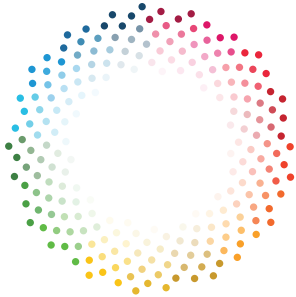
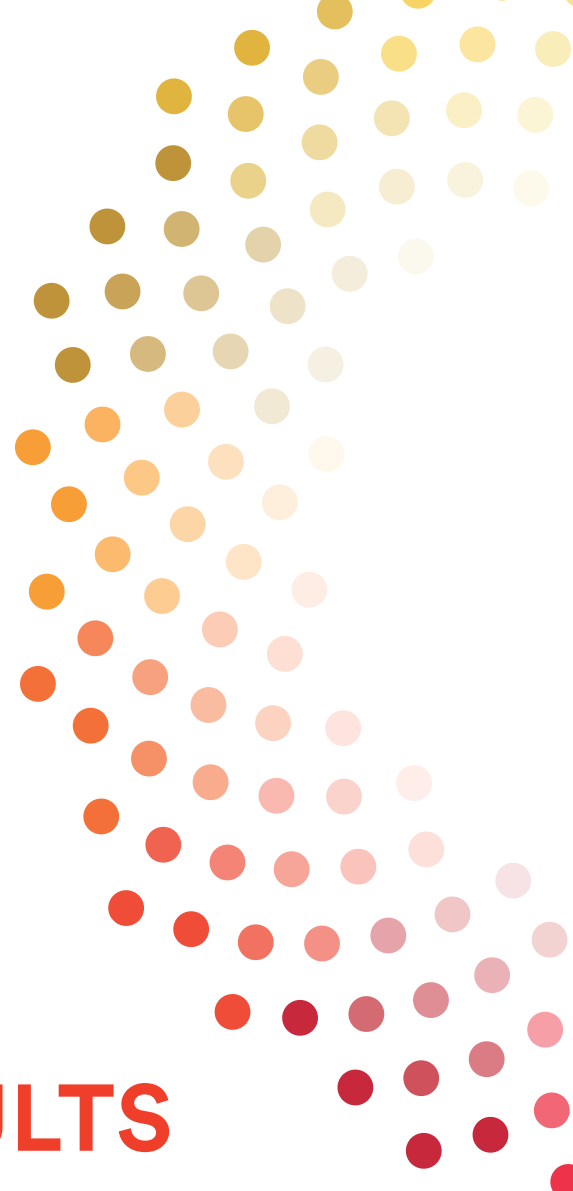


Initiated by the European Union and the United Nations:



Spotlight Initiative

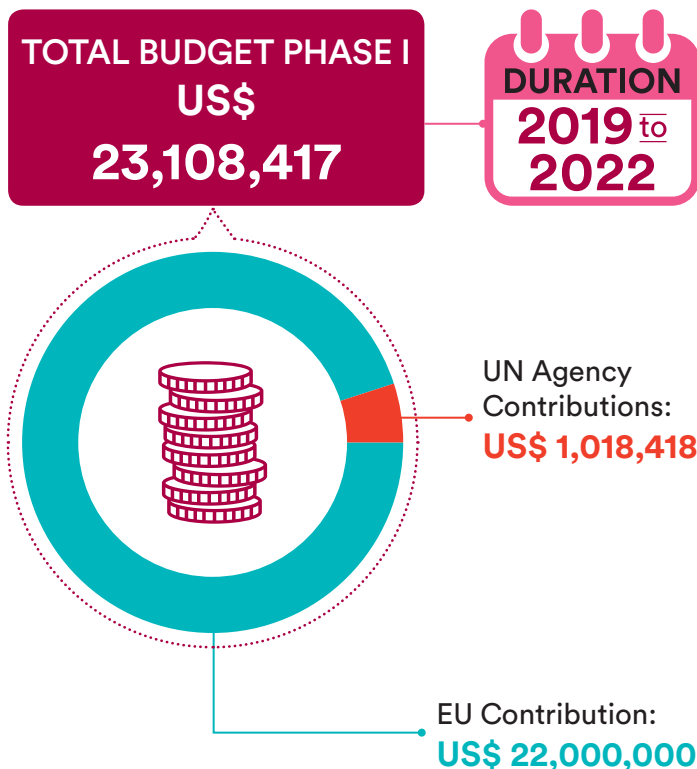
To eliminate violence against women and girls



UGANDA

2020 COUNTRY PROGRAMME RESULTS

ABRIDGED VERSION



Recipient UN organizations:

UN Women, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR

Other partners:


IOM; WHO; Pulse Lab; Ministries of Gender Labour and Social Development, Health, Education and Sports, and Local Government; District and Local Governments; Public Service; National Planning Authority; Inter-Religious and National Population Council; Equal Opportunities Commission; Uganda Bureau of Statistics; Uganda Human Rights Commission; Civil Society Organizations; Women's Networks; International Non-Governmental Organizations; Cultural Institutions; Council of Traditional Leaders in Africa; Private Sector Foundation; Safe Boda; Academic Institutions

Context

In 2020, major flooding and landslides in Kasese and other regions, and the locust infestation during the agricultural season, led to a shift in attention and government resources towards humanitarian response. The national election campaigns held in 2020 further halted progress on legislative reforms and government capacity-building activities, as government partners were focused on the elections. Incidents of violence against women and children spiked considerably during the COVID-19 lockdown.

REPORTS FROM GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SHELTERS REFLECTED

 **60.5%** increase in the demand for Emergency Shelters

 public awareness of violence against women and girls (VAWG) expanded

Spotlight Initiative's Response

In 2020, the Spotlight Initiative implemented interagency coordination in the spirit of UN Reform, including by leveraging the joint resources and capacities of agencies to strengthen coordination on programming to end child marriage at national level. In Uganda, the Spotlight Initiative worked to address sexual and gender-based violence (GBV) and harmful practices, advance gender equality, and increase women's access to sexual and reproductive health and rights. By working with the Ministry of Health to integrate sexual and reproductive health, HIV and VAWG into the Essential Services Package, the Spotlight Initiative helped elevate the importance of access to health services for survivors of VAWG. Services were adapted during the COVID-19 outbreak, when the Spotlight Initiative, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, adjusted its strategies to respond to the emerging needs of women and girls survivors and provide information and vital services through mobile clinics, GBV shelters and "Safe Spaces". The Spotlight Initiative's work in social engagement and media outreach increased awareness on VAWG and sexual and reproductive health and rights, empowering adolescents and youth and supporting the uptake of services. To ensure access to effective justice and remedies, the Spotlight Initiative, together with partners, worked to establish special court sessions dedicated to child survivors of violence, pivoting to a fast-track procedure to reduce trauma and exposure to COVID-19. Upholding the principle of "Leaving No One Behind," the programme focused on communities at high risk of violence, including refugees, adolescents, in- and out-of school girls, women and girls with disabilities, and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Key Results

Working towards gender-sensitive legislation (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation and Pillar 2: Institutions)

High-level progress was made on the legislative framework for eliminating VAWG through advocacy efforts for and technical support to the development of the National Child Policy and the Sexual Offence Bill and Succession Amendment Bill 2019. In 2020, supported state and non-state institutions strengthened their capacity and started addressing VAWG and harmful practices with support from the Spotlight Initiative. Spotlight Initiative also contributed to the increased capacity of state and non-state institutions to address VAWG and harmful practices. For example, the review of the curricula in a university and training institutions to integrate GBV programming is ensuring continuous capacity strengthening of government officials. Additionally, by strengthening the capacity of local governments, the Spotlight Initiative supported them to develop and implement institutional frameworks to combat VAWG, improve access to

justice for survivors, strengthen accountability mechanisms, end impunity for perpetrators, and ensure multi-sectoral support and services. There has been a notable increase - particularly at local government level - in awareness of and attention to VAWG response, with the development of GBV action plans and increased allocation of funds for GBV initiatives. At the end 2020, 49 costed GBV specific interventions were integrated into budget documents for FY 2021/2022. Through the COVID-19 sub-committee on GBV and violence against children, which the Spotlight Initiative has supported, the government has integrated GBV into its national response to COVID-19.

Advancing norm change and improved data and vital services (Pillar 3: Prevention, Pillar 4: Services and Pillar 5: Data)

To shift unequal social norms, the Spotlight Initiative implemented the SASA! model, a comprehensive methodology to foster community mobilization and prevention.

IN 2020,

918 COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS

engaged more than 140,000 people

95,000 FEMALE

45,000 MALE

These individuals and communities now better understand the nexus between power, violence, and gender equality, and deeper reflection on attitudes toward gender roles.

Prevention efforts were further supported through **awareness campaigns on essential services for VAWG and harmful practices, which reached over**

5,960,000 people

and resulted in increased awareness of existing referral pathways and available response services.

To support access to services, the Spotlight Initiative worked with the Ministry of Health to integrate sexual and reproductive health, HIV and VAWG into the Essential Services Package.

The Package will be incorporated into the country’s universal health coverage strategy 2021-2025 (and aligned with the Gender-based Violence Policy), a significant achievement to ensure the sustainability of efforts to end VAWG within national structures.



The Spotlight Initiative supported roll-out of 2 Apps – GETIN and Safe Pal, which facilitated mapping of **1,347 young mothers** and SafePal reached **500,000 young people** with information and facilitating GBV referrals during the COVID-19 lock down. Safe Pal has been taken by the Ministry of Gender Labor and Social Development and has been rolled out nation-wide.

In line with the principle of “*Leaving No One Behind*”, the Spotlight Initiative partnered with civil society organizations for decentralized reach, resulting in improved access to services by refugee populations, and increased awareness on the links between COVID-19 and GBV for 17 million people.

The Spotlight Initiative launched Safety Audits in targeted refugee settlements to address the specific risks faced by women refugees while accessing essential services. Access to services was further supported by supporting 96 women’s groups to access funding and government grants under the new Parish model project (the government’s development project to address poverty) that will provide services at village level.

Spotlight Initiative supported Uganda Bureau of Statistics to; undertake the data quality assessment of the information management systems in a bid to harmonize and standardize indicators for the various systems and integrate GBV/SRH indicators in the four modules of the Community Information System to allow for collection of data on the 10-14 year olds that has not been generated through the UDHS.

Supporting civil society and women's movements (Pillar 6: Women's Movement and Civil Society)

The Spotlight Initiative strengthened the ability of civil society organizations, activists and women human rights defenders to effectively advocate for gender-transformative legal frameworks. For example, advocacy by the Spotlight Initiative through women's rights organizations resulted in a Presidential Declaration, which removed the requirement for pregnant women to obtain the Resident District Commissioners' permission to seek health care services, followed by a Ministerial Circular urging probation officers to expeditiously handle cases of domestic violence and support survivors to access required services during and after the COVID-19 lockdowns. Through joint advocacy efforts with the Ministry of Gender, the programme contributed to amplifying the voice of the women's movement in favour of the development of National Guidelines on the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy and Re-entry of child mothers in school and ensuring women's safety in public places.

One Story of Impact:

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS LEADING IN LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The principle of leaving no one behind informed interventions that enhanced the capacities of civil society to reach vulnerable groups including women with disabilities, albino women, women living with HIV, Batwa women and women refugees. In partnership with national and local CSOs, **the Spotlight Initiative increased access to multi-sectoral services for over 1,500 women and girls**, including those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. To create an enabling legislative environment, the programme provided technical support in the revision of the National Disability Policy integrating access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for persons with disability. As a result, 2 women with disabilities in the two districts of Amudat and Terego attained positions of leadership in their local councils.

In their own words...

“The training [in women's empowerment] opened my eyes. I didn't know where to go for help but now I know where people with disabilities can get different services in our district. **I became more aware of our rights and how to stand up for ourselves.**”

ANGELLA MUHINDO
Spotlight Initiative rights-holder

Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

The Spotlight Initiative piloted the use of information and communications technology to strengthen referral mechanisms for survivors of VAWG. In partnership with the Uganda Law Society, Spotlight Initiative developed innovative applications to match survivors of VAWG to specialized lawyers able to provide legal advice and referrals in multiple languages to survivors.



Through the **Child Help Line Call Center and the “Self-Interactive Voice Recording”**,

THE SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE REACHED

15,043 individuals

with **329** individuals

referred for legal support to the different legal aid clinics across the country.

1,159 individuals used the language assistance to listen to the information on GBV and other services

34 cases were referred to the police for further support

Other efforts included Safe Boda partnerships, fuel vouchers, outreaches and remote capacity building on continuity of essential. These efforts have the potential to ensure more timely access to information and better reach those who are often left behind.