



Caribbean Regional Spotlight Initiative Regional Civil Society Reference Group Terms of Reference (TOR)

Background and Objective

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is an egregious human rights violation that cuts across all countries and cultures. It hinders the achievement of women and girls' human rights and their abilities to live and love and reach their full potential in safety and dignity. Eliminating VAWG and achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is, therefore, a pre-requisite to achieving the 2030 Agenda.

In September 2017, the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU) launched the Spotlight Initiative -- a global partnership to eliminate all forms of VAWG. Backed by a financial investment of EUR 500 million, the Initiative will operate in five regions (Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific) and respond to all forms of VAWG, with a particular focus in specific regions on domestic and family violence, sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices, femicide, trafficking in human beings and sexual and economic (labour) exploitation. In line with the 2030 Agenda, the Initiative will fully integrate the principle of 'leaving no one behind' and adopt a multi-stakeholder approach.

For decades women's movements have been at the forefront of the fight to eliminate violence and harmful practices against women and girls across the globe. Their expertise spans all the Outcomes of the Spotlight Initiative's comprehensive Theory of Change -- supporting the implementation of laws, policies and interventions in order to prohibit, prevent and sanction all forms of VAWG; tackling impunity; ensuring timely, adequate and high-quality multi-sectoral services for survivors; educating women and girls on their rights, as well as men and boys on the harmful consequences of traditional notions of masculinity; addressing social and cultural norms that perpetuate and enable discrimination; ensuring accurate, reliable and meaningful data on all forms of VAWG; and building alliances, movements and solidarity across the world to eliminate VAWG and advance progress on gender equality and women's empowerment more broadly.

The Spotlight Initiative intends to work closely with women's movements and relevant human rights-based civil society organizations on the design and implementation of the Initiative and its Country Programmes in a mutually supportive and reinforcing way, deploying and building upon their vast knowledge and experience, developed at global, regional, national and community levels.

To this end the Initiative will establish a **Civil Society Regional Reference Group** (CS-RRG) as an institutional mechanism to harness civil society expertise. The CS-RRG will have a dual responsibility — as advisors to the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme and as advocates and partners for the realization of its objectives.





Mandate of the CS-RRG:

The meaningful engagement of women's rights groups and relevant civil society organisations, including those representing victims and survivors of violence and groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination (rural/hinterland women and girls, adolescent mothers, women and girls living with HIV/AIDS, women and girls living with disabilities, LGBTQI persons, etc.), is a key principle of the Spotlight Initiative.

In line with this, a **Civil Society Regional Reference Group** will be established as an institutional mechanism to bring in civil society participation and expertise. The establishment of the CS-RRG will be guided by the principles of inclusion, feminist-led and human rights-based, national/regional ownership and transparency.

Meetings will be held on a quarterly or as-needed basis, and these are expected to be held remotely. Members of the Civil Society Regional Reference Group will serve in their individual capacities on an unpaid volunteer basis.

The CS-RRG will act as an institutional mechanism to bring in civil society participation and expertise. The Spotlight Initiative reference groups serve a dual function — as advisors to the Spotlight Regional Programme and as advocates and partners for the realization of its objectives. The Group will also hold the Spotlight Initiative accountable for the commitments made under the Regional Programme. At least 50% of all members of the Civil Society Regional Reference Groups should be from women's rights and feminist activist groups. The Reference Group will have representation of women and girls from regional groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. It will also include strong, national level CSOs with a focus on GBV given that at the regional level there is not a network of NGOs working on GBV specifically, with special consideration of the inclusion of women's organizations in non-Spotlight countries. It is also proposed to have one CSO from the Civil Society Reference Group of each of the Spotlight countries to facilitate linkages between regional programme and national programmes.

The composition of the Reference group will prioritise:

- Regional and national Feminist and women organizations working on violence against women and girls.
- Diversity and representation of different groups to ensure an inclusive and intersectional approach
- Participation of at least two young women's /adolescent girls' organisations (or organisations with programmes dedicated to young women/adolescents)
- Participation of at least one men's group
- Umbrella groups or networks that represent multiple NGOs that are focused on gender based violence
- Diversity of language communities (English , French)





Functions:

The Spotlight Initiative CS-RRG would have the following roles:

- Provide advice on issues related to violence against women and girls
- Serve as partners in the advocacy, promotion and communication activities, including dissemination of the Spotlight Initiative messages to the public, especially adolescents, young people, families, community leaders, faith-based leaders and the media
- Provide advice on on-going interventions, possible scale-up and challenges
- Serve as an interactive space and open forum for dialogue/learning between the Spotlight Initiative and women's rights' organisations working on EVAWG
- Provide other relevant information, analysis and lessons learned that could feed into the future programming and advocacy efforts of the Spotlight Initiative
- Support the UN Implementation Team and provide advice on programming, including by raising risks and proposing mitigation measures, as well as providing feedback to the Regional Steering Committee (RSC)
- Provide representation at Regional Steering Committee Meetings (20%)
- Work under the guidance of the Technical Coherence Lead (UN Women) in support of work by RUNOs with civil society.

Composition:

The Civil Society Regional Reference Group should be a strategic and substantive network of persons with diverse experience, expertise and perspectives in the priority areas of the Spotlight Initiative. It will be composed as follows:

- The group will consist of maximum of 15 persons, selected through an open selection process.
- All persons included in the CS-RRG should have expertise and experience in the area of addressing violence against women and girls. The criteria is listed below.
- Membership in the CS-RRG will not positively or negatively prejudice the respective individual's organization in accessing Spotlight Initiative funds
- CS-RRG members join the group in their individual capacities and not as representatives of their organizations

Criteria of Selection:

A maximum of 15 persons will be selected on the following criteria ensuring a wide balance of the elements indicated across the criteria.

1. Available to actively participate in group meetings virtually, and have adequate time to follow up on activities, promote initiatives and respond to consultations.
2. Minimum of two years' work experience in the non-governmental sector working with one or multiple registered organizations, academia, research, progressive faith based organisations,





independent Women Human Rights Defenders or activists who are not affiliated with an organization or at least five years' activism within one or more thematic areas outlined below, in lieu of work experience.

3. Thematic expertise in one or more of the following areas:
 - i. gender-based violence
 - ii. intimate partner violence (domestic violence)
 - iii. family violence (including incest)
 - iv. school-based violence
 - v. child abuse and protection
 - vi. early sexual initiation
 - vii. teen and pre-teen pregnancies
 - viii. sexual and reproductive health
 - ix. mental health
 - x. reintegration of offenders
 - xi. broader gender equality issues
 - xii. other relevant areas
4. Knowledge and expertise in a combination of Spotlight Initiative pillars:
 - i. Policy & Legislation
 - ii. Institutional Strengthening
 - iii. Violence Prevention
 - iv. Essential Services
 - v. Data management
 - vi. Women's movements/civil society
5. In adherence with the leaving no one behind principle, intersectionality and diversity of communities/constituencies across population typologies such as female victims and survivors of violence, youth, elderly, indigenous people, migrants, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV, sex workers, men and boys (positive masculinities etc.), LGBTQI, etc.
6. Diversity and balance of geographical typologies and scope (Regions):
 - i. urban/peri-urban communities
 - ii. rural communities
 - iii. hinterland/indigenous communities
 - iv. mining camps
 - v. other
7. Diversity and Language: All members are expected to communicate in English. In addition language diversity is key to facilitate dialogues between members of reference groups and various linguistic communities within the Caribbean region.
8. Independence: CS-RRG Members should not hold political functions or be part of management of political parties