

Spotlight Initiative
To eliminate violence against women and girls



Ending Violence Against Women & Girls

Spotlight Initiative Compendium of Innovative and Good Practices and Lessons Learned

April 2024

Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



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Foreword

Mid-way through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, violence against women and girls (VAWG) remains the most pervasive human rights violation in the world, and continues to be a significant barrier to development. Despite the progress made over the past three decades, globally, 1 in 3 women worldwide are still subjected to violence within their lifetime.

The converging and multi-faceted crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, conflict, and growing economic inequalities are exacerbating all forms of VAWG, while women's human rights continue to be eroded by fundamentalist and authoritarian movements. VAWG not only threatens women and girls' safety, health, and wellbeing, but limits their social and economic agency, furthers their marginalization, and, ultimately, prevents them from fulfilling their potential. The societal costs of violence profoundly impede collective progress and make the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals impossible.

Launched in 2017 with €500 million from the European Union, Spotlight Initiative is the largest targeted effort of the UN to end violence against women and girls. Over the past six years, the Initiative has radically shifted the landscape of programming on violence against women and girls. In more than 25 countries across five regions, the Initiative has employed a uniquely comprehensive, whole-of-society, whole-of-government approach that addresses all key drivers of violence against women and girls.

Embodying a set of principles that are at the core of the UN, Spotlight Initiative has pioneered a new way of working with communities, civil society and women's movements, ensuring meaningful engagement in governance, creating openings for political influence and decision making, and strengthening civic space. Spotlight Initiative has created critical partnerships in spaces where none existed before and built a new model of localization at state, district and community levels, placing VAWG at the centre of national development priorities, while supporting local communities to address violence in their specific contexts.

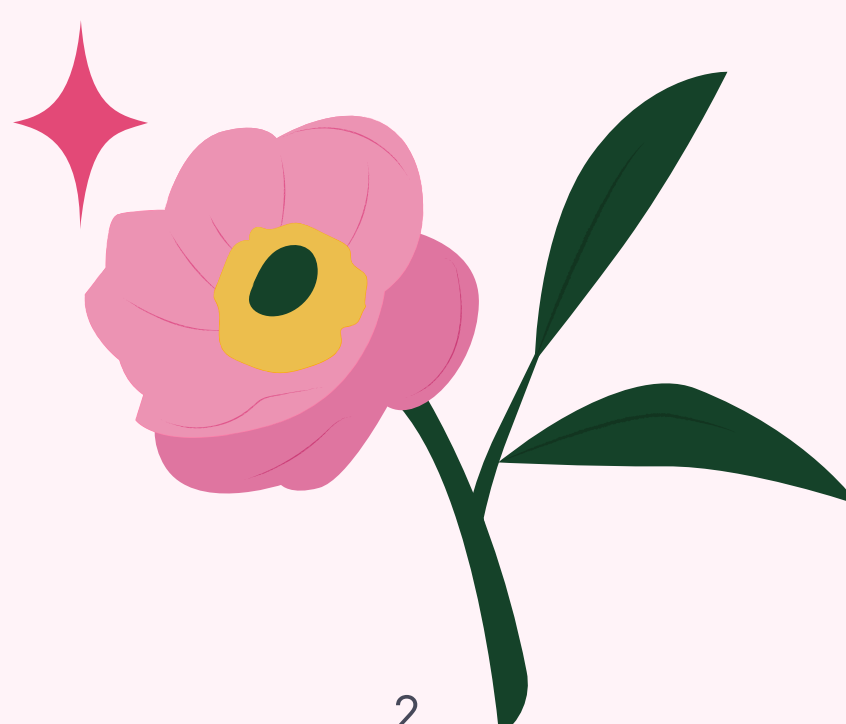
In alignment with the UN development system reforms, Spotlight Initiative represents a unique opportunity to move beyond piecemeal, disconnected, and small-scale interventions to a whole-of-UN approach which orients programming based on on-the-ground capacities, capitalising on the collective expertise, institutional knowledge, and resources of UN agencies to build more coherent, more effective programmes.

Spotlight Initiative's results to date have been transformational, demonstrating that catalytic change is possible when we truly prioritise women and girls. Since 2019, with Spotlight Initiative's support, the conviction rate for perpetrators of gender-based violence has doubled across 12 countries; almost 500 laws and policies have been signed to end violence against women and girls; national budgets to address gender-based violence have increased 10-fold across 14 countries; and 2.5 million women and girls have accessed gender-based violence services, as of 2022.

With this in mind, Spotlight Initiative commissioned the production of this Compendium of Innovative and Good Practices and Lessons Learned to advance the broader evidence and knowledge base on ending VAWG and share effective practices that can be replicated and scaled up more widely.

Presenting a suite of over 50 case studies across the six original 'pillars' of the Spotlight Initiative, as well as cross-cutting themes, the Compendium provides policymakers and practitioners with practice-based knowledge on ending VAWG that is high-impact, innovative, sustainable by design and rooted in local needs and context. Codifying this expertise is particularly pertinent as Spotlight Initiative transitions to its next generation of programming and expands its universal reach, with the goal of further reducing the prevalence of violence in target communities from 1 in 3 to 1 in 5 women and girls within a decade. I encourage you to use the Compendium as a key source of information and evidence in designing and implementing programming to end violence against women and girls, to drive progress not only on Goal 5: Gender Equality, but across all the Sustainable Development Goals.

Erin Kenny
Deputy Global Coordinator
Spotlight Initiative



Acknowledgements

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This publication has benefited significantly from the committed participation of all Spotlight Initiative programmes who shared their rich knowledge and experiences. Special thanks in particular to Spotlight Initiative teams in Ecuador, Malawi, Papua New Guinea, Tajikistan and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Spotlight Initiative Secretariat is grateful for the valuable inputs received from Recipient UN Organizations during the review phase, in particular the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

This Compendium could not have been possible without the courage of women and girl survivors who have spoken out about their experiences, and the resilience of women's rights advocates and feminist movements who remain so central to the fight to end gender-based violence.

The Compendium and associated activities were designed and coordinated by ImpactMapper, led by Alexandra Pittman, and overseen and coordinated by Heran Ayele and Amy Bretherton from the Spotlight Initiative Secretariat. This project is funded with generous support from the European Union.



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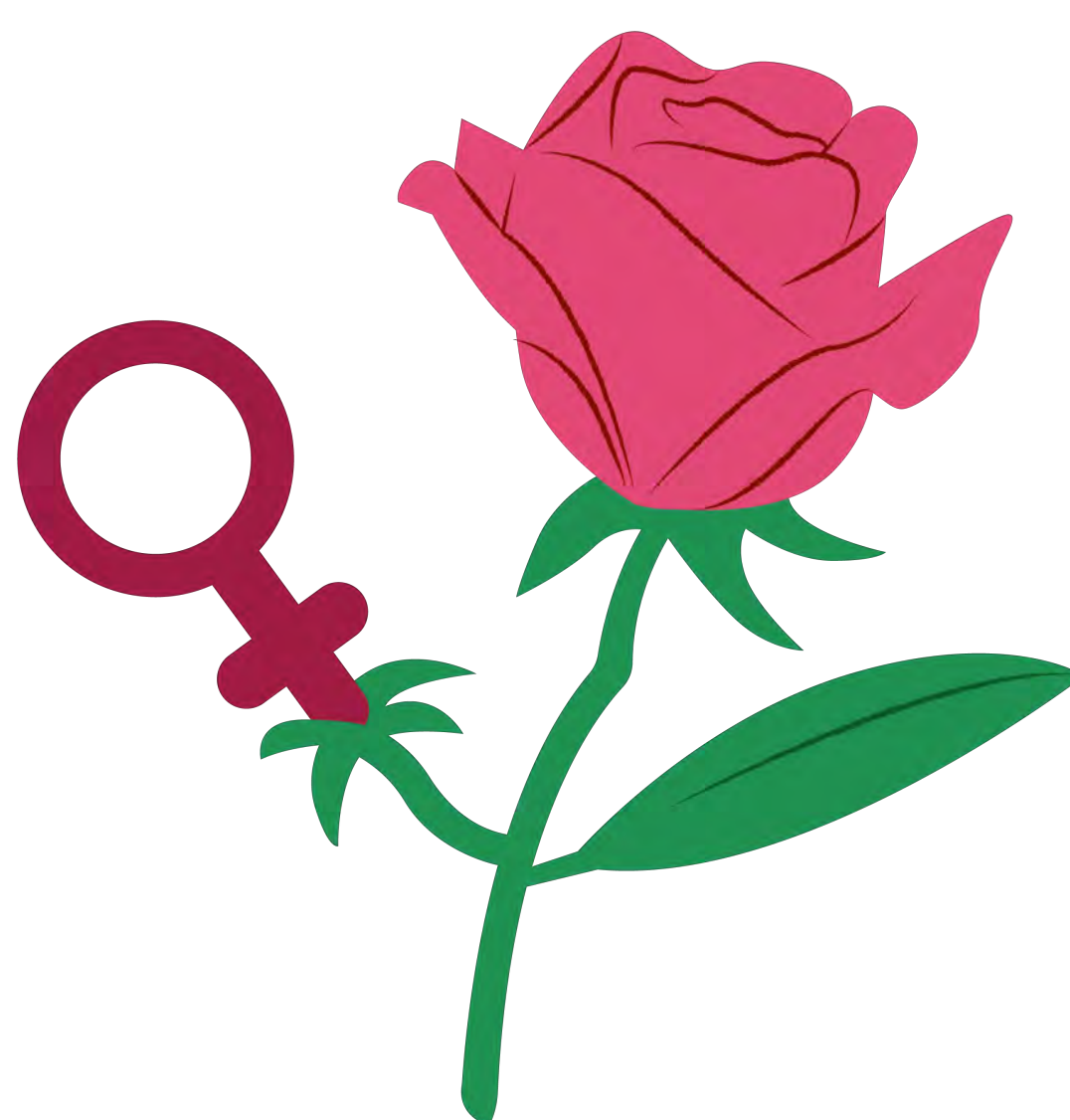


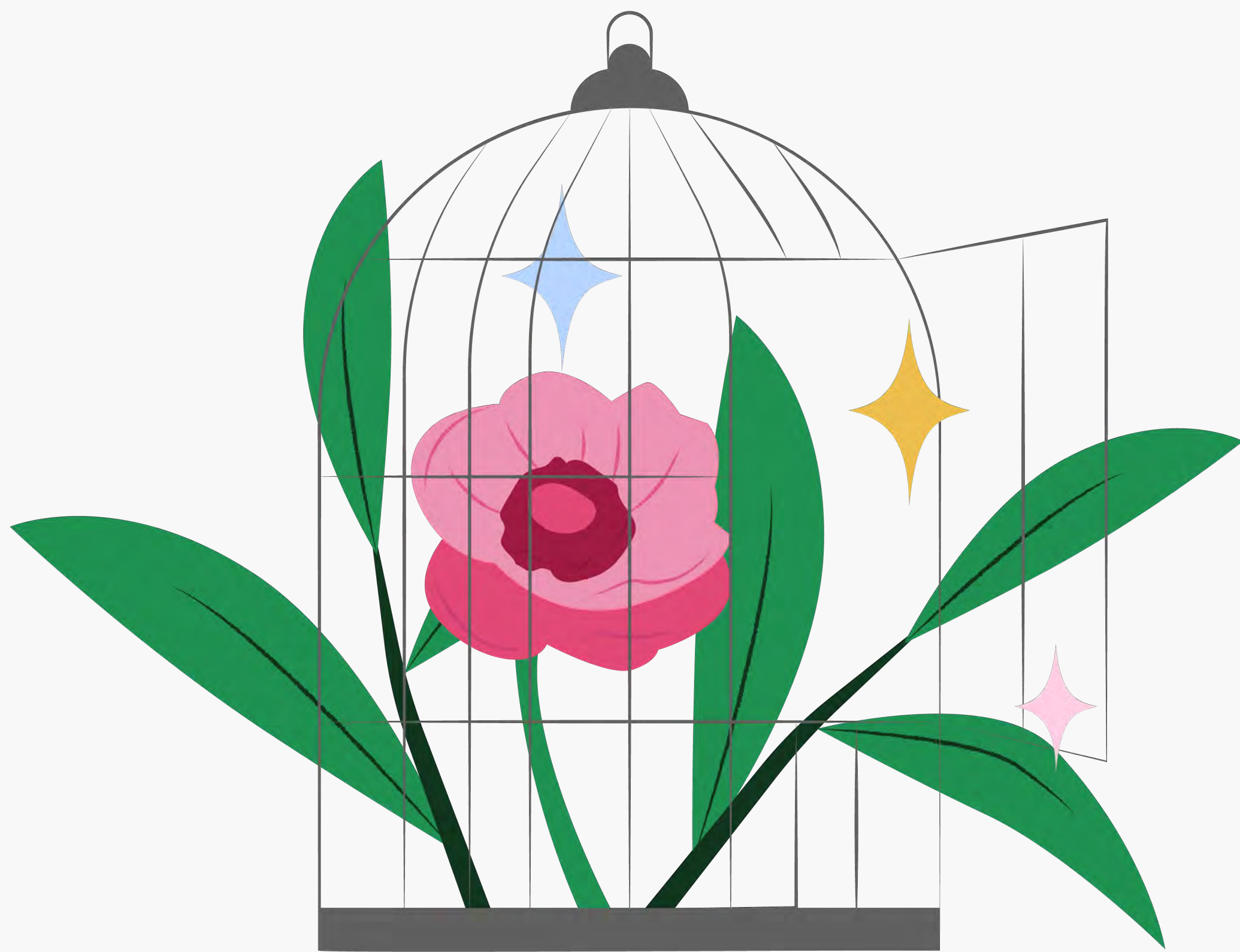
List of abbreviations

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AUC-WGDD	The African Union Commission - Women, Gender and Development Directorate
AWLN	African Women Leaders Network
CSGRG	Civil Society Global Reference Group
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CariSECURE	Strengthening Evidence-Based Decision Making for Citizen Security in the Caribbean Project
CEJIL	Center for Justice and International Law
CHAMP	Collaborative HIV Prevention and Adolescent Mental Health Programme
CLE/FLE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Family Life Education
COTLA	Council of Traditional Leaders of Africa
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSNRG	Civil Society National Reference Group
CSRRG	Civil Society Regional Reference Group
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DVIC	Domestic Violence Intervention Centre
EAT initiative	Temporary and Free Accommodation in Hotels for Women, Girls, Boys and Adolescents Survivors of Violence
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EU	European Union
EVAW	End Violence Against Women
EVAWG	End Violence Against Women and Girls
FB	Facebook
FDS	Defense and Security Forces
FF	Femicide/Feminicide
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FV	Family Violence
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
FOKUPERS	Forum Komunikasaun Ba Feto Timor Loro Sa'e
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HP	Harmful Practices
ICF	Inner City Fund
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
IP	Implementing Partner
IT	Information Technology
JCF	Jamaica Constabulary Force
LCDZ	Leonard Cheshire Disability Zimbabwe
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPD	Organisations of Persons with Disabilities
PacFemCOP	Pacific Feminist Community of Practice
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PINAY	Pinay Careworkers Transnational
PLE	Esperanza Protocol; El Protocolo de la Esperanza (in Spanish)
PNG	Papua New Guinea

List of abbreviations

POWA	Productive Organization for Women in Action
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PRMIS	Police Records Management Information System
RFI	Radio France Internationale
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring Methodology
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SGA	School of Gender Activists
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SMS	Short Message Service
SN	Strategic Note
SOCO	Scenes of Crime Officers
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression, and Sex Characteristics
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SHRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Medical
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNTF	United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAPP Act	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
VAWG-WebMS	Violence Against Women and Girls Data System
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WEP	Women Empowerment Principles
WHO	World Health Organization
WPHF	Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund
ZDHS	Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey





Background

Spotlight Initiative is the largest targeted effort by the United Nations to end all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. Launched in 2017 with a “seed” investment by the European Union of 500 million EUR, Spotlight Initiative represents an unprecedented global partnership on ending gender-based violence, providing targeted investments across five regions (Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Pacific and the Caribbean) through 34 programmes: 26 country programmes and five regional programmes,¹ along with its two Civil Society Grant-Giving Programmes.² With a focus on addressing specific forms of violence (determined regionally) – intimate partner and family violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, femicide, trafficking and sexual exploitation, Spotlight Initiative promotes a comprehensive, rights-based approach to drive transformative change across six interconnected outcome areas or pillars below. The Initiative’s comprehensive model has been found to be 70-90 percent more effective at reducing the prevalence of violence than siloed or piecemeal approaches and small scale interventions.³



¹ Africa: Liberia, Mali, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Mozambique, Uganda, Zimbabwe. Central Asia: Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan. Caribbean: Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. Latin America: Argentina, El Salvador, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico. Pacific: Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu. Regional Programmes: Latin America Regional Programme, Africa Regional Programme, Caribbean Regional Programme, Pacific Regional Programme, ASEAN Regional Programme.

² In partnership with the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women for programmes in Africa and Latin America and the Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund for programmes in Africa, Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea.

³ “Imperative to Invest: How addressing violence against women and girls today reduces violence over time, fosters peace and stability, and enables people to reach their full potential - all of which advances us towards the SDGs” (Dalberg, 2022).

A flagship programme of the United Nations Secretary-General, Spotlight Initiative is a demonstration fund for UN Reform, capitalising on the collective strengths of the UN system to support the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and accelerate progress not only on Goal 5 (pursuing real and sustained gender equality), but across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Spotlight Initiative is a proven model of multilateralism and multi-stakeholder partnership and engagement towards ending violence against women and girls. Committed to the principle of leave no one behind,⁴ particularly those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, Spotlight Initiative engages in meaningful and sustained collaboration with civil society organisations, with a focus on women's rights organisations who are integral partners of the Initiative. By partnering with donors, civil society, the private sector, academia and all relevant UN entities, Spotlight Initiative leverages different types of expertise and capacities and takes a more integrated approach to achieve common goals. Spotlight Initiative employs a whole-of-society approach, which places ending gender-based violence at the heart of national development priorities and plans, while also giving local communities and civil society the tools they need to address violence in their specific context.

Spotlight Initiative's results to date have been transformational, with the conviction rate for perpetrators of gender-based violence doubling across 12 countries; 500 laws and policies having been signed to end violence against women and girls; national budgets to address gender-based violence having increased 10-fold across 14 countries; and 2.5 million women and girls having accessed gender-based violence services, as of 2022.

In recognition of its unprecedented results, Spotlight Initiative was selected as a high-impact initiative and an SDG accelerator by the UN Secretary-General. Gender equality is at the heart of achieving progress on the SDGs, and by deeply addressing violence against women and girls, efficiencies are unlocked, impacting progress on all of the other SDGs.

After five years of implementation, various innovative and good practices have emerged and are demonstrating the effectiveness of Spotlight Initiative's model of coordination, delivery of comprehensive programmes and multi-stakeholder ownership, with a strategic vision that eradicates the drivers of violence, involving women and girls in designing their own futures free of violence.



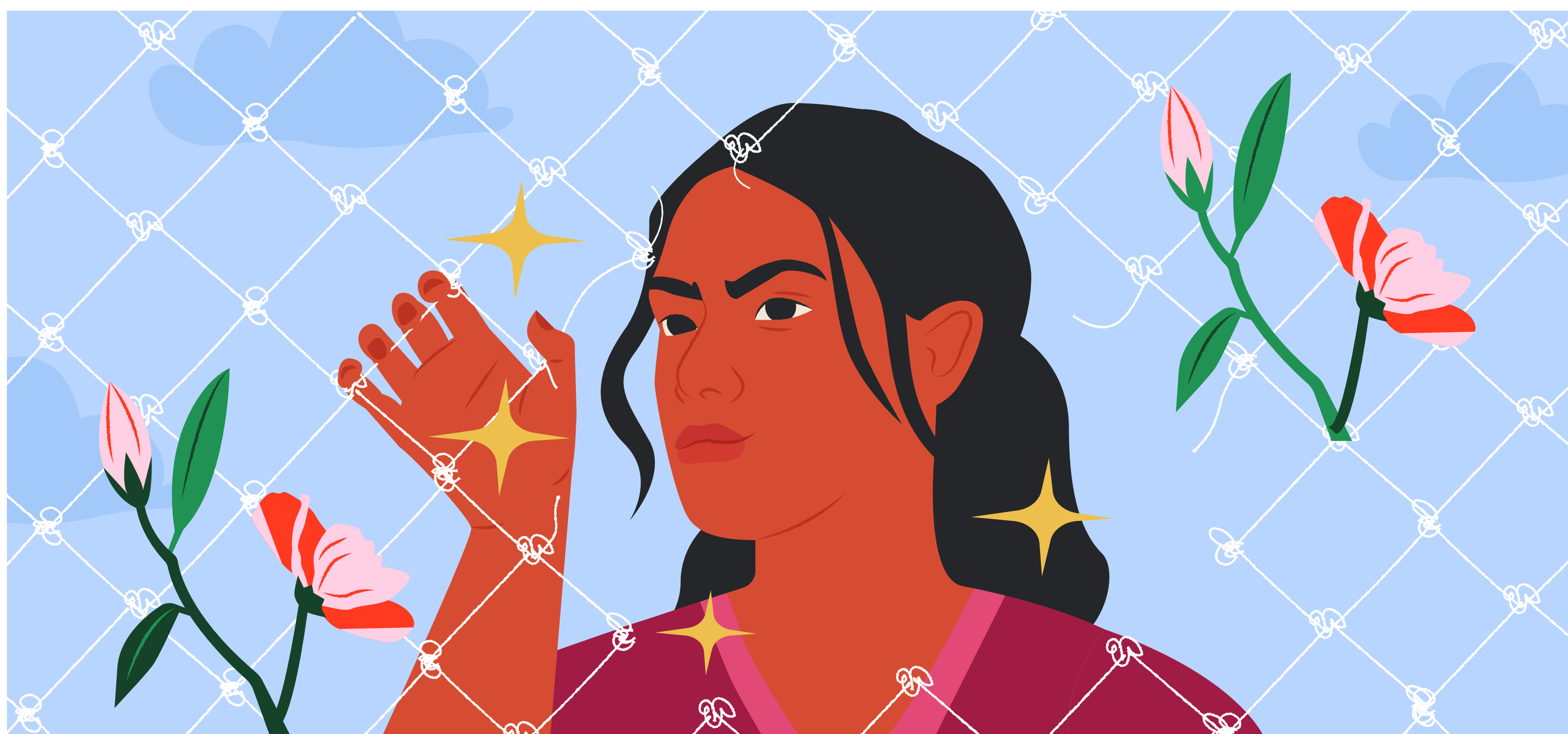
⁴ The leave no one behind (LNOB) principle describes the commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty, end discrimination and exclusion and reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind, undermining the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole. [Universal Values - Principle Two: Leave No One Behind \(UNSDG\)](#).

Compendium objectives

Spotlight Initiative commissioned ImpactMapper to produce a compendium of innovative and good practices and lessons learned across its six outcome areas, as well as other relevant and cross-cutting themes.⁵

The Compendium covers Spotlight Initiative's work from 2018 to 2023 and includes information from all regions in which Spotlight Initiative is being implemented.

The Compendium's overall purpose is to synthesise and document innovative and good practices, as well as lessons from the implementation of Spotlight Initiative to support programmatic learning, improve interventions and contribute to the broader evidence and knowledge base on ending violence against women and girls. The Compendium also documents the new way of working with the one UN system in implementing a comprehensive and rights-based programme on ending violence against women and girls. The aim is to build practice-based knowledge and share practices that can be scaled up more widely.



⁵ Some cross-cutting themes relate to UN reform, partnerships, leave no one behind, female genital mutilation, child marriage, sustainability, etc.

Data collection and analysis

Desk Review

More than 321 Spotlight Initiative documents, produced during the period from 2019 to 2023, were reviewed to assess whether they should be analysed as part of the Compendium desk review. Documents included the Global Annual Report, Country Annual Reports, Regional Annual Reports, Annex D: Promising or Good Practices Reporting Templates, Midterm Assessments, Knowledge Products, Meta Review, Trust Fund Reports, programme showcase products and other reports. After reading and analysing for quality and relevance of the documentation in terms of sharing good or innovative practices and lessons learned, a total of 268 documents were selected and coded in the ImpactMapper software, according to the type of case study by thematic areas and lessons learned by pillar and thematic area. In addition, to deepen knowledge on scale up and sustainability factors connected to good and innovative practices, a 10-question survey was sent to all Spotlight Initiative programmes. In total, 10 Spotlight Initiative teams submitted survey responses, including the Africa Regional Programme, Afghanistan, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Samoa and Zimbabwe.

Summary table of documentation analysed by type of report and year

Type of report	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Global Annual Report	1	1	1	1	4
Country Annual Report	9	23	23	24	79
Regional Annual Report	2	5	5	5	17
Annex D	14	26	30	25	95
Mid-Term Assessment			38	1	39
Knowledge Brief			15	7	22
UN Trust Fund Annual Report	2	2		2	6
Meta Review				1	1
Programme Showcase Product			4		4
Other		1			1
Total	28	58	116	66	268

Site Visits

To dive deeper into a number of country contexts that displayed positive results and good practices, site visits were conducted in five countries with representation across Spotlight Initiative's five regions. To select countries for site visits, the ImpactMapper team thoroughly reviewed outcomes from the country programme documentation and proposed a list of countries. With Spotlight Initiative's team, the ImpactMapper team then finalised the choice of countries based on a few factors, including availability, whether their programmes were in their last year of implementation, or whether they had received recent field visits by other assessment teams. Physical site visits were carried out in Ecuador, Malawi and Trinidad and Tobago, and virtual site visits were conducted in Papua New Guinea and Tajikistan. 114 people were interviewed overall through the country visits – 89 of which were conducted in-person and 25 of which were held online.

Limitations

Desk research limitations

The data gathered through desk research was limited to the information provided by Spotlight Initiative programmes in their reports. Where possible, external research was conducted to contextualise in-country trends related to violence against women and girls and to check if other UN agencies had published information of relevance to the case studies. Where identified, supplemental external and public resources have been hyperlinked in the case studies.

Site visit limitations

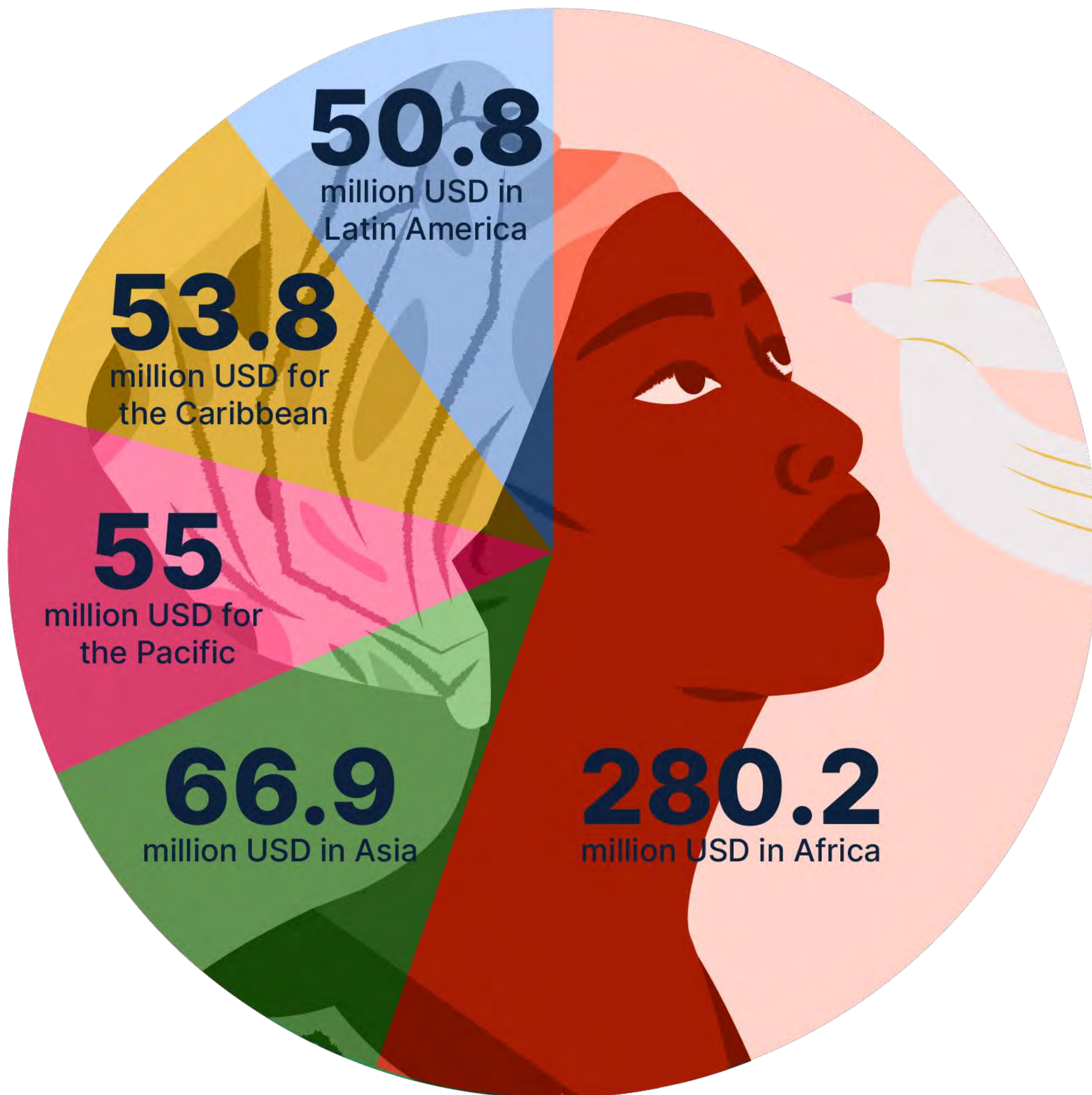
The site visits afforded a much deeper insight into a variety of projects in a country, allowing the ImpactMapper team to interview multiple stakeholders per project. Thus, these case studies are significantly more detailed than the desk review and enabled a more holistic analysis of factors connected to success, scale-up or sustainability compared to the desk review case studies where less information was available. The country case studies that are longer are by no means indicative of a greater success of site visit case studies compared to desk research case study, rather it is merely a function of the greater details derived from the data collection process.

Survey data collection limitations

Data collected from the surveys also faced some limitations. First, only 29 percent (10 of the 34) Country and Regional Programme Offices submitted completed responses. Second, in many cases, responses to the survey were very brief and high-level and did not offer substantive additions that could be used in the case studies. Where possible, extra research through internet searches was conducted to fill in gaps with published case studies from other entities, and in some cases, the team sent individual follow up questions to different Spotlight Initiative programme offices when necessary.

Infographic of funding and country reach

Over 5 years, Spotlight Initiative has invested 506.9 million USD across its 34 programmes.



122
countries
reached

As of 2022

26 through Spotlight Initiative's country programmes

30 through Spotlight Initiative's two civil society grant giving programmes

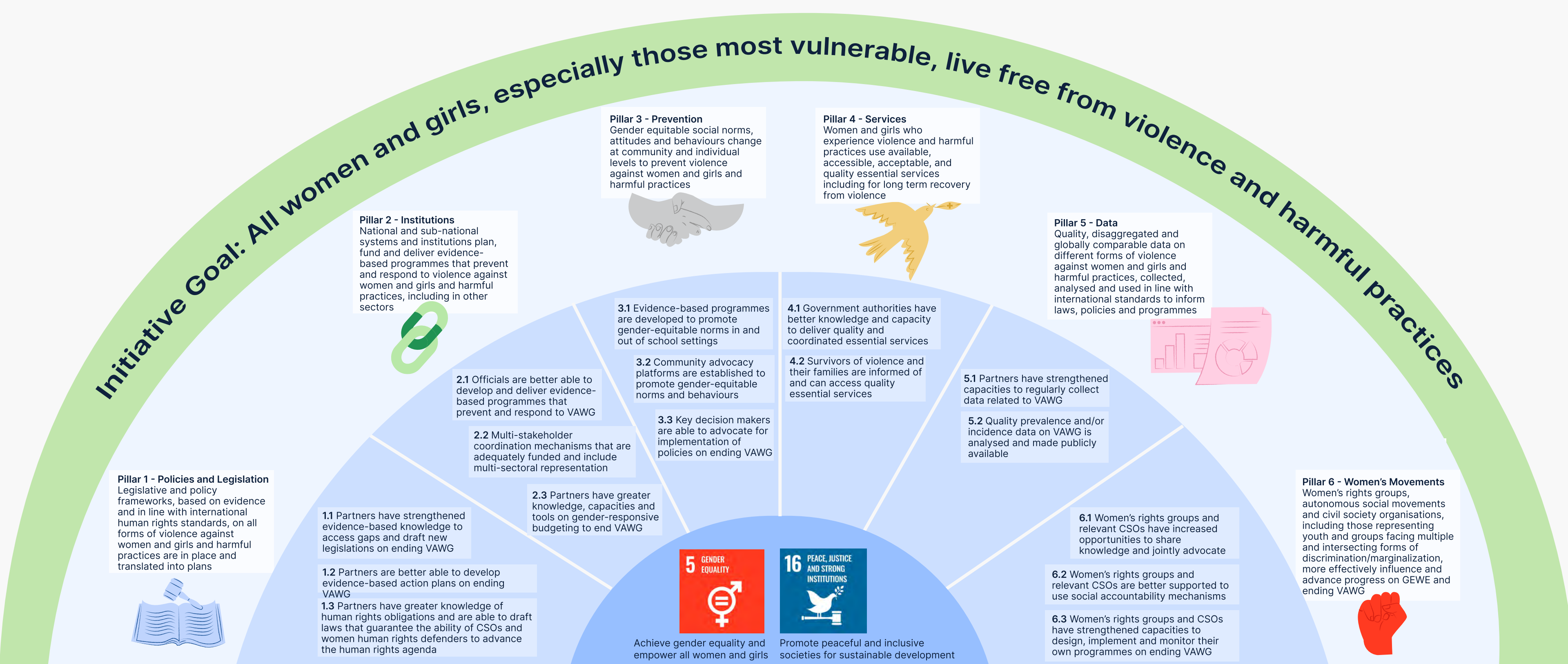
66 through Spotlight Initiative's five regional programmes

Theory of Change

Spotlight Initiative's Theory of Change emphasises that the most effective way to end violence against women and girls is through a well-funded, rights-based and comprehensive approach that works across diverse areas. This approach prioritises the engagement of feminist and women's rights organisations and movements and civil society more broadly. Spotlight Initiative programmes focus on addressing the root causes of violence and gender inequity by implementing their approach across six pillars of work.

There is a need to develop and implement integrated interventions to create the legal basis for equity and the elimination of violence against women and girls (Pillar 1), to strengthen diverse national and local institutions to promote gender equality and women's rights (Pillar 2), to tackle various factors contributing to violence, such as harmful social norms, practices and beliefs (Pillar 3), to increase access and strengthen the quality of essential services for survivors (Pillar 4), to build a robust evidence base and national databases to monitor and support efforts to end violence against women and girls (Pillar 5), and to support and deepen women's movement building globally, nationally and locally (Pillar 6). See the visual of the Theory of Change below.

Spotlight Initiative Theory of Change



Spotlight Initiative's model is unique and focused on innovation at many levels; it is a demonstration fund for the SDGs, as well as the power of UN reform, and offers diverse solutions on an issue as sensitive as ending violence against women and girls. In order to do this effectively, Spotlight Initiative's model relies on deep partnerships from civil society, government and feminist organisations within a country and from UN agencies coordinating together.