Email Group (community@spotlightinitiative.org) is a space created to facilitate learning and exchange. This platform provides a space for Spotlight Initiative UN teams to share resources and tools on EVAWG and all elements of Spotlight Initiative programming, information on learning opportunities, challenges and successes at the country and regional levels, and to ask any questions related to the Spotlight Initiative and EVAWG programming.
- **COSI Calendar:** The COSI Calendar is available to view upcoming global, regional, and country events, activities or learning opportunities and any other activities occurring in each programme.

17. PROGRAMME CLOSURE

About this section

This section presents a summary of the programme closure requirements for the Spotlight Initiative.

It covers the operational closure steps, financial closure steps, notification of closure and bank details.

This guidance was issued by the Multi Partner Trust Fund Office as the main custodian of contractual obligations at the inception of the Spotlight Initiative Fund.

Further related information may be found in the foundational Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference](#) (also referred to as Annex I – Description of the action in the contract with the EU).

Further information related to the section can be found in Section 1 on Global Legal Framework and Governance Architecture and Section 13 on Reporting of this Operations Manual Compendium.

See the “updates to the guidance” at the end of this section for **important additional information**.

The Spotlight Initiative Programme closure requirements

Overview

[The Spotlight Initiative](#) (SI) Secretariat and the Spotlight Initiative Administrative Agent (AA-MPTF Office), have elaborated the guidance for the Spotlight Initiative Programme closure processes as described in the Spotlight Initiative [Terms of Reference \(TOR\)](#), [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#), signed between UN and MPTF Office, [MOU](#) and [MOU Addendum for EU contribution](#) signed between the RUNOs) and the AA.

Procedures for the Project closure follow the individual RUNO's own internal rules and regulations. As outlined in the MOU, each RUNO determines when it has completed all approved activities within the timeframe approved by the Operational Steering Committee specified in the project document cover page. RC country office needs to communicate the completion of all approved Programme activities by submission of final narrative report to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the AA, and followed by RUNOs submission of the Certified Final Financial Statement, final financial Report and [Management Declaration](#) to the AA.

The MOU indicates that final narrative reports be submitted to the AA by 30 April of the year following financial closing of the project. The Certified Final Financial Statement, final financial Report and [Management Declaration](#) are to be provided to the AA by 30 June of the same year.

The closure of individual projects within the approved implementation timeline facilitates the efficient MPTF Office Programme closure within the specified End Date established by the Operational Steering Committee. Further, the timely closure of Programmes allows for re-allocation or reimbursement to donors of unspent funds and interest, in accordance with the Spotlight Initiative Terms of Reference and upon OSC decision.

Operational Closure Steps

For Programmes to be accepted as 'Operationally Closed" the following steps need to be complied with:

- RC office/RUNOs inform the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat and the AA that Programme have been operationally closed;
- RUNOs via RC office submit the final End of Project Narrative Report to the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat to be endorsed by the OSC and the MPTF Office for posting on the [Spotlight Initiative GATEWAY page](#).
- Upon Spotlight Initiative Secretariat's confirmation, the MPTF Office proceed with the Programme Operational closure in the MPTF Office system.

Financial Closure Steps

For projects to be accepted as "Financially Closed" the following steps need to be complied with:

1. RUNO submits Certified Final Financial Statement and final financial Report ([template link](#)) for each Country Programme separately (please see the [list of the Spotlight Initiative approved projects](#)).
2. In addition to expenditure on Spotlight Initiative funds received, the final financial Report for each Country Programme must include final expenditure of RUNOs' contribution.

3. All expenditure reports must provide a breakdown by UNDG categories in accordance with the approved UNDG breakdown budget for the Country Programme.
4. RUNO refunds any Unspent Balance and sends notification to the MPTF Office to enable the MPTF Office to identify the refund (see notification instructions below).
5. RUNO transfers the interest for prior and current year, if any, to the MPTF Office Bank Account and sends notification to the MPTF Office to identify the interest (see notification instructions below). If the RUNO's regulations do not require the transfer of interest, this should be indicated by marking the box on the Certified Final Financial Statement and Report.
6. No expenditure in excess of funds transferred should be reported on Certified Final Financial Statement and Report submitted to the MPTF Office.
7. The indirect cost should not exceed the approved percentage of project cost (7%).
8. Upon review, the MPTF Office proceed with the Programme Financial closure in the MPTF Office system and will notify RUNO accordingly that all financial procedures are satisfied.

Notification of Closure

Notification for all transfer of interest earnings and refunds of unutilized funds, including reference to the nature of the refund, amount of refund and project number, should be sent to the following individuals at the MPTF Office: louise.moretta@undp.org, Aamir.maqsood@undp.org; and the relevant portfolio manager ([link to contact list](#)). Proper notification will ensure the funds are applied in a timely manner.

Bank Details

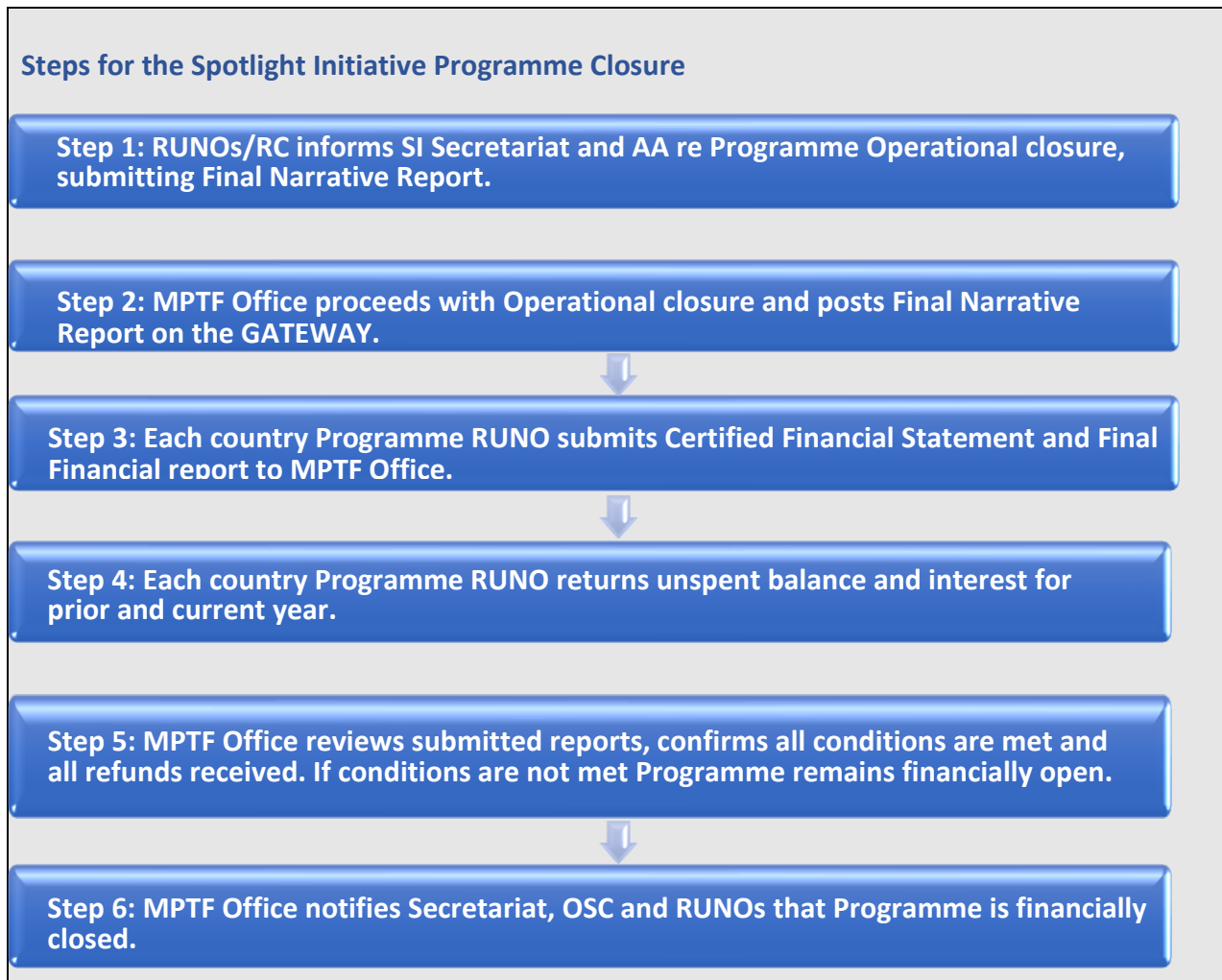
All interest earnings and unutilized funds should be credited to the following account:

- **Name:** Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office
- **Account Number:** 36349626
- **SWIFT Code:** CITIUS33

- **Bank Name/Address:**
Citibank, N.A.
111 Wall Street
New York, NY 10043 USA
- **Reference:** Spotlight Initiative/MPTF Office project number/[interest/refund]

Links to Required Templates

- [SI TOR](#)
- [SI MOU with RUNOS](#)
- [MOU Addendum for EU contribution to the SI](#)
- [SI project Final financial reporting Template \(incl. UN Agencies contribution\)](#)
- [Management declaration template](#)
- Spotlight Initiative project Final narrative reporting Template



Updates to the guidance

A **Final Narrative Report** will be required as part of the programme closure process. More information can be found in Section 13 on Reporting of this Operations Manual Compendium.