

# In the Spotlight

Caribbean

**PLAY YOUR PART  
Campaign Launched!**

**National Study:  
Economic Costs of  
VAWG**

**Spotlight Team:  
Visit to Guyana**



**Spotlight  
Initiative**

An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union





# Editor's Note

The Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme is in its final year and the RUNOS are focused on implementation to ensure that the activities of Phase 2 are completed and the people of the Caribbean can be closer to achieving a region that is free from violence.

March was a very busy month for the Regional programme with several launches and events occurring throughout the month.

The launch of UNICEF's Social behavioural Change Communications campaign #PlayYourPart, took place in early March in St. Lucia. Read all about the launch starting on Page 3.

One of the most critical pieces of work conducted under the Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean and led by UN Women is the National Study on the Economic Cost of Violence Against Women and Girls in Jamaica. Now comprehensive data is available about how this scourge is impacting at least one country in the region. Details of the launch, which was held in March can be found on Pages 8 and 9.

UNFPA also hosted a two-day workshop focused on the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Toolkit Assessment Training for Out-of-School Youth in Trinidad. Read more about the workshop on Page 10.

Also in March, UNDP gathered representatives from the

police and justice sectors for a meeting where the "Draft Regional Guidelines to Integrate Gender Perspectives, Gender-based Violence Minimum Standards for Practical Solutions for responding to VAWG/FV for Police and Justice Institutions" were presented for validation.

On page 16 and 17, there is the Girls of a Feather St. Lucia launch of its Spotlight Initiative-funded telehealth programme, which also took place in March.

Finally on March 16, Spotlight Initiative Guyana hosted Deputy Secretary-General of the European Union's External Action Service with a visit to Batavia, an indigenous village that is working to eliminate Gender-based Violence with the support of the Spotlight Initiative.

It's exciting to see the various activities under the Initiative start to bear fruit and we hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed bringing this issue to you.



# #PlayYourPart CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED!

## Social and Behavioural Change Communication for Addressing VAWG

UNICEF's #PlayYourPart Social Behavioural Change Communications (SBCC) campaign was launched in St. Lucia with a regional hybrid event on 7 March this year. The aim of the campaign is to empower women and girls in the Caribbean so they can enjoy their rights free from violence. The campaign is an activity of Pillar 3 (Prevention) of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional programme, which is a global initiative of the United Nations (UN) that has received generous support from the European Union (EU). Its aim is to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. The overarching aim of the campaign is to win hearts and minds so that structures and behaviours ultimately can be changed.

The #PlayYourPart campaign has three main overarching goals: to challenge unequal gender norms, harmful behaviours and attitudes and negative stereotypes that drive

VAWG; to support the promotion of healthy relationships and non-violence and reduce acceptance of violence as a normal part of relationships, discipline, or authority; and to disrupt the intergenerational cycles of violence, which lead children who experience violence to be more likely victims and perpetrators later in life

During the launch, Erin Kenny, Head of the Technical Unit, Spotlight Initiative affirmed that “it takes a whole world to be able to influence change. Women alone cannot bear the burden for taking this forward. About one third of all investments at country and regional level go to prevention. The EU ensured that a significant amount was dedicated to prevention for transformational change.”

The #PlayYourPart multimedia campaign includes materials and tools developed and produced with artists and production houses across the Caribbean, and comprises two six-episodes radio drama, an original song and music video, an animation, and two video PSAs. The campaign also includes social media assets that are designed to be conversation starters.



UNICEF Photo: Presh Productions



Attendees, UNICEF staff and Spotlight Initiative personnel gather for a group photo after the launch of UNICEF's SBCC campaign in St. Lucia on 7 March 2023.



From left: Janey Joseph, Director – The Division of Gender Relations; Co-host Xenia Douglas – National Carnival Queen and Social Media influencer; Tricia Basdeo Gobin, UNICEF Gender Consultant for the Spotlight Caribbean Regional Programme; Host Mareen Alexander, Radio and Talk Show Host; Loveness Nyakujarah, Regional Spotlight Initiative – Coordinator and Technical Coherence; and Debbie Gray, UNICEF Gender Programme Specialist and Regional Coordinator, Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme with various messages and calls-to-action to fight VAWG.

There is also a guidance document that includes information on how to adapt the campaign package to individual context.

Head of Cooperation of the EU to Barbados, Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS, and CARICOM/CARIFORUM, David Mogollon Huerta shared that the “European Union and the United Nations have been working through the Spotlight Initiative to address this pervasive issue of VAWG. The EU is particularly concerned about often dissecting the occurrences of family violence, gender-based violence and discrimination. The Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean aims at reducing family violence in the region through a harmonised and dedicated action.”

The original song and music video were produced in partnership with renowned soca artist Teddyson John and reggae artist Curmiah Lisette both of Saint Lucia, and Nadine Sutherland from Jamaica.

Curmiah Lisette, explained that as a woman, a mother and survivor of childhood and adolescent violence, “the campaign is powerful as it not only speaks to women and girls but calls on men and boys to play their part. It is important for everyone to get involved with the campaign, everyone must play their part. If everyone [don’t] play their part, then we [will not] move forward and change [will] not happen.”

The music video was filmed in a sample of countries and features all community members inviting communities and countries to play their part. The song is designed to form a common musical identity for the campaign across the Caribbean, together with a clear and concise call to action.

The song is catchy, upbeat, and features well-known and talented musicians who support the goals of the campaign.

John, who attended the launch, reaffirmed his commitment to support the goals of the campaign. He emphasised that “both myself and the producer were thrilled that we were given the opportunity to write the song. We were given some points and direction for the campaign, and immediately after hearing about Play Your Part we knew we wanted to create something that anyone could align to. For me it was about using my talent as an avenue to get this powerful message out, calling for an end to violence against women. The song itself provides longevity for the campaign.”

Another product of the campaign is a two-dimensional (2D) two-minute animation that focuses on eliminating harmful stereotypes and addressing intergenerational cycles that perpetuate violence.

The two video Public Service Announcements use real life stories of champions who are advocates of VAWG prevention and are making a difference in their communities (police officers, health workers, community activists, grandparents, etc.). Each video use a positive and hopeful tone while at



Sargeant Zachary Hippolyte, Host of Television Talk Show, Police Insight

the same time addresses the root causes and ultimate consequences of VAWG on women, girls and communities.

Chianne Cools, a firefighter in Saint Lucia and one of the champions, expressed that being able to share her story in the video was definitely a learning experience for her.

“As much as I was aware that VAWG is a pressing issue, I didn’t realise how prevalent it is today. Young people can play their part by educating themselves and knowing about the different types of abuse, knowing how to deal with it in a healthy manner. Also knowing the necessary steps to take if they know anyone who is being abused”, she stated.

The six-episode radio drama, which aims to reach hearts and minds by intentionally weaving key messages through compelling and relatable stories uses regional messages and highlights different types of family violence. The package also includes guidelines on how to produce and implement highly interactive call-in shows, which bring the audience into the issues through live callers and messages.

Garry Conille, UNICEF LACRO Regional Director, also delivered remarks and acknowledged that “despite meaningful progress over the decades, VAWG still persists across the Caribbean and therefore we must all do more to stop it from happening in the first place. Several organisations have come together to launch a bold call to action to all Caribbean men, women, boys and girls to play your part in ending VAWG.

“This campaign is an opportunity to highlight the urgency of the issue across the Caribbean and the need for a new set of approaches and strategies that encourage and drive behaviour change towards the fulfilment of women’s and children’s rights starting with each and every one of us. UNICEF and PCI Media developed this campaign together with Caribbean organisations to ensure it is relevant and tailored to the needs of this region.”

The SBCC package takes into account different audience groups and different contexts. The materials are designed to mobilise a range of communication channels and be used in a variety of settings to create a dynamic multi-media campaign that allows space for each country’s implementers to conduct customised complementary activities to engage their populations and process the campaign’s messages in the most meaningful ways. While the core content comes from regional-level priorities, each country should determine their own priority audiences and what messages and materials are relevant to their context.

In closing remarks, Meesha Brown, President of PCI Media, conveyed that “the campaign calls in rather than calling out. It really calls in men and boys to be partners in this work with us. It is important for all of us to come together to solve these problems. We all must play our part, and this includes not only women and men, girls and boys, but other partners such as the media. This campaign is the beginning and we must take it and amplify it in spaces where people need to intersect with it and this work. This campaign brings together culture and community and together leveraging those things for change.”

**Download the campaign materials and learn how you can implement this campaign and play your part to end VAWG.**





Under the Caribbean Regional Programme, UNICEF has focused on parenting to reduce violence both for women and children. It is well known that violence against children (VAC) and violence against women (VAW) often occur within the same households and share many risk factors. When violence occurs among parents, guardians or caregivers, particularly intimate partner violence against women, violence against children can occur – with a range of consequences for both adult survivors and young children’s mental and physical well-being. No matter what form of violence a child is exposed to, their experience may lead to serious and lifelong consequences. Emerging evidence suggest there are ample ways to prevent violence, including through parenting interventions.

Professor Maureen Samms-Vaughan is a well-known Developmental and Behavioural Pediatrician, scholar and policy development specialist in child health, development and behaviour. She considers herself to be a feminist and advocate for early childhood development well-being with a focus on vulnerable children and those affected by violence.

She expressed that in the Caribbean “we don’t consider gender differences in children in a way that we should... we often think about it when children are older, such as adolescents.” Professor Samms-Vaughan was the leading specialist to contribute to the development of parenting guidelines that will raise awareness on the importance of positive parenting and gender socialisation as a key strategy to reduce and prevent violence in early childhood and exposure to family violence as well as improve the well-being for young people and their families across the Caribbean.

The optimal development of children depends on the interactions they have with their primary caregivers, including care that responds to their specific needs and caregiving roles. For this, it is important that countries prioritise policies and practices that are oriented towards the changing social norms where men are increasingly assuming roles as caregivers and the evolving family structures (two-parent, single-parent, adolescent mother/age-disparate, same-sex parents, mixed race and multi-generational). Reflecting on her own experiences in the field, Professor Maureen Samms Vaughan expressed that “strategies must be designed at national levels but need to be implemented at the community level. Until we get the policy buy-in at the top for gender transformative approaches to parenting, we are not going to progress

# PREVENTING VAC THROUGH GOOD PARENTING PRACTICES

even at the community level. Right now, there seems to be a disconnect between policy and what is being done and the kind of support that parents get in their communities.”

Many of the issues related to interpersonal, or family violence are grounded in gendered stereotypes and social norms that see violence as an appropriate response to day-to-day issues throughout the lifecycle. No matter what form of violence a child is exposed to, their experience may lead to serious and lifelong consequences.

As the current chair of the Violence Prevention Commission in Jamaica, she shared examples of good strategies in the region for violence prevention during the early childhood, “early childhood institutions are learning grounds for parents, teachers, and children. Firstly, at the community level, addressing violence through early childhood centers where teachers are trained to promote peace in the classroom and resist the use of violence in the classroom. There are also violence prevention programs for early childhood institutions.”

This work provides an opportunity for gender roles to shift within the home, to transform caregiving and promote positive parenting as violence prevention strategies, including rigid ideas around masculinities. Professor Maureen Samms-Vaughan shared that “while we focus on violence against women and girls, what sometimes happen is the exclusion of men and boys. Many times, we don’t emphasize enough on the importance of engaging men in reducing the violence against women and girls, engaging young boys and adolescents in violence prevention during early childhood development.”

The parenting guideline will be launched in 2023.



Professor Samms-Vaughan holds an MD and DM in paediatrics from the University of the West Indies and a PhD in epidemiology from the University of Bristol. Among her many accomplishments and public service awards, she received the Order of Jamaica in 2022 for her pioneering research, clinical work and policy development in the field of Child Health, Child Development and Behaviour.

UNICEF Photo /Pexels

# NATIONAL STUDY ON ECONOMIC COSTS OF VAWG FIRST IN CARIBBEAN

The total cost of Violence Against Women in Jamaica in 2018 was JMD102 billion (or more than USD1 billion). This represents 6.49% of GDP.

The total costs of VAWG for a 'typical case' were estimated at JMD 15.646 billion/USD121.8 million or 0.77% of the 2018 GDP.

The National Study on the Economic Costs of Violence Against Women and Girls (ECOVAWG) in Jamaica was launched by Representative of UN Women MCO Caribbean Tonni Brodber under the EU-UN Spotlight Programme with European Union Ambassador to Jamaica, Her Excellency Marianne Van Steen in partnership with Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, the Honourable Olivia Grange.


Ms. Brodber highlighted: "In Jamaica the total costs of violence against women and girls, is 15.646 billion Jamaica dollars for a typical case... The typical case is based on administrative data. So these are just the women who are showing up to the police and this is an underreported crime. 15.646 billion Jamaica dollars.

... This study provides evidence which will hopefully inform decision making and justify the budget decisions that are required for effective response yes, but also effective prevention. It is costing Jamaica too much. The stakes are really too high."



Photo credits: UN Women Photo/Dorian Clarke



 Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport and Tonni Brodber, Representative, UN Women during the launch of the National Study on ECOVAWG in Jamaica.

Please read the Representative's full remarks [here](#)

Please read the United Nations Resident Coordinator (a.i.) to Jamaica [here](#)

Please access the National Study on the Economic Costs of Violence Against Women and Girls (ECOVAWG) in Jamaica and its companion documents on our website [here](#)

Key Findings of the Data – Excerpted from Researchers' Presentations –

[Authors]: Bazlul H. Khondker, PhD (Team Leader), Samantha John-Aloye, PhD (Social Statistician), Lebrechtta Nana Oye Hesse-Bayne, MSc Econ (Gender and Development Specialist)

 Left: European Union Ambassador to Jamaica, Her Excellency Marianne Van Steen delivering remarks during the launch of the National Study on ECOVAWG in Jamaica.

Photo credit: UN Women Photo/Dorian Clarke



## Estimated Economic Costs for 2018

	(Million JMD)		(Million USD)		Percent of 2018 GDP	
	Typical Case	Full Coverage Case	Typical Case	Full Coverage Case	Typical Case	Full Coverage Case
<b>Total Economic Costs</b>	15,656	131,629	122	1,024	0.77	6.49
<b>Direct Cost</b>	13,600	85,948	106	669	0.67	4.24
<b>Economy Wide Costs</b>	2,056	45,682	16	355	0.10	2.25

- The economic cost of VAWG in Jamaica is high.
- The total cost under the **typical case** is JMD 16.0 billion (or USD \$0.12 billion). Cost under the typical case is 0.77% of the 2018 GDP (JMD 2,027.3 billion).
- The total cost under the **full coverage case** is JMD 102 billion (or more than USD \$1 billion). In terms of GDP, the total cost is 6.49%; direct cost is 4.24% and economy wide indirect cost is 2.25%



## Estimated Direct Costs

Cost Categories	Typical Case			Full Coverage Case		
	(Mil JMD)	(Mil \$)	% GDP	(Mil JMD)	(Mil \$)	% GDP
<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>13,600</b>	<b>105.8</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>85,948</b>	<b>668.7</b>	<b>4.24</b>
<b>Services Costs</b>	<b>12,574</b>	<b>97.8</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>58,101</b>	<b>452.0</b>	<b>2.87</b>
Health Case	152	1.2	0.01	3,224	25.1	0.16
Law Enforcement & Court Cost	1,370	10.7	0.07	43,824	341.0	2.16
Specialised Services Costs	1,433	11.1	0.07	1,433	11.1	0.07
Costs of Learning Time Lost	9,619	74.8	0.48	9,619	74.8	0.48
<b>Household Cost</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>8.0</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>27,847</b>	<b>216.7</b>	<b>1.37</b>
Personal Cost	393	3.1	0.02	12,584	97.9	0.62
Costs of Income Lost	632	4.9	0.03	15,263	118.8	0.75

**Total direct cost under the full coverage case JMD 85.9 billion or 4.24% of GDP**

- Services cost is JMD 58.1 billion or 2.87% of GDP.
- Household cost is JMD 27.8 billion or 1.37% of GDP.
- Out of pocket expenditure is around JMD 12.6 billion or 0.62% of GDP
- Personal income lost is JMD 15.2 billion or 0.75% of GDP



## Total Cost of VAWG in 2018

The economic cost of VAWG affects everyone in Jamaica

Cost to Jamaican girls =	0.5% of GDP
Cost to Jamaican adult female =	1.4% of GDP
Cost to Jamaican government & non-governmental service providers =	2.5% of GDP
Cost to Jamaican private sector =	2.2% of GDP
Cost to Jamaican society =	6.5% of GDP

The private sector is not immune to cost of VAWG. Almost all of these 17 activities or sectors are run by the private sector. Per year output loss to the private sector due to VAWG is JMD 45.7 billion or 2.2% of GDP. This is a large figure to any private sector group.

**Given this high loss to the private sector, elimination of VAWG in Jamaica should also be a priority of the private sector.**



# CARICOM, UNFPA JOIN FORCES FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TOOLKIT TRAINING WORKSHOP



Participants gather for a photo after the CSE training workshop in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad

Sixteen participants from across the Caribbean convened at the Brix by Autograph Collection for a two-day training workshop focused on the use of the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Toolkit Assessment Training for Out-of-School Youth.

The workshop, held 15-16 March 2023, was presented in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat's Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) the implementing partner for this activity and was facilitated by consultants Dr. William Adu-Krow, a Public Health Specialist, and Dr. Barbara Reynolds Educational Development Specialist.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) falls under strengthening capacity to deliver CSE in both in- and out-of-schools, which is one of the activities of Pillar 3 (Prevention) of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme. Pillar 3 (Prevention) is led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). CSE is a rights-based and gender-focused approach to sexuality education, whether in-school or out-of-school, and aims to equip children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will enable them to develop a positive view of their sexuality, in the context of their emotional and social development and the norms and standards espoused by society. While there is an CSE component of the Health and Family Life

Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Photos:  
Abraham Diaz



Dr. Quacy Grant, Vice-Chair, Civil Society Regional reference Group speaking during the CSE Workshop.



Batula Hassan Abdi, UNFPA Technical Advisor Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean

Education curriculum in the Caribbean, this tool-kit provides the corresponding non-formal curriculum for out-of-school children and young people. Support for this training is part of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional programme.

Batula Hassan Abdi, Technical Advisor Sexual and Reproductive Health Sub-Regional Office for the Caribbean, UNFPA in addressing the workshop shared the “two days of training of our young people on the use of the CSE Out-of-School Toolkit that was adapted and contextualised against the international guidance on out-of-school CSE to the Caribbean context. The process of developing the toolkit was a consultative process and in collaboration with young people is a very welcomed step for the region as this will support the process to improve coordination and delivery of out-of-school CSE by various civil society organisations in the Caribbean”.

Over the two-day training workshop, a range of topics including Circles of Sexuality, Values Clarification, Sexual & Reproductive Systems were covered.

Dr. Nicolette Henry, CSE Consultant, and UNFPA Spotlight Coordinator said, “this tool is a very useful to help young people in the region to have a culturally relevant guideline document that will help them to have healthy lives and relationships as they navigate life changing decisions about their sexual and reproductive health”.

Participants represented several CARICOM Member States including Antigua, Belize, The Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname.

Jeanine Blanchard, Programme Manager with the European Union Delegation to the Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, also delivered remarks during the workshop’s opening ceremony.

Photo Credit: Ashley Lashley Foundation

A close-up portrait of Ashley Lashley, a Black woman with her hair pulled back, wearing a bright orange blazer. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a plain, light grey.

**MEDIA: "ADVERTISING  
HAS ROLE TO PLAY IN  
ADVANCING GENDER  
EQUALITY, ENDING VAWG"**

ASHLEY LASHLEY (UNICEF)

# Thin, young, seductive.

## Recognize any of these stereotypes?

The latest research from UNICEF and the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media

### A review of advertising in Mexico and the Caribbean and its links to gender equality, gender norms, and violence against women and girls

uncovers insights into gender representation in advertising in the Caribbean. The study's findings indicate that harmful gendered norms and stereotypes are present in advertising in the Caribbean. The ways in which women and men were portrayed were subtle but distinct and illustrative of discriminatory gender norms and patriarchal systems that privilege masculinity over femininity. The ways in which they were depicted may also suggest that it is "appropriate" and "normal" to punish those who violate those norms – including through acts of violence. As such, the study's findings are highly concerning, particularly given the high rates and normalization of VAWG in the region.

In order to challenge these norms and promote positive content that advances the rights of women and girls, the study calls on advertisers and regulators to leverage the power of advertising to promote gender equality and prevent violence. It also calls to expand opportunities for adolescents and young people to participate in their communities and in the processes that affect them. It recommends working with youth organizations to change social and gender norms that stand in their way and develop platforms for them to share their experiences and propose solutions.

Ashley Lashley, a UNICEF youth advocate and feminist from Barbados, has engaged across various media platforms in the region from a young age. As part of the study launch, Ashley was invited to reflect on her own life experiences with discrimination in the media. As a contestant in the Miss World pageant at a young age she was vulnerable to negative gender stereotypes that often create barriers to advancement. Young women from marginalised communities can be perceived as not

having the competence, intellect and confidence needed to be crowned Miss World Barbados. She notes "and this is the general stereotyping of young girls and women who come out of marginalised and stigmatised communities, not only in Barbados, where I live, but around the world." While Ashley is not immune to persistent experiences and consequences of gender stereotyping in marketing and media, the experience has reinforced her views that young people can play an important role in addressing these inequities.

As digital technologies have become increasingly integrated into the daily lives of children and young people, the study suggests that interventions targeting multiple agents and institutional sites of gender socialization are needed. Ashley is concerned with the prevalence of gender stereotyping in advertisements across the Caribbean. However, she believes that young people can bring awareness around these issues so that they can feel a greater sense of belonging and pride within their communities. She explains, "it is extremely important to me that I continue to empower young women across the Caribbean region to capture their uniqueness, diversity and intelligence, and really never give up on themselves and really strive to overcome any obstacles or barriers that has been placed within their way".

Marketing and media can play a role in advancing gender equality and the promotion of non-violence by creating gender-sensitive content and breaking gender stereotypes. It can also become an ally on prevention and response to VAWG because of their unique reach to broad sections of the population.

The EU-supported study is part of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme. More information [here](#).

Ashley Lashley was crowned Miss Teen Barbados in 2016 and Miss World Barbados in 2018, and represented Barbados at the Miss World pageant in 2018. She is the founder and Executive Director of the [Ashley Lashley Foundation](#). She is also UNICEF Youth Advocate and CARICOM Youth Ambassador.

# CONFLICT CAN ALWAYS BE RESOLVED WITH DIALOGUE AND RESPECT

#PLAY YOUR PART



An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union



**Spotlight Initiative**  
To eliminate violence against women and girls



**unicef**   
for every child

# REGIONAL COMMON STANDARDS TO GUIDE POLICE AND JUSTICE RESPONSES TO VAWG, FV

UNDP continues to support regional institutions in integrating gender, and violence against women and girls (VAWG), including family violence (FV) in frameworks and processes particularly those related to Police and Justice response to VAWG and FV cases.

On 14 March 2023, UNDP held a validation meeting to present the document “Draft Regional Guidelines to Integrate Gender Perspectives, Gender-Based Violence Minimum Standards and Practical Solutions for Responding to VAWG/FV for Police and Justice Institutions”.

Twenty representatives from police and justice institutions across CARICOM Member States, United Nation agencies, experts, and civil society partners attended the meeting, and they welcomed the Common Standards. UNDP is currently updating the Common Standards based on the feedback received during the validation meeting.

The Common Standards identify practical methods to improve documentation, reporting, and data analysis systems while ensuring the protection of victims’ and survivors’ data and identities, which is part of the rollout of the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence. This year, UNDP will support the CARICOM Secretariat with the adoption and piloting of the Common Standards. The Common Standards are based on a situation analysis that was carried out in 2022 to address the gaps in coordination between justice and policing departments regarding VAWG and FV cases and identifying ways to improve the delivery of efficient response services and prevent re-victimisation.



# GIRLS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER



Chelsea Foster, Founder and Executive Director, Girls Of A Feather – a Mentorship and Advocacy group for Adolescent Girls in Saint Lucia – delivering the feature address during the launch of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme-funded project.

UN Women Photos: HiLights Pro and Gideon Ambrose/EyeKast)



Ten tablets were donated to four schools and five agencies including the Bordelais Correctional Facility (reps not photographed) to facilitate free online counselling sessions for their clients through Girls of a Feather's telehealth platform.






# GIRLS OF A FEATHER

Empowerment Through Self-Actualization



 Sacha Lee (left), from the St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association and Kezia St. Brice (right), a youth worker with the Department of Youth and Sports.



 Tonni Ann Brodber, Representative – UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean delivering remarks during the launch.

Girls of A Feather (GOAF) St. Lucia is one of the small grant recipients of Caribbean Regional Spotlight programme led by UN Women MCO – Caribbean.

The not-for-profit organisation, founded in 2014 by Chelsea Foster, provides mentorship and advocates for adolescent girls in the small island state.


GOAF started as an online platform while Foster was still enrolled at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad. The organisation has since grown to an in-person outfit with office space where it now meets the community it serves. The organisation offers several programmes for adolescent girls between 12 and 17 years, including Girls with Goals.

In March, the organisation launched its Spotlight-funded programme, that provides counselling via its online platform in three main areas: mental health, gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health.

The Spotlight small grant allows GOAF to continue to offer its online telehealth services to various communities across St. Lucia.

During the launch, GOAF donated 10 tablets to four schools and five agencies to facilitate free online counselling sessions for their clients through Girls of A Feather's telehealth platform.



 Josephine Lubin (left) ECADE (Collecting on behalf of LGBTQ+ organisation United and Strong) and GOAF Programme Coordinator, Dianne Francis (right).


# FIRST FACE-TO-TOE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

After nearly two years of virtual meetings, the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme held its first face-to-face Steering Committee meeting on Thursday, 20 April 2023 at UN House, Marine Gardens, Hastings Christ Church.

The Steering Committee co-chaired by United Nations Resident Coordinator, Didier Trebucq and Deputy Secretary-General, CARICOM Secretariat Dr. Armstrong Alexis welcomed David Mogollon Huerta, Head of Cooperation of the EU to Barbados, Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS, and CARICOM/CARIFORUM, Tonni Brodber, Representative, UN Women, Jenny Karlsen, Deputy Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Sub-regional office for the Caribbean, Dr. Nicolette Henry, UNFPA Spotlight Coordinator and CSE Consultant, Terry Ince, Chair, Civil Society Regional Reference Group, Kenroy Roach, Senior Development Coordination Officer, Strategic Planner and Team Leader, Resident Coordinator's Office.

Other Regional Programme stakeholders attended virtually,



 The Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme Steering Committee meeting.



Didier Trebucq, UN Resident Coordinator (left); Dr. Armstrong Alexis, Deputy Secretary-General (centre); and David Mogollon Huerta, Head of Cooperation of the EU to Barbados, Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS, and CARICOM/CARIFORUM (right) at the first face-to-face Steering Committee meeting.

# D-FACE MEETING HELD

Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Photos: Belle Imagery



Committee during its recent meeting.


including UNDP's Spotlight Coordinator Noha Saad, Sebastian Essayag, Gender Policy Specialist on EVAWG – Gender Cluster - Panama Regional Center (RSC-LAC), Ann-Marie Williams CARICOM Secretariat's Spotlight focal point, who also provided an update on the Secretariat's plans for the remainder of the Programme.

In his address to the meeting, Trebucq provided an overview of the Regional Programme focusing on the Delivery Rate and Risk, as well as the actions to be taken to ensure the Programme delivers in this second and final phase.

Nyakujarah presented highlights on the 2022 Annual Report, and the Programme's Delivery, as well the legacy and sustainability and resource mobilisation for the Regional Programme.



 Above: Terry Ince, Chair, Civil Society Regional Reference Group (left), being introduced to Didier Trebucq, UN Resident Coordinator (right), as Loveness Nyakujarah (background) looks on.

 Below: From left: Dr. Nicolette Henry, CSE Consultant and UNFPA Spotlight Coordinator, Jabbarie Hurdle, Finance & Administrative Analyst, Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme (centre), and Kenroy Roach, Senior Development Coordination Officer, Strategic Planner and Team Leader, UN Resident Coordinator's Office, (right) prior to the start of the Steering Committee meeting.




 Tonni Brodber, Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean

# SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE GUYANA SUPPORTING DEVELOPMENT IN REGION 7

## EU, UN and Government of Guyana delegation visit Batavia Village

The Amerindian village of Batavia in Region 7 in Guyana's hinterland is reachable from the nearest town of Bartica by boat. On 16 March, this remote hinterland community hosted the highest-level European official to ever visit Guyana. During her brief two-day state visit to Guyana, Deputy Secretary-General of the European Union's (EU) External Action Service Helena KÖNIG, dedicated a whole day to Batavia to interact with this welcoming Amerindian village and to learn about how the community is fighting against Gender-Based Violence (GBV) under Spotlight Initiative Guyana.



 Helena KÖNIG, Deputy Secretary General of the European External Action Service (centre-left) with Ambassador René Van Nes, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana and Suriname (centre); Yesim Oruç, Resident Coordinator, Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator Guyana (centre-right) with EU staff and members of the Spotlight Initiative Guyana team.

Hon. Pauline Sukhai, Guyana's Minister of Amerindian Affairs; René Van Nes, EU Ambassador to Guyana; Yesim Oruç, the United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator; and representatives of UNICEF and UNDP were all on deck along with Ayo Dalgety-Dean, the CEO and staff of Blossom Inc., the Spotlight Initiative Implementing Partner in Batavia.

The EU's top diplomats met with local officials and engaged with residents in the community and members from the Batavia Mountain Movers youth group and the Batavia Women's Group. The delegation was also treated to cultural presentations.

Addressing the residents and the leaders of Batavia, Ms. KÖNIG underlined the importance of partnerships for the long-term success of the Spotlight Initiative. Noting that tackling GBV will take a collective effort, she said "it has to be a cooperation between men and women, boys and girls and it has to start very early. It is extremely important...

and it's something that we will have to continue to work on. We're not perfect everywhere, but I think the important thing is the direction that we are going in together."

Emphasising the shared values between the EU, the UN and the Government of Guyana, the EU's Ambassador to Georgetown, René Van Nes also highlighted how important the work being done in Batavia and Guyana as a whole is to the EU. "The European Union really cares about values. We really care about making sure that people not only within the European Union, but within the rest of the world can live a life in dignity. And that is why the European Union decided to finance the Spotlight project which is funded in many countries in the world, including Guyana," he said.

The UN family led by Resident Coordinator Oruç echoed the messages of partnership and commended the Toshao and other village representatives for their work. "What brings us all together here today is the Spotlight Initiative, the world's largest investment in eliminating the scourge



A section of the audience during the presentation in Batavia.



Helena KÖNIG and Yesim Oruç with residents during a visit to the Batavia recreational centre.

of Gender-Based Violence; the world’s largest investment by the European Union with support of the United Nations to work around the world and here in Batavia. You join a community of activists and people and governments who are working to eliminate the scourge...women’s right to life is a human right, and we all have a role to call it out and to prevent it,” she said.

Speaking to the broader goals of her government in bridging development disparities in Guyana, Minister Sukhai acknowledged the importance of international partnerships and how they find concrete form in Amerindian villages across Guyana. Highlighting the many programmes of her government, she added, “as we cooperate at a national level, we are a member of the United Nations and we are also receiving a lot of support from friendly nations, including those of the European Union...Together I believe that Guyana has a very aspiring future as a country for its people, its children and for the youth.” Emphasising that domestic violence has been in her government’s agenda for some time, she added, “I understand, like everyone who is involved in this work, what it takes to move this scourge out of society. It’s a big task and it’s a work in progress.”

She further encouraged Blossom Inc. to continue the good work that it has started in Batavia to raise awareness and provide tools for solutions to GBV at the local level. Blossom Inc. is one of the UN’s civil society partners under the Spotlight Initiative Guyana. It has been working closely with Batavia and other hinterland communities to help mitigate social problems such as substance abuse, adolescent pregnancy, and violence against women and children.

Work conducted with the community under the Spotlight Initiative Guyana includes sensitisation sessions with village leaders, women and girls and other stakeholders; mobilisation of community members through forming the Gatekeepers Group, the Boys and Girls Club and the Batavia Mountain Movers; and conducting awareness sessions and capacity building activities.

By engaging with the community and developing partnerships with local stakeholders, the work being conducted under the Spotlight Initiative Guyana is helping to build momentum for change and drive progress towards a more equal and just society for all.



Helena KÖNIG, Ambassador Van Nes and Yesim Oruç and Guyana’s Minister of Amerindian Affairs, Pauline Sukhai with members of the Batavia Village Council and Staff of Blossom Inc.

# GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING, A TOOL FOR FINANCING INITIATIVES TO ADDRESS VAWG



Above: Group photo of GRB participants at Regional Workshop in Trinidad and Tobago  
(Credit: UN Women Photo / Shurdelle Jennings)

Gender responsive budgeting (GRB) is a strategy to achieve gender equality, where budgets or proposed spending is analysed and designed to ensure interventions to eliminate inequalities between women and men and boys and girls, are adequately financed.

Under the Regional EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, budget planners, analysts and gender focal points were brought together for national workshops in Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago to enhance their analytical and technical skills for analysing public expenditures in different sectors to address violence against women and girls (VAWG). A regional session was also convened with senior leadership in finance, statistics and gender equality from nine CARICOM countries to improve their technical capacity to better understand and apply international GRB better practices in national budgeting processes.

The EU-UN Spotlight Initiative is the world's largest targeted effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls

(VAWG). It was launched in 2017 with an initial budget of EUR 500 million.

Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) – Caribbean Tonni Brodber in opening remarks to the Regional workshop held in Trinidad and Tobago said there are many misconceptions about what Gender-responsive budgeting is, explaining it is not about separate budgets for women nor spending on women or women-only programmes.

“Rather what gender-responsive budgeting seeks to do, is to ensure that the collection and allocation of public resources is carried out in way that is effective and inclusive and contributes to advancing gender equality and sustainable development, while responding to the capacities, constraints and needs of women and men, girls and boys. And it calls for adjusting budget policies to benefit all people.

The analysis, legislation, and other practical policy measures can address gender bias and discrimination. It has been



 European Union Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Peter Cavendish delivering remarks during the Regional Workshop in Trinidad and Tobago.

(Credit: UN Women Photo / Shurdelle Jennings)

proven to do so in other countries and in countries in our region. It helps us to assess the implications for people of any planned action whether via national legislation policies and programmes in all areas and at all levels, ensuring that women and men benefit equally, and that inequality is not the norm, and it is not perpetuated,” Ms. Brodber added.

The UN Women Representative said too, the workshop facilitated through the Spotlight Initiative demonstrates that the Spotlight Initiative is not just a one-off investment, rather it is an investment in sustainability and long-term systemic change.

European Union Ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago, Peter Cavendish said in remarks to the Regional workshop held in Trinidad and Tobago: “Gender responsive budgeting is smart budgeting for smart future economies. Going forwards the more successful economies will be those that bring all of the talents of all parts of the workforce into their most productive roles and GB is essential for this.”

United Nations Resident Coordinator to Guyana, Yesim Oruç, in her opening remarks to the Guyana national workshop said she was very proud to lead the Spotlight Initiative Programme, generously funded by the European Union, in Guyana where from the Head of State to Minister Vindhya Persaud - co-chair of the Initiative’s Steering Committee - the effort, the passion and the commitment are vocal and strategic, and partnerships with civil society are dynamic and effective.

“The Government is budgeting for women and for ending VAW....For example, Budget 2023 tops up by more than 30% the budget of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security – the Ministry with the primary mandate to provide services for vulnerable women including survivors of GBV,” the UN RC stated.

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