



REGIONAL PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

CENTRAL ASIA

July 2020



REGIONAL PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

| <p>Programme Title: Alliances for Change – Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practice in Central Asia</p> | <p>Recipient UN Organizations (RUNOs): UN Women, UNFPA, and UNDP</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|------------------|---------------|-------|----------------|---------------|------|------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|
| <p>Programme Contact: Norimasa Shimomura UN Resident Coordinator, Kazakhstan Address: 14, Mambetov str., Nur-Sultan, 010000, Kazakhstan, Tel.: +7 7172 696 550 E-mail: norimasa.shimomura@one.un.org</p> | <p>Programme Partner(s): UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP.</p> <p>Working in partnership with Governments, Civil Society, Activists, Survivors, Youth, Men and Faith-based Leaders from the five Central Asian countries as well as Afghanistan.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Programme Country:</p> <p>Central Asia and Afghanistan Regional Programme</p> | <p>Programme Location: Regional, covering 5 Central Asian countries, and in partnership with Afghanistan. Programme Management is under the UN RC and in collaboration with UN Agencies based in Kazakhstan and EECA Europe and Central Asia Regional Offices.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Programme Description: To end all forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in Central Asia, existing national legislation must be transformed so that implementation comprehensively and meaningfully prevents and protect against SGBV and harmful practices; while providing survivors with the support and redress they require. To change the root causes of SGBV and harmful practices in Central Asia, advocates, survivors and communities need both tools for change, partnerships for change, and platforms for voice and agency to be fostered.</p> <p>In brokering the creation and remit of the first Central Asia-wide mechanism (“the Alliance”) on SGBV, the UN will support governments, civil society, activists, survivors, youth, men, and faith based leaders to come together across borders, to foster the voice, agency and expertise needed to transform the prevalence of and response to SGBV and harmful practices for all communities. Cross-border, Central Asian-specific sharing of best practices, joint development of regionally specific Models and Tools guiding state-led prevention of and response to SGBV and harmful practices, as well as regional efforts to close the data gap on SGBV will be fostered. Such a region-wide network will build broad alliances across the 5 countries and Afghanistan to collectively and systematically build knowledge and action to</p> | <p>Total Cost of the Spotlight Regional Programme (including estimated Unfunded Budget): USD 5,392,708</p> <p>Total Funded Cost of the Spotlight Regional Programme (Spotlight Phase I¹ and UN Agency contribution): USD 4,432,461</p> <p>Breakdown of Total Funded Cost by RUNO:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="839 1240 1394 1464"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name of RUNOs</th> <th>Spotlight Phase I (USD)</th> <th>UN Agency Contributions (USD)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>UN Women</td> <td>2,541,617</td> <td>72,485</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UNFPA</td> <td>688,010</td> <td>37,880</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UNDP</td> <td>1,018,957</td> <td>73,512</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>4,248,584</td> <td>183,877</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Name of RUNOs | Spotlight Phase I (USD) | UN Agency Contributions (USD) | UN Women | 2,541,617 | 72,485 | UNFPA | 688,010 | 37,880 | UNDP | 1,018,957 | 73,512 | TOTAL | 4,248,584 | 183,877 |
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¹ Funding from the Spotlight Initiative will be allocated by the Operational Steering Committee in two distinct phases: Phase I will entail allocating 70% of the funding envelope, Phase II will only be allocated depending on the Regional Programme’s overall needs and performance towards achieving results.



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

strengthen legislation, and through innovative practices, effect national and local level changes of knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and practices which are at the root of all forms of SGBV.

Estimated No. of Beneficiaries

Note – the table below is a compilation of inputs from the UN Agencies in the five Central Asian Countries. Given the regional nature of the programme, harmonising how the numbers of beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are calculated is something which the UN in Kazakhstan will work in coordination with the programme’s technical experts.

To date, calculation of Direct Beneficiaries is based on: numbers of parliamentarians, key officials, departments within government ministries, institutions and commissions who have the authority to implement policies and programmes around SGBV, as well as representatives from women and youth groups and other CSOs; data provided by UN-supported SGBV service providers on numbers of women and girls supported;

Calculation of Indirect Beneficiaries is based calculation of affected populations, based on household prevalence and perception surveys, as well as national studies on SGBV.

| Indicative numbers | Direct | Indirect |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Women | 76,945 | 18,668,141 |
| Girls | 71,831 | 6,610,235 |
| Men | 37,176 | 13,592,347 |
| Boys | 45,445 | 6,869,016 |
| Total | 231,397 | 45,739,739 |

Start Date: 24 July 2020

End Date: 31 December 2022



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Recipient UN Organization

Name of Representative: Alia El-Yassir

Signature

Name of Agency: UN Women

Date & Seal



Recipient UN Organization

Name of Representative: Giulia Vallese

Signature

Name of Agency: UNFPA

Date & Seal



Recipient UN Organization

Name of Representative: Yakup Beris

Signature

Name of Agency, UNDP

Date & Seal





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UN Resident Coordinator

Name: *Norimasa Shimomura*

Signature

Date & Seal



The UN Executive Office of the Secretary General:

Ms. Amina J. Mohammed

Signature: _____

Date: _____



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Acronyms

| | |
|----------|--|
| BPfA | Beijing Platform for Action |
| CEDAW | UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CoE | Council of Europe |
| CRC | UN Convention on the Rights of the Child |
| CRPD | UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities |
| CSW | UN Commission on the Status of Women |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| EU | European Union |
| GRB | Gender-responsive budgeting |
| ICPD | International Conference on Population and Development |
| MICS | Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey |
| OSCE | Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe |
| NSOs | National Statistical Offices |
| NWMs | National Women's/Gender Machineries |
| RC | UN Resident Coordinator |
| RCO | UN Resident Coordinator's Office |
| RUNOs | Recipient UN Organizations |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender-Based Violence |
| SI | Spotlight Initiative |
| SOPs | Standard Operating Procedures |
| SPECA | UN Economic Commission for Europe – UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia-Pacific's Special Programme for the Economies in Central Asia |
| UNCT | UN Country Team |
| UNDP | UN Development Programme |
| UNFPA | UN Population Fund |
| UNRC | UN Resident Coordinator |
| UNSDCF | UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework |
| UN Women | UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women |
| UPR | Universal Periodic Review |
| VAW/VAWG | Violence against Women/Violence Against Women and Girls |
| Y-Peer | Youth Peer Education Network |



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Executive Summary

SGBV is a significant public health concern and human rights violation in Central Asia. Understanding prevalence remains a challenge given the lack of harmonised methodologies used nationally in the Central Asia region to monitor SGBV. However, the 2017 Demographic and Health Survey for Tajikistan presents a picture which is indicative for all of Central Asia: approximately 24% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence in their lifetime; 31% of ever-married women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence from their spouse; 2% of women aged 15-49 have experienced sexual violence and it is most common among women who are divorced/separated or widowed (4%). In Kazakhstan, the current level of prevalence is 17% for physical/sexual violence and 21% for of psychological violence².

At the geographic crossroads of Asia, Afghanistan faces dramatically different socio-economic and human development realities than its Central Asian neighbours. Unlike Central Asia's rankings in the global gender equality indices, and as a result of conflict, conservative social norms, as well as inconsistent interpretations of formal legislation and religious customs, Afghanistan remains one of the most extreme examples of gender inequality in the world, ranking 168 out of 189 countries (2018)³, and rated as one of the worst countries to be a woman.⁴

Where Afghanistan and its Central Asia neighbours share commonalities, however, are in some of the specific challenges faced in ending SGBV and harmful practices. In all six countries, legislation is in place to tackle SGBV but contains varied and inconsistent interpretations of the CEDAW and the CRC in terms of transforming the impact gender norms have on women and men, girls and boys, in transforming the subsequent power relations between women and men, and in actively prohibiting gender-based discrimination, including its most egregious form, that of SGBV. In all six countries, implementation of non-discrimination and SGBV-related legislation is significantly hindered by lack of clarity in the legislation and subsequent regulatory frameworks on how to ensure a multi-sectoral, inclusive and survivor-centred approach for all communities in a country; lack of political will to provide the necessary resources to give legislation and its regulatory frameworks the legs needed to transform the prevalence of SGBV and harmful practices in their country; and the lack of voice on the part of survivors and their communities to demand inclusive, non-discriminatory access to quality support. Underpinning all of this is the need to build upon and foster greater, mutually supportive alliances among and between government and civil society.

In all six countries, survivors of SGBV hesitate to come forward due to fear of social stigma, limited access to services, limited trust in the police and judiciary to treat cases fairly, and for many, lack of understanding of what their rights may be under the law.

Intersectionality of discrimination in Central Asia is a stark reality, with women in particular groups facing multiple layers of vulnerabilities to gender-based discrimination, including SGBV. These include women with disabilities, women living with HIV, rural women, ethnic minorities, women in early and/or forced marriage, and women migrants. These women face the risks of SGBV, at times limited access to services or discrimination and prejudice when accessing services.

The realities of religious radicalisation and its impact on SGBV in the Central Asia region and Afghanistan differ considerably but are felt in all contexts. Nonetheless, in the case of Central Asia, studies have shown that women are "vulnerable to radical recruitment in particular ways that men in Central Asia are not. Women's social status in the patriarchal cultures of these societies, it has been argued, made joining radical and extremist causes a liberating escape. At the same time, however, there has been evidence both of women leading men (and other women) into extremist groups and women following their husbands or male relatives into such groups."⁵

² Sample survey on Violence Against Women in Kazakhstan, Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan, Committee for Statistics, 2017.

³ UNDP <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>, visited October 2019.

⁴ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/2019/10/peril-progress-prosperity-womens-well-being-around-the-world-feature/>

⁵ Internews. - <https://internews.org/resource/information-flows-and-radicalization-leading-violent-extremism->



The absence of regionally owned and led mechanisms or organisations, including academia, is a challenge unique to Central Asia. As a result, there are limited opportunities for joint and systematic learning for action, innovation and knowledge generation on transforming the legislation, services, attitudes and practices to end SGBV and harmful practices. Increasingly there is a need for a safe and enabling environment for a broad range of government and decision-makers, civil society, activists, survivors, youth and men to come together, to discuss, brainstorm and develop systematic action and tools which are nationally relevant. The region is witnessing a political détente among the five Central Asian countries – a situation which has not been seen for the last 25 years. Building on this shared openness, and drawing on the shared history, culture and language, as well as the long-lasting legacies of past governance systems, there is unprecedented opportunity to foster cross-border peer mentoring, learning and action to effect change at the national and community level.

Overall Programme Strategy Summary

Ending SGBV would accelerate achieving the SDGs and addressing it requires fostering a transformational approach across the region.

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) for Central Asia will invest in the development of a Central Asia Alliance on SGBV, comprised of both government and non-governmental stakeholders, including parliamentarians, ministries and government departments, judiciary and police, civil society organisations (CSOs), activists, survivors, youth, men and religious leaders. The role of the Alliance will be to develop action-oriented models, tools and alliances with the sole purpose of contributing towards increased efficacy, inclusion and scope of state and non-state prevention, response and behaviour change strategies and tools to end SGBV and harmful practices including, child, early and forced marriages. Through the SI partnership in Central Asia, key recommendations emerging from the January 2018 Gender Study for Central Asia carried out by the European Commission would be addressed.⁶

Mobilising the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as in partnership with Afghanistan, the SI seeks to fill a vital vacuum in the region, while bolstering the work of the SI Country Programmes. Namely, the absence of a much-needed Central Asian consensus around SGBV prevention, response and behaviour change to support the ongoing national and community efforts in this regard; and the absence of any institutional forum for such consensus to be generated in a way which ensures inclusive, continuous and collective dialogue among and between government and non-governmental stakeholders in the face of the constricting civic space in much of the region. The SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will ensure that all Models, Tools, and Transformational approaches adopted at the regional level reinforce and support the implementation of the international norms and standards guiding work on SGBV, including the CEDAW, the CRC and the Council of Europe (CoE)'s Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – also known as the Istanbul Convention. In addition, the Models will reflect the importance of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) methodologies – including costing – to ensure prevention and response to SGBV is robust.⁷

Leveraging Impact of SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

The SI Regional Programme for Central Asia has been developed in consultation with the six UNCTs involved. Through the support of the RUNOs Regional Offices and the UN RC Kazakhstan, the RUNOs have begun dialogue with their agency counterparts in the countries on implementation. At all stages of the programme's implementation, the SI Regional Programme will coordinate with the six UNCTs, and in particular the SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan with a view to:

[central-asia](#)

⁶ EuroPlus Consulting, for the European Commission (2018). "Regional Overview Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia", January 2018.

⁷ EuroPlus Consulting, for the European Commission (2018). "Regional Overview Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia", January 2018.



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- a) ensuring the agenda-setting of the Central Asia Alliance, its scope of work, and its vision will bolster the on-going national-level work on legislative reform and services;
- b) identifying and engaging national stakeholders as members of the Alliance so as to support the investments made by the SI Country Programmes in terms of tool development, advocacy, and supporting tangible behaviour change at the national and community level;
- c) ensuring the Alliance reflects an inclusive membership of vulnerable populations, activists, survivors, and key government officials;
- d) ensuring regional women's movement building is grounded in local needs and priorities and reinforces and complements ongoing country-level support to CSOs.

The SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are focused on all six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative. The investments made through the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will bolster, inform and be informed by the national work in particularly around Pillars 1, 2, 3 and 6, but also to some extent the work under Pillar 5. To ensure the Regional Programme's continued relevance to these SI Country Programmes, the UN Resident Coordinators from these three countries will participate in the SI Regional Programme's Steering Committee.

The SI for Central Asia and Afghanistan will be a major step forward in shoring up the gains that have begun to take hold in the region in understanding the scope and prevalence of SGBV and will provide the opportunity to bring transformation in the thinking and actions of men and women in the region, with a particular focus on youth. The SI for Central Asia and Afghanistan would be one of the only systematic opportunities for Afghan national stakeholders working in the area of SGBV to have tailored opportunities to engage in cross-border exchange, tools development and action-oriented alliance building to support the work on the ground.

Geographic Scope

The SI covers the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with partnerships with national stakeholders from Afghanistan. Managed by UNCT Kazakhstan, in coordination with the other UNCTs in Central Asia, the scope of work is focused entirely at the regional level with no interventions being done at country level, but with a view to supporting on-going and future national level SGBV work in these countries. The only exception to this is the provision of grants to grassroot women's organization, with incorporated capacity development support, as part of pillar 6.

PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

I. Situational Analysis:

The five countries of Central Asia – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan – represent a vast, diverse region. From Tajikistan's low-income ranking⁸, to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan's ranking of lower middle income, to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan at upper middle-income classification, the countries' have relatively high human development. Kazakhstan is currently listed among countries of Very High Human Development, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan among High Human Development, and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan among Medium Human Development countries. As a direct result of their shared Soviet legacy, combined with relatively consistent national efforts to reduce poverty and improve social and economic wellbeing of its citizens, Central Asia is a region with important progress in terms of advancing gender equality. The decline in maternal mortality rates, stable gender parity in primary and lower secondary educational attainment, the overall significant presence of women in the formal labour force (with exception of Tajikistan), the stability of women's labour force participation rates in the region (with exception of a decline in Kyrgyzstan)⁹, and the growth in proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments - are some of the important gains made in the last twenty years in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the region. Yet trend such as the decreasing share of women-parliamentarians in Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan since 2014¹⁰, present a legitimate cause for concern.

Simultaneous to the above, the region presents unique lessons of stalled and unfinished progress towards a real and lived gender equality. Gender-based discrimination in the region derives from deeply engrained social norms – including gender norms – which have resulted in entrenched, traditional and patriarchal beliefs. The norms, and subsequent gender roles and stereotypes, are at the root of the power relations between women and men; and influence all aspects of women, girls', boys' and men's choices – from their levels of educational attainment to their fields of study; to their career opportunities; to the age at which they marry and the number and timing of the children they have; and to the roles they play in their homes. The impact of gender norms is exacerbated by the limited capacities and resources of national institutions to implement existing legislation and policies pertaining to gender equality, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Limited political will at the highest level to enforce this legislation, and to adequately resource the institutions therein, remains a significant barrier to realising gender equality and women's empowerment, including ending all forms of SGBV.

Subsequently, while gender parity in all levels of education is largely universal, across Central Asia, women continue to work in predominantly low paying sectors, in part-time jobs and as manual agricultural labour – often as unpaid seasonal “family workers”. Despite providing significant contributions to the nations' agricultural outputs, women constitute the minority among landowners. Women are also under-represented in decision-making positions in both the public and private sector and occupy low and middle management positions in sectors traditionally dominated by women, such as education, healthcare and social work. By producing the vast majority of unpaid work women are routinely shouldering the burden of failing social welfare systems in the region - cumbersome, outdated and underfinanced systems which do not support their work in the home. These same gender-based inequalities in Central Asia must be further understood in terms of intersectionality, and the degree to which one's location, age, disability, orientation and ethnicity impact the level of gender-based discrimination encountered. In the face of SGBV, these persistent realities - alongside the societal expectations and pressures - significantly challenge a survivor's ability, belief and opportunity to rise out of a violent situation.

SGBV is a significant public health concern and human rights violation in Central Asia. Understanding prevalence remains a challenge given the lack of harmonised methodologies used nationally in the Central Asia region when collecting and analysing data. However, the 2017 Demographic and Health

⁸ Tajikistan was moved down from lower-middle to low income economy by the World Bank in 2018

⁹ World Bank Gender Statistics Data Base

¹⁰ World Bank Gender Statistics Data Base, Inter-Parliamentary Union



Survey for Tajikistan presents a picture which is indicative of the shared challenges the five countries face: approximately 24% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence in their lifetime; 31% of ever-married women aged 15-49 have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence from their spouse; 2% of women aged 15-49 have experienced sexual violence and it is most common among women who are divorced/separated or widowed (4%). In Kazakhstan, the current level of prevalence is 17% for physical/sexual violence and 21% for of psychological violence¹¹. The Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) surveys show that levels of acceptance by women of violence from their husbands, ranges from 14.2% in Kazakhstan (2015), to 32.8% in Kyrgyzstan (2018) to 35% in Turkmenistan (2016). The last MICS in Tajikistan (2005), showed that tolerance towards violence was at an extremely high 74.4% and the MICS in Afghanistan (2011) showed a tolerance rate of 91%. Other forms of SGBV including the harmful practices of Child Marriage and Early Unions are also occurring in different parts of the countries in the Region.

This situation is further hampered by low awareness of girls and women about their rights and equal opportunities and limited knowledge to claim and demand the services they need. Men and boys also have low awareness of women's rights and limited understanding of how gender norms have shaped their lives. Knowledge by men and boys, in particular among male policy makers, law enforcement, judiciary and court officers, media, and youth would contribute to preventing gender-based discrimination, including SGBV.

At the geographic crossroads of Asia, Afghanistan faces dramatically different socio-economic and human development than its Central Asian neighbours. Over three decades of conflict has destroyed the country's primary and secondary level education systems, significantly reduced the provision of basic health services, resulted in limited food security, malnutrition and limited livelihood opportunities for women and girls in particular. Over 36% of the population live under the poverty level.¹² While the quality of life for many Afghan women has undergone extraordinary transformations in the last decade, "ensuring women's rights remain a most critical development challenge for Afghanistan".¹³ Unlike Central Asia's rankings in the global gender equality indices, and as a result of conflict, conservative social norms, as well as inconsistent interpretations of formal legislation and religious customs, Afghanistan remains one of the most extreme examples of gender inequality in the world, ranking 168 out of 189 countries.¹⁴

Where Afghanistan and its Central Asia neighbours share commonalities, however, are in some of the specific challenges faced in ending SGBV and harmful practices. In all six countries, legislation is in place to tackle SGBV but contains varied and inconsistent interpretations of the CEDAW and the CRC in terms of transforming the impact gender norms have on women and men, girls and boys, in transforming the subsequent power relations between women and men, and in actively prohibiting gender-based discrimination, including its most egregious form, that of SGBV. In all six countries, implementation of non-discrimination and SGBV-related legislation is significantly hindered by lack of clarity in the legislation and subsequent regulatory frameworks on how to ensure a multi-sectoral, inclusive and survivor-centred approach for all communities in a country; lack of political will to provide the necessary resources to give legislation and its regulatory frameworks the legs needed to transform the prevalence SGBV and harmful practices in their country; and the lack of voice on the part of survivors and their communities to demand inclusive, non-discriminatory access to quality support. Underpinning all of this is the need to build upon and foster greater, mutually supportive alliances among and between government and civil society.

In all six countries, the persistent and negative impact of gender norms remains one of the greatest barriers to ending all forms of SGBV and harmful practices. Survivors of SGBV hesitate to come forward due to limited trust in the police and judiciary to treat SGBV cases fairly; and fear of social stigma for

¹¹ Sample survey on Violence Against Women in Kazakhstan, Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan, Committee for Statistics, 2017.

¹² UN/Government of Afghanistan (2015). "UN Development Assistance Framework 2015-2019". 2015, Page 7.

¹³ UN/Government of Afghanistan (2015). "UN Development Assistance Framework 2015-2019". 2015, Page 11.

¹⁴ UNDP <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>, visited October 2019.



leaving violent unions and making “family” matters public. The realities of religious radicalisation and its impact on SGBV and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriages in the Central Asia region and Afghanistan differ considerably, but are felt in all contexts. Nonetheless, in the case of Central Asia, studies have shown that women are “vulnerable to radical recruitment in particular ways that men in Central Asia are not. Women’s social status in the patriarchal cultures of these societies, it has been argued, made joining radical and extremist causes a liberating escape. At the same time, however, there has been evidence both of women leading men (and other women) into extremist groups and women following their husbands or male relatives into such groups.”¹⁵

Intersectionality of discrimination in Central Asia is a stark reality, with women in particular groups facing multiple layers of vulnerabilities to gender-based discrimination, including SGBV. These include women with disabilities, women living with HIV, rural women, ethnic minorities, women in early and/or forced marriage, and women migrants. These women face the risks of SGBV, at times limited access to services or discrimination and prejudice when accessing services.

The absence of regionally owned and led mechanisms intergovernmental and regional non-governmental bodies or organisations, including academia, is a challenge unique to Central Asia. As a result, there are limited opportunities for joint and systematic action-oriented learning, innovation and knowledge generation on transforming the legislation, services, attitudes and practices to end SGBV and harmful practices. Increasingly there is a need for a safe and enabling environment for a broad range of government and decision-makers, civil society, activists, survivors, youth and men to come together and develop systematic action and tools which are nationally relevant. The region is witnessing a political détente among the five Central Asian countries – a situation which has not been seen for the last 25 years. Building on this shared openness, and drawing on the shared history, culture and language, as well as the long-lasting legacies of past governance systems, there is an unprecedented opportunity to foster cross-border peer mentoring, learning and action to effect change at the national and community level.

The 2030 Agenda has gained significant traction in Central Asia, including its affirmation that gender equality is a condition sine qua non for sustainable development and, at the same time, an indispensable outcome of it. The 2030 Agenda, along with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), prioritizes the realization of gender equality and women’s rights in a cross-cutting manner across its economic, social and environmental dimensions, along with the stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5). The SDGs seek to change the course of the 21st century by addressing key challenges such as poverty, inequality, health, the impact of climate change and women’s empowerment.

Ending SGBV would accelerate achieving the SDGs, but requires a transformational approach at the local, national and regional level to a) ensure legislation actively seeks to change the power imbalance between women and men, that it addresses the social norms - including gender norms - which perpetuate SGBV, and that the legislation itself ensures comprehensive, inclusive and effective tackling of SGBV; b) ensure the institutional response to SGBV under such legislation - led by government in partnership with CSOs - additionally seeks to not only provide services, but to do so in a manner which adopts a survivor-centred, multi-sectoral approach, allowing the survivor to rise out of violence and to change their realities; and c) require the voice, agency, platforms and tools to actively change the knowledge, behaviours, attitudes and practices of individuals and communities so as to end all forms of SGBV and harmful practices. All of this requires strengthening the knowledge, data and monitoring around SGBV prevalence, sectoral responses, and social perceptions. The government and general public, in particular survivors of SGBV, youth, men, and faith-based leaders, need to be active players to change negative gender norms at the root of SGBV.

¹⁵ Internews. - <https://internews.org/resource/information-flows-and-radicalization-leading-violent-extremism-central-asia>

Outcome 1:

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have domestic violence (DV) laws. Currently Turkmenistan has no DV Law, although it has adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) to end DV, and within the NAP has committed to developing a Law. Rape as a form of sexual violence is criminalized in countries in Central Asia, though often marital rape is not recognized as a criminal offense. These legislative gains in Central Asia are important. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, the law on DV (2017) requires the government to name a coordinating body for all activities related to the prevention of and response to domestic violence. It also assigns responsibilities for preventing DV and assisting victims to access multiple government and non-governmental entities, requiring a survivor-centred approach. Afghanistan adopted its law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (VAW) (2009), and in 2016/2017 saw parts of this civil law incorporated into the country's Penal Code, resulting in the original, more comprehensive law being left unused by law makers. In 2018, the President reaffirmed the strength and application of the civil VAW law.¹⁶

Nonetheless, the majority of legislative frameworks in the region do not align comprehensively with the international commitments, norms and standards outlined in the CEDAW and CRC Conventions, both of which all six countries have ratified; nor as outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA), the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). And while none of the six countries have ratified the Council of Europe (CoE)'s Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence – also known as the Istanbul Convention - the standards it upholds, including the criminalisation of all acts of SGBV, including DV, are gaining traction in the region, particularly among the CSOs and the national women's/gender machineries. Kazakhstan has already initiated steps to move forward with ratification of the Istanbul Convention and has confirmed in its recently presented 5th CEDAW Periodic Report that it will ratify the Convention. As regional studies conducted on the status of gender equality have shown, including a 2017 report by the European Union, “the criminalization of domestic violence remains an open question in all five Central Asia countries” and that “gender equality laws are also not universally adopted, nor effectively enforced in those countries where they have been adopted.”¹⁷

Outcome 2:

Within Central Asia, those countries which have legislation on ending SGBV and harmful practice have yet or have just started to develop robust and comprehensive policy frameworks, standard operating procedures (SOPs), or case referral/case management protocols which provide all service providers. – Ministries, local authorities, government institutions and CSOs providing SGBV care – explicit guidance and policy requirements so as to ensure comprehensive inclusive, quality services and response for survivors of SGBV.

Further, in many cases, women and girls who have experienced SGBV and harmful practices in both the rural and urban areas remain unaware of their rights; fear backlash and stigma for coming forward – from their families and communities as well as the service providers and Police; or are unable to access sufficiently comprehensive services necessary to overcome violence for themselves and their children. Lack of trust in the police and judiciary throughout the five countries and in Afghanistan have also held survivors back from reporting abuse. In Afghanistan, monitoring reports show that despite the laws in place, prosecution of violent crimes against women is rare, with over half of the cases reviewed by the UN between 2015-2017 being sent for mediation, which is in direct contradiction to both the national legislation as well as the principles contained in the CEDAW.¹⁸

In recent years, and through international support, there have been some positive experiences, including the introductory trainings within the five Central Asian countries on what a case referral/case

¹⁶ Amnesty International. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/03/afghan-women-will-be-silent-no-more/>. Visited October 2019.

¹⁷ EuroPlus Consulting, for the European Commission (2018). “Regional Overview Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia”, January 2018. Page 6.

¹⁸ Amnesty International. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2019/03/afghan-women-will-be-silent-no-more/>. Visited October 2019.



management system – also referred to as a multi-sectoral coordinated response – to SGBV means; and some introductory work on the UN Global Essential Services Package for women and girls, and initial work in establishing Regional standard operating procedures at the national levels in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and recently in Uzbekistan. In Afghanistan, through the strong support of the international community, a number of services have been put in place, with work still on going to establish case referral protocols to ensure a multi-sectoral response to SGBV.

National efforts in all six countries are underway to transform approaches towards ending SGBV and harmful practices. The lack of political will to effectively transform and implement legislation, services, court-response, financing, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours remains a pervasive challenge. The advocates in government - National Gender Machineries, MPs, Judiciary, line Ministries and local authorities - require significantly increased access not only to financial and human resources, but also to necessary institutional skills and knowledge on how to tangibly change the SGBV prevention and response system in the country. National level dialogue between government and civil society - both key players in the prevention and response to SGBV are at times sporadic, and reactive rather than systematic, and replicate previous approaches, while not necessarily tackling the root causes to SGBV.

Alliances - among government departments, civil society, activists, men, youth and religious leaders and women from vulnerable communities - and with these groups - are seldom sustained nationally, and lack the injection of necessary innovative ideas, knowledge and models to develop a collective response and prevention approach towards SGBV. In many of the Central Asian countries, aspects of discourse on SGBV and harmful practices, and the inclusion of socially vulnerable groups into this discourse - can be sensitive. Raising the alliance building to a regional level provides all actors with a safe, inclusive and relevant mechanism for learning, innovation and shaping platforms for change. Further, there is an increasing lack of civic space for CSOs and activists in the majority of countries in Central Asia, in part due to limited funding opportunities and limited capacities, and in part due to increasingly closed spaces for dialogue between rights holders and duty bearers. CSOs in Central Asia have very limited exposure to best practices and common challenges in the region and beyond. For CSOs in Afghanistan, where funding opportunities are considerably greater than that of Central Asia, the larger challenge is issues of capacities, and issues of exposure to best practices in the area of SGBV.

Outcome 3:

Public tolerance of violence against women is high in Central Asian countries. According to a [recent Oxfam study](#) conducted in six districts of Tajikistan, 96.5% of men interviewed and 71.5% of women consider that women must tolerate violence for the benefit of the family. And while perception surveys are limited in the region, according to National Beijing +25 Reviews and the experiences of gender equality advocates in government and civil society, these findings are reflective of common refrains in all five countries. In the region, survivors of sexual violence are blamed, and face stigma and harsh judgement if they come forward due to deep-rooted patriarchal norms resulting in double victimization.

Social norms – including gender norms – are engrained in individuals from birth onwards, and by adolescence, the social norms which inform the majority of beliefs, attitudes and subsequent practices are fixed. In Central Asia, the education pedagogies and curriculum often reinforce a number of negative gender norms and gender stereotypes. While healthy lifestyles are gradually being taught in some schools and youth friendly services are increasing in some urban centres of the region, overall sex education, including comprehensive sexuality education in school is not taught in the five countries. Increasing conservatism and influence of Islam and Orthodox Christianity in both rural and urban areas of Central Asia are reinforcing traditional gender roles. Through families, peers, institutions and systems, media, private sector, culture and faith, these norms are socialised into individuals. Negative gender norms, negative masculinities, attitudes about violence and power imbalance between women and men are at the root of SGBV and harmful practices, and the stigma survivors often face. To address stereotypical gender norms, eliminate SGBV, and end harmful practices that foster injustice, it is critical to engage men and boys at different levels of society in their capacity of agents of change and holders of solutions.



Outcome 5:

In Central Asia, most of the available data on SGBV is not disaggregated or sufficient to inform a comprehensive response to support the design of legal protection regimes and facilitate legislation enforcement. Data gaps on many of the gender-related SDG Indicators is an overarching challenge in Central Asia. Kazakhstan carried out a comprehensive prevalence study on Violence Against Women in 2017; Turkmenistan plans to start conducting in 2020 a survey on “Health and Status of a Woman in the Family”; Tajikistan has recently expressed an interest to conduct a prevalence of violence survey; and in Kyrgyzstan, the Gender in Society Perception Study (GSPS) has been launched as well as components of a men’s attitude survey on SGBV and gender equality were rolled out in 2013. Excepting Kazakhstan and to some extent the study on men’s attitudes towards SGBV and gender equality in Kyrgyzstan, the majority of SGBV data in the region does not result in internationally comparable data given the varied methodologies used. Although scarce data is available on VAW there is a clear need for more qualitative data, including prevalence. To effectively prevent VAW it is important to understand underlying causes and design targeted interventions based on evidence and informed decisions.

Outcome 6:

The situation for civil society organisations varies across Central Asia, however a common theme over the last five years is increasingly restrictive legislation on the operation of CSOs working on particular issues related to human rights, justice and rule of law¹⁹. Women’s organisations in the region are expressing growing concerns about a backlash against women and LGBTI human rights defenders and social change activists.²⁰

In Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, the majority of NGOs are Government-affiliated. There are few CSOs working on SGBV and harmful practices and their capacity is generally not very strong, which has to some extent limited the growth of an active women’s movement in the two countries. In Tajikistan, there has been a flourishing of CSOs since 1995. In 2013 the number of CSOs was estimated at over 2,600. However, recent requirements on CSOs to provide information on grants funds for project implementation have made it more challenging for less established CSOs to thrive. The civil society sector In Kyrgyzstan is one of the strongest in Central Asia with over 17,391 CSOs registered and around 5,700 operational. Nearly half of all active NGOs (43 percent) work on human rights issues, with 17.1 percent having a particular focus on gender issues. In Afghanistan, hundreds of organizations defending women have become prominent since 2001 (some with the monetary support from the international community). Young women’s groups are now using technology to strengthen the voice of Afghan women. Moreover, Afghan women active in the Americas, Europe, and Asia are supporting the voices of women in Afghanistan through international fora. These platforms allow women both inside and outside Afghanistan to build stronger ties and work closely in the fight for justice and the women’s movement is consequently taking a more coherent structure.²¹

In general, women’s movement in Central Asia have been hampered by lack of resources. Without sufficient funding to meet their core organizational needs, CSOs depend almost entirely on external donor organizations and consequently often know more about the priorities of international organizations than about their own constituents and their needs. Moreover, given the competition and limited funding, many CSOs have not been able to invest in internalizing their EVAWG work, which at times contributes to organizations and advocates perpetuating harmful gender norms and use of power themselves. Other issues include a critical mass of LGBTI organisations that lack funding²². If CSOs are to become sustainable, they need to be able to develop long-term programmes. Some CSOs, especially newly created ones that are implementing small projects, lack the means even to support an office and staff.

Moreover, Central Asian CSOs suffer from limited access to information sharing and limited platforms for dialogue both within countries and regionally. The lack of strong CSO coalitions in Central Asia, has

¹⁹ International Partnership for Human Rights, <https://www.iphronline.org/the-situation-of-civil-society-in-central-asia-20151022.html>. Visited February 2020.

²⁰ Sisters for Change, <https://www.sistersforchange.org.uk/2019/05/22/backlash-against-womens-rights-in-europe-and-central-asia/>. Visited January 2020.

²¹ Free Women Writers, <https://www.freewomenwriters.org/2016/09/14/afghan-women-history-post-taliban/>. Visited February 2020.

²² ILGA-Europe, https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/funding_for_lgbti_activism_in_europe_and_central_asia.pdf. Visited February 2020.



created barriers to sustained collaboration between women's organizations beyond project-based activities and reduces the potential impact of each organization. There is a need for stronger sharing of CSO knowledge on lessons in SGBV programming, and exposure to promising global practices, which often is limited to larger NGOs or international NGOs. In all countries the majority of CSOs are concentrated in the capital cities, in spite of all the Central Asian republics having large rural populations. This is largely because the representative offices of international organizations are situated in the capitals, where people have more access to information. It is difficult for people living in remote regions to travel because of the cost of transport.

Consultations with civil society organisations and representations have also verified the demand for capacity building support to engage with stakeholders at a national and regional level on SGBV action. The Interim CSRG for the Regional Programme (including representatives from all 6 countries) expressed a demand for a virtual network to be established of CSOs in Central Asia to support work on SGBV. CSO representatives encouraged actions that enabled women to take control of development agendas and programmes that are affecting their lives. CSOs express concerns cross Central Asia that the political will for women's human rights has been largely declarative and has not generated significant structural changes in Central Asia. In order to challenge the current development model and to claim women's rights, strong movements of rural, migrant and urban poor women are needed. There is a need for support to build their capacity to meaningfully engage in decision making processes and to be able to form strong local feminist movements, connected with national and regional movements, to demand accountability from state and non-state actors.

II. Programme Strategy

Overall Summary

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) for Central Asia will invest in the development of a Central Asia Alliance on SGBV, comprised of both government and non-governmental stakeholders, including parliamentarians, ministries and government departments, judiciary and police, civil society organisations (CSOs), activists, survivors, youth, men and religious leaders. The role of the Alliance will be to develop action-oriented models, tools and alliances with the sole purpose of contributing towards increased efficacy, inclusion and scope of state and non-state prevention, response and behaviour change strategies and tools to end SGBV and harmful practices.

The SI for Central Asia will harness the collective expertise, experiences, challenges and energy of gender equality advocates from the five Central Asian countries as well as Afghanistan. This will be done with the purpose of advancing legislative reform, policy dialogue and advocacy, technical assistance in the development of most effective measures to address SGBV and social norm changes necessary to prevent and respond to SGBV, and harmful practices such child and forced marriage and Early Unions. Through the SI partnership in Central Asia, key recommendations emerging from the January 2018 *Gender Study for Central Asia* conducted for the European Commission would be addressed by the Regional Programme.²³

The SI Regional Programme will primarily focus on the five countries of Central Asia and will bring in Afghanistan at relevant times for sharing of experiences, learnings and best practices. The programme has therefore been designed to primarily address the needs of Central Asia and has identified those specific areas in which a Central Asia/Afghanistan dialogue would be mutually beneficial. While Afghanistan's context remains distinct from Central Asia, a shared ethnic and cultural heritage, as well as increasing avenues for governmental and CSO partnerships bridging the Afghanistan/Central Asia borders is to be capitalised upon. Government and CSO partners from Afghanistan will be invited to learn and to share their experiences in rolling out international norms and standards on SGBV in the

²³ EuroPlus Consulting, for the European Commission (2018). "Regional Overview Final Report: Gender Study for Central Asia", January 2018.



context of intersectionality and increasing conservatism.

Mobilising the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as in partnership with Afghanistan – the SI seeks to fill a vital vacuum in the region. Namely, the absence of any Central Asian consensus around SGBV, and the absence of any institutional forum for such consensus to be generated.

Through collective thinking and collective advocacy, governments, Parliamentarians, civil society, human rights and women’s activists, survivors, and women from groups often marginalised will develop Central Asia-specific models for legislative, policy and institutional reform. These Central Asia-specific models will be grounded in the international norms and standards guiding work on SGBV, including the CEDAW, the CRC and the Istanbul Convention. In addition, the Models will reflect the importance of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) methodologies – including costing – to ensure prevention and response to SGBV and harmful practices is robust.

In so doing, and through outreach to key national level stakeholders in Afghanistan, the SI will contribute towards the development of a Central Asia Alliance against SGBV. The Alliance would be a cross-border mechanism for sharing best practices and development of regionally specific models on legislative and policy response to SGBV, sharing experiences and enhancing Government/Civil Society dialogue within a safe and enabling environment. The SI, through the shaping of the Alliance, will also seek to tackle the social norms – including gender norms – which result in gender-based discrimination, as a root cause of SGBV. This will be achieved through mobilising experiences and partnerships with young boys and girls, men, survivors, faith-based organisations; and social innovation in the use of technology and big data to contribute to closing key knowledge and data gaps common among the five countries of Central Asia.

The SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are focused on all six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative. The investments made through the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will bolster, inform and be informed by the national work in particularly around Pillars 1, 2 and 3, but also to some extent the work under Pillar 5. To ensure the Regional Programme’s continued relevance to these SI Country Programmes, the UN Resident Coordinators from these three countries will participate in the SI Regional Programme’s Steering Committee.

The ultimate goal of the SI Regional Programme is that through Central Asia innovations around understanding, preventing and responding to SGBV and harmful practices, the national stakeholders and over 35 million women and girls in the five countries, as well as national stakeholders in Afghanistan will benefit by creating an environment where there is zero tolerance for SGBV and harmful practice.

The SI for Central Asia will be a major step forward in shoring up the gains that have begun to take hold in the region in understanding the scope and prevalence of SGBV and will provide the opportunity to bring transformation in the thinking and actions of men and women in the region, with a particular focus on youth. The SI for Central Asia would be one of the only systematic opportunities for Afghan national stakeholders working in the area of SGBV to have tailored opportunities to engage in cross-border exchange, tools development and alliance building to support the work on the ground.

[Summary by Pillar](#)

Pillar 1: Through a participatory, cross-border Review of National Legislation on SGBV and harmful practices, a broad-based network of experts will come together from government and CSOs, as well as activists and survivors of SGBV from Central Asia and Afghanistan (where appropriate). In close consultation with the three SI Country Programmes, the work of this emerging Alliance will focus on developing key recommendations for transforming legislation and state-driven prevention and response to SGBV and harmful practices. Essential to the comprehensive revision of national SGBV-related legislation is greater knowledge by government, activists and civil society about the best practices in implementing the CEDAW, CRC, Istanbul Convention, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), BPfA and ICPD commitments and standards in terms of ending SGBV. The process of conducting this extensive, and participatory five country review will also launch the first collective networking in Central Asia on SGBV which will be part of the mechanism described in Pillar



2.

Pillar 2: The priority for Pillar 2 is institutionalizing a broad-based Alliance for Central Asia, which is capable and positioned to drive legislative, policy and institutional reform in the area of SGBV specific to the regional context. Such an investment will also address the lack of a robust women's movement in the region. Given the complexities of a cross border Alliances, the development of this Forum will firstly be in illustrating the power of collective action and leveraging the work of the SI Country Programmes in the region. Specifically, through strengthened cross-border networking and experience sharing, collective capacity development and awareness raising on international norms and standards, and hands-on work with international and national experts in the development of SGBV SOPs "models" grounding in international norms related to SGBV, a nascent Central Asia Alliance on ending SGBV and harmful practices will emerge. In the three years of the SI, the programme will concretely support adaptation, adoption and institutionalization of Regional Models on SOPs for key sectors at the national level ensuring inter-ministerial coordinated case referral/case management response, capacity building, prevention and data collection. Relevant SOPs to be prioritized by the Alliance will be systematized across the region, for example on survivor-centred Justice and multi-sectoral responses to SGBV. The agenda, focus and composition of the Alliance, as well as the timing of the meetings and nature of the tools, will be informed in part by the on-going work and needs of the SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as well as work supported by the other two UNCTs in the region.

Pillar 3: The SI, under the leadership of the emerging Alliance wherever possible, will significantly invest in building regional momentum around on-going national level social mobilisation currently taking place in countries like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Pillar 3 will focus strongly on: a) developing regionally-specific models on how to roll out social norm and behaviour change at the national and local level; and b) deepening regional alliances among non-traditional partners so as to foster greater national and local level partnerships in this regard. Emphasis is on bringing together men, youth, faith-based leaders, survivors, activists and government. The messaging, the nature of the alliances, the inclusion of groups who are often marginalised and important champions, will all be coordinated with the SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as the UNCTs in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Significant interventions include: building on the Youth Peer ("Y-Peer") movement and other relevant youth networks; and mobilising men – including faith-based leaders – to be champions for equality and non-violence at the regional level. This in part could be achieved through the MenEngage platform, and raising up to the regional level a movement such as "#Don't Be Silent" which gives voice and leadership to survivors of SGBV. Given the importance that families play in society, specific modules/training packages on the supportive roles that husbands, and fathers can play in the family will be reviewed and introduced at the regional level.

Pillar 5: Data gaps on many of the gender-related SDG Indicators is an overarching challenge in Central Asia. However, there have been some initial inroads in Kazakhstan on data collection and analysis on SGBV, and the Pillar would seek to highlight these positive experiences to the emerging Alliance, folding in representatives from all countries' National Statistical Offices (NSOs). Grounded in international standards and best practices, regional Models for the collection of Prevalence, Administrative, and Perception data as part of multi-sectoral coordination and response to SGBV will be developed by the Alliance and the NSOs. The SI will also support using "big data", including crowd sourcing to understand occurrence and perceptions of SGBV. The SI for Central Asia will invest in conducting analysis of men's perceptions of SGBV, in order to get at the root causes of SGBV against women and girls as well as creating accessible and user-friendly graphics of how vulnerability to SGBV intersects with other forms of discrimination against women and girls; and the degree to which the Central Asian countries are achieving the SDG targets on SGBV. Linked to on-going work around monitoring the SDGs in Central Asia, the data and knowledge generated under the SI will be accessible on digital platforms operated and utilized by the Central Asia Alliance, disseminated and utilised at the national levels.

Pillar 6: The SI initiative will invest in strengthening regional leadership, coordination, knowledge sharing and networking of women rights organizations to support CSOs collective and strategic engagement with governments and other actors within the broader Alliance for Central Asia on SGBV. A regional CSO network, linked to the Central Asian Alliance, will be established, involving WROs, CSOs, activists and women's rights defenders across the six countries. In order to strengthen the role of CSOs to strategically and collectively engage as accountability holders in their engagement with the Central Asia



Alliance and other national and international platforms, CSOs will receive monitoring tools and technical assistance to develop strategies and strengthen their capacity to monitor and advocate for progress on the road map for aligning national laws and regulations with international standards and conventions. A virtual knowledge platform will also be established to facilitate remote knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices and joint development of advocacy strategies. This will also provide the space for CSOs to introduce and promote the scale up of innovations across countries.

With focus on strengthening institutional capacities of grassroots organization that do not currently have the technical capacities to access funding from international organizations, the SI will provide small grants to CSOs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Capacity development support will be incorporated with the provision of the small grants to support efficient monitoring, ensure quality control, and best use of funds and to ensure coherent approach to strengthening CSOs capacities for involvement in the women's movement. Moreover, an existing local women's right organization in Central Asia, with potential to become a regional grant making body, will be identified and will receive technical support on requirements for grant-making and support to gain the capacity to provide regional leadership and influence policy making. CSOs from all 6 countries, involved in regional movement building, will also be engaged to provide capacity building support for the involvement of other CSO in regional movement building, based on a self-assessment of capacity development support needs. Through this support it is expected that CSOs in Central Asia will gain the capacities to be leaders of the regional women's movement, advocating and working for transformative change, while being more coherent and aligned with local priorities and realities in the region.

Geographic Scope

The SI covers the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, with partnerships with national stakeholders from Afghanistan. Managed by the UNCT Kazakhstan, in coordination with the other UNCTs in Central Asia, the scope of work is focused entirely at the regional level with no interventions being done at country level, apart from the provision of grants to grassroots women's organization, with incorporated capacity development support, as part of pillar 6.

Coherence and Complementarity of work on the ground

The SI Regional Programme for Central Asia has been developed in consultation with the six UNCTs involved. Through the support of the UN Regional Offices and the UN RC Kazakhstan, the RUNOs have begun dialogue with their agency counterparts in the countries on implementation. At all stages of the programme's implementation, the SI Regional Programme will coordinate with the six UNCTs, and in particular the SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan with a view to:

- a) ensuring the agenda-setting of the Central Asia Alliance, its scope of work, and its vision will bolster the on-going national-level work on legislative reform and services;
- b) identifying and engaging national stakeholders as members of the Alliance so as to support the investments made by the SI Country Programmes in terms of tool development, advocacy, and supporting tangible behaviour change at the national and community level;
- c) ensuring the Alliance reflects an inclusive membership of vulnerable populations, activists, survivors, and key government officials.
- d) ensuring regional women's movement building is grounded in local needs and priorities and reinforces and complements ongoing country-level support to CSOs.
- e)

The SI Country Programmes in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are focused on all six pillars of the Spotlight Initiative. The investments made through the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will bolster, inform and be informed by the national work in particularly around Pillars 1, 2, 3 and 6, but also to some extent the work under Pillar 5. To ensure the Regional Programme's continued relevance to these SI Country Programmes, the UN Resident Coordinators from these three countries will participate in the SI Regional Programme's Steering Committee.

The SI for Central Asia and Afghanistan will be a major step forward in shoring up the gains that have begun to take hold in the region in understanding the scope and prevalence of SGBV and will provide the opportunity to bring transformation in the thinking and actions of men and women in the region, with a particular focus on youth. The SI for Central Asia and Afghanistan would be one of the only systematic



opportunities for Afghan national stakeholders working in the area of SGBV to have tailored opportunities to engage in cross-border exchange, tools development and action-oriented alliance building to support the work on the ground.

Results Chain by Outcome

Pillar 1 – Legislative Reform

Outcome 1: Legislative frameworks, based on evidence and in line with international human rights standards, on all forms of VAWG and harmful practices are in place and translated into plans.

Overview: As the previous section has outlined, compared to the majority of countries in the Europe and Central Asia region, a number of the five Central Asian countries lack comprehensive legislation prohibiting and responding to all forms of SGBV.

It is essential that the legislation pertaining to SGBV and harmful practices align with the international norms and standards agreed to by all Central Asian countries. The legislation in the countries lack comprehensive scope, contain h limited definitions of either family, types of violence, types of relationships and in some cases, insufficient definitions of gender equality. Further, there is a lack of clarity in the laws around enforcement, division of roles, the legalities of Protection Order implementation, and lack of comprehensive inclusion of the steps and measures required for a survivor-oriented multi-sectoral response to cases of SGBV. Moreover, protection orders have been ineffective in cases where they allow for continued co-habitation if the perpetrator has no alternative housing. Hence this raises issues of security and further psychological impact on the violence survivor that have not been considered.

The last two years, however, have seen a gradual momentum within the five Central Asian countries to improve the legislative frameworks around SGBV, and to significantly strengthen the implementation of the provisions already on the books. Political champions are emerging, particularly in Kyrgyzstan and potentially in Kazakhstan. Nevertheless, the growing political will in the countries has yet to translate into concrete action. Further, and due to the limited political will in investing in ending all forms of gender-based discrimination, the national women's/gender machineries (NWMs) in the five countries all face the inter-connected challenges of vague remit, limited authority, marginalisation within government decision-making processes, limited human and financial resources, and limited outreach among local government departments.

Theory of Change:



Spotlight Initiative
To eliminate violence
against women and girls

If there is a sustained opportunity for decision-makers and rights holders in all five countries to come together on SGBV, reflecting the voices of survivors, activists, NGOs and service providers, academia, Parliamentarians and Ministries

If through a participatory process at the Central Asian level, decision-makers and rights holders, including those most vulnerable to intersecting forms of discrimination, collectively increase their knowledge on the international norms and standards on SGBV and the direct linkages between ensuring a life free of violence to overall national development

If duty barriers and rights holders together develop Central Asia-level models based on international standards, and collectively seek to mobilise Political Will for legislative reform pertaining to SGBV

Then an enabling environment in support of legislative reform on SGBV and other forms of discrimination is in place at the regional level which supports change on the ground to guarantee the rights of women and girls

Because national governments have access to regionally accepted, tested recommendations for the effective implementation of national legislative frameworks addressing impunity and providing for coordinated action around addressing SGBV

Response:

Output 1.1 Regional Partners in Central Asia²⁴ have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending SGBV and on gender equality and non-discrimination that respond to the rights of groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies' recommendations.

Bringing together the five Central Asian countries, the UN will support government, civil society and activists to collectively review the current national laws on SGBV and some forms of harmful practices, namely Child and forced Marriage and Early Unions.²⁵ The regional legislative review would assess the degree to which laws uphold the commitments taken and norms set forth in the CEDAW and related General Recommendations, the Istanbul Convention, the CRC and related General Comments, the ICPD, the BPfA and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and related

²⁴ Ministries, including National Gender/Women's Machineries (NWMs), Offices of the President, Parliamentarians, human rights institutions and women's right advocates, including representation from those groups most vulnerable to SGBV.

²⁵ DV Laws and accompanying Protection Orders, law governing sexual violence, laws governing Child Marriage/Early Union and the degree to which the Criminal Codes address SGBV.



General Comments.

In the region-wide Review, specific consideration will be given to: the scope of the national SGBV Laws in protecting against all forms of SGBV and some forms of harmful practices; the degree to which the Laws ensure that all women and girls, regardless of their disability, ethnicities, orientation, marital status and location are accessing multi-sector, survival-centred services, including justice; and the benefits and implications and measures required in order to criminalise all forms of SGBV.

Through the SI, the process of conducting the review will lay the groundwork for establishing a UN-supported Central-Asia wide Alliance over the coming five years (see Outcome 2). Initially, through SI support and at the Central Asia level, the UN will bring together representatives from the Offices of the Presidents, NWMs, Ministries of Justice, Ministries of Health and Social Welfare, women leaders including Parliamentarians and national/regional gender equality experts and advocates from CSOs, including those representing socially vulnerable groups.

This initial network will collectively oversee the process of the Review of SGBV Legislation, and together discuss a road map for mobilising strong political will and an enabling environment for legislative reform on the ground. In so doing, the nascent Alliance would deepen its understanding of international norms and standards, the root causes of SGBV, and the intersecting forms of discrimination facing certain groups of women who equally face the risk of SGBV – including women living with disabilities, women living with HIV, women migrants, LGBTI and women of ethnic minorities.

Target Groups:

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** From all five Central Asia countries Representatives from the Offices of the President, who have oversight of the NWMs; National Gender Machineries; Ministries of Justice, Health, Social Welfare and Interior; Parliamentarians; regional, national and grassroots NGOs supporting prevention, response and awareness of SGBV, as well as survivors and activists from marginalized groups. From Afghanistan, representatives from Parliament, NWM, Ministry of Justice and CSOs who worked around the reform of SGBV Legislation and its integration into the Penal Code;
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** Persons who benefit from the reform of SGBV legislation at the national level in the five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan.

Note – the table below is a compilation of inputs from the UN Agencies in the five Central Asian Countries. The calculations are still ongoing and will be updated in the coming weeks. Given the regional nature of the programme, harmonising how the numbers of beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are calculated is something which the UN RCO in Kazakhstan will work in coordination with the programme’s technical experts.

Calculation of Direct Beneficiaries is based on: numbers of parliamentarians, key officials, departments within government ministries, institutions and commissions who have the authority to implement policies and programmes around SGBV, as well as representatives from women and youth groups and other CSOs; data provided by UN-supported SGBV service providers on numbers of women and girls supported;

Calculation of Indirect Beneficiaries is based calculation of affected populations, based on household prevalence and perception surveys, as well as national studies on SGBV.

| Outcome | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Indicative numbers | Direct | Indirect |
| Women | 520 | 2,512,558 |
| Girls | 50 | 1,090,006 |
| Men | 460 | 2,499,709 |
| Boys | 50 | 2,029,552 |
| TOTAL | 1,080 | 8,931,200 |



Lessons Learned:

While the five Central Asian countries share a common history, culture and languages, as well as common institutional challenges, all have distinct economic realities and significantly varying degrees of political will, knowledge and capacities on the issues of human rights, equality and SGBV. While all five countries have aspects of functioning democratic systems, there is limited trust among citizens on the efficacy and transparency of these systems. The five countries have varying degrees of freedom of assembly, expression and association, and access to reliable funding, and as such, the expertise among civil society to respond to SGBV and harmful practices is inconsistent. In none of the five countries are resources sufficiently allocated to prevent and respond to SGBV. In the case of Afghanistan, the challenges of developing and implementing any legislation which impacts the family differs considerably in scope from that of the Central Asian countries. Nonetheless, Afghan national stakeholders have accrued considerable expertise on the challenges and impact of strengthening both the Civil and the Criminal Codes' applications in cases of SGBV. Under Pillar 1, the lessons learned from the Afghanistan NWM, Ministry of Justice, key Parliamentarians and CSOs will be shared within the higher level regional Central Asia dialogue on these issues.

International development assistance in the five countries is limited when compared to their neighbours in South Asia. As upper Middle-Income countries, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan do not receive international aid from traditional donor routes. In the case of Uzbekistan, until the political turn over in 2016, donors had great difficulty engaging in the country. Mobilising sufficient and sustained technical expertise to overcome the knowledge gaps among government personnel and even within the CSO community therefore remains a challenge. With the improved inter-governmental relationships among the five Central Asian countries, the UN Country Teams in the region are increasingly mobilizing actions at the regional level on issues which would otherwise be considered nationally sensitive as well as unsustainable given the limited access to needed resources and expertise at the national level.

Signature Interventions:

- The SI, through the support of the five UNCTs, UNCT Kazakhstan will mobilise government institutions, including Parliament, alongside civil society actors, gender equality activists, academics and voices of survivors and marginalized groups to lead a **process of developing a participatory methodology to review the national bodies of legislation pertaining to SGBV, including harmful practices**. The process of bringing these practitioners and experts together will increase their knowledge about the international norms and standards around the CEDAW, CRC, gender-dimensions of the SDGs, the BPfA and the ICPD, as well as Central Asian and global best practices in comprehensive, inclusive and effective SGBV legislative frameworks.
- In coming together at a regional level, initial dialogue will also focus on **building momentum for the gradual development of a Central Asia Alliance to end all forms of SGBV and harmful practices**.
- A **regional level review will be carried out by a team of international and national experts of the national legislative frameworks governing prohibition, protection and response to all forms of SGBV, including harmful practices related to Child and force Marriages and Early Unions**. The results of the Legislative Review will include specific recommendations surrounding how to strengthen the scope and application of SGBV legislation, harmonizing these with international norms and standards, as well as the recommended actions for criminalizing SGBV.
- Based on the findings of the five Central Asian country legislative review, the SI will support **regional dialogue among the national stakeholders involved in the Legislative Review including and as relevant with members of the CEDAW and CRC Committees from the ECA region, as well as members of the Istanbul Convention's independent expert body, the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO)**. The dialogue would include other political leaders from the five countries, so as to mobilise greater political will for legislative reform, as well as to advocate with the five Central Asia countries to consider ratification of the Istanbul Convention. Based on the dialogue, the group would then develop a roadmap on how as a collective they will support mobilising national level political support for legislative reform on SGBV. To inform the dialogue, and in particular the challenges and best practices of integrating SGBV legislation currently in the civil codes of the countries into Criminal Codes, national



stakeholders from Afghanistan will be invited to the final regional dialogue. Afghanistan has recently undergone a similar review and revision to its Penal Code, and while the contexts are different, the legislative and implementation challenges of having SGBV legislation in both the Civil and Criminal Codes are shared among the country and its Central Asia counterparts.

The regionally-led legislative review will be one of the first actions of the SI Regional Programme, and its focus, scope and partnerships will be informed by the SI Country Programmes in the three countries as well as the overall work of the UNCT in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan to ensure that the Regional review, and subsequent dialogue is a) timed to reinforce and support country-level work; and b) engages with the most relevant national stakeholders;

Sustainability:

Through the joint support of the SI and UNCTs in Central Asia, the above actions will form the foundation for the development of a Central Asia Alliance to end all forms of SGBV and harmful practices. The close coordination with the SI Country Programmes will further ensure the regional momentum gained will leverage national level work. The above dialogues would serve to not only develop a collective regional vision on how to enhance the prevention and response to SGBV, but also garner political support for the creation of the Alliance.

With the engagement of the UNCTs in conducting the Review, and the establishment of a Central Asia social media platforms on SGBV, the findings of the Review will be distributed and taken up by national stakeholders in the five countries.

Pillar 2 – Institutional Strengthening

Outcome 2: Central Asia systems and institutions plan, fund and deliver evidence-based multi-sectoral programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG and harmful practices.

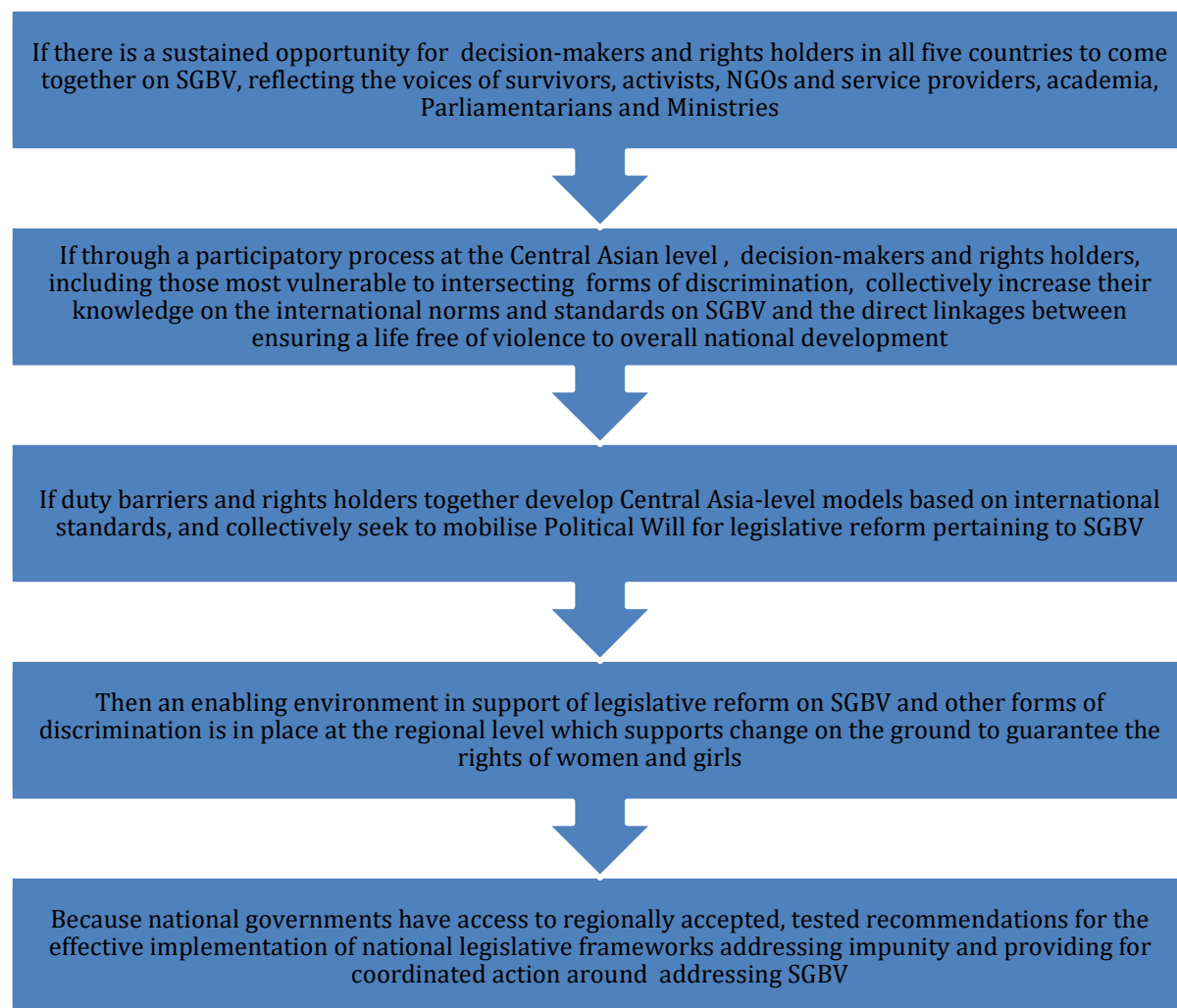
Overview

The recent National Reviews of Beijing +25 and ICPD +25 illustrate important trends in the region on institutional responses to SGBV. NWMs for SGBV in Central Asia do not have the clarity of remit, sufficient legislative authority or position in government, as well as consistency of sustained and adequate human and financial resources required to effectively implement SGBV legislation. These same realities impact the sustainability of partnerships with key actors working on SGBV in government and civil society. Recent years have seen an increased knowledge on overall international norms and standards, as well as enhanced gender mainstreaming capacities among the NWMs. The application of this knowledge and capacities, however, seldom trickles down to the service providers on the ground. The National Beijing +25 reviews have captured that SGBV is the one area in which the NWMs have enhanced coordination among government departments. Further, and despite shrinking civic space in many of the five countries, SGBV is the one area which has witnessed the longest period of partnership between government and civil society in Central Asia.

In recent years, and through international support, there have been some positive experiences, including the introductory trainings within the five Central Asian countries on what a case referral/case management system to SGBV means; some introductory work on the UN Global Essential Services Package for women and girls, and initial work in establishing Regional standard operating procedures at the national levels in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and recently in Uzbekistan. In Afghanistan, through the strong support of the international community, a number of services have been put in place, with work still on going to establish case referral protocols to ensure a multi-sectoral response to SGBV.

The absence of regional intergovernmental and regional non-governmental bodies or organisations, including academia, is a challenge unique to Central Asia. The absence of such mechanisms in the region has resulted in limited opportunities for joint learning, innovation and knowledge generation on tackling the bottlenecks and advancing the gains in overcoming SGBV. There is a need for a safe and enabling environment for a broad range of rights holders and duty bearers to meet, discuss, brainstorm and develop positions and tools which are nationally relevant to end SGBV.

Theory of Change:



Response:

Output 2.2: Central Asia coordination mechanism established representing government, civil society and the voice of excluded groups, to support greater knowledge and the application of innovation and cross-border sharing on the costing, monitoring and implementation of SGBV Legislation, Policies and Systems.

The priority for Pillar 2 is institutionalising an Alliance for Central Asia which is capable and positioned to set regionally specific legislative, policy and institutional guidelines and models on SGBV grounded in the international norms and standards. The Alliance will be comprised of the Offices of the President, NWMs, relevant line Ministries including Health, Education, Social protection and Justice, as well as Rule of Law representatives from the Courts and Police, Parliamentarians, civil society networks, grassroots and community level organisations, as well as women's rights activists and voices of women from communities often left in the margins.

Given the complexities of a cross border Alliances, the development of this mechanism will firstly be in illustrating the power of collective action. Specifically, through strengthened cross-border networking and experience sharing, collective capacity development and awareness raising on international norms and standards, and hands-on work with international and national experts in the application of these standards, a nascent Central Asia Alliance on ending SGBV and harmful practices will emerge, which Afghanistan too will contribute to and benefit from.



In the three years of the SI, the programme will concretely support the development of Regional SOP Models/Tools for SGBV case referral/case management response across the countries. SOPs will be reviewed/updated for survivor-centred Justice and multi-sectoral responses to SGBV. A key investment of SI will be in building knowledge among the Alliance about the importance of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) in increasing the impact of SGBV legislative frameworks and policies. In the case of Afghanistan, at the start of programme implementation, and in consultation with the UNCT Afghanistan, national stakeholders will be identified from Government and civil society to participate in those regional dialogues most relevant to the country in terms of SOP Models; as well as identifying those Afghan stakeholders who will benefit from inclusion in the Regional modelling and best practice exchange around utilising GRB tools to increase impact of SGBV SOPs and policies.

The network brought together to form the Central Asia Alliance to end SGBV and harmful practices will be focused on advancing an agenda of gender equality, women's empowerment and ending all forms of SGBV in the region. With the UNCT Kazakhstan as the initial host and long-term secretariat of the process, and with UN advocacy for the five governments to eventually take up the hosting of the Alliance in future years, the Alliance's remit will include:

- Mobilising greater political will and commitment towards ending all forms of SGBV and harmful practices in Central Asia;
- Deepening Central Asia's access to best practices and innovation in the prevention, protection and multi-sectoral response to SGBV and harmful practice upholding a survival centred approach and core principles of social justice;
- Strengthened regional-specific tools and knowledge on how to leverage greater financing for SGBV at the national and sub-national levels;
- Creating a sustainable space for dialogue, innovation and sharing of best practices among traditional and non-traditional partners on ending SGBV, including partnering with NGOs and activists; youth networks for Central Asia; male champions including supportive husbands and fathers; faith-based leaders; National statistical offices and global/regional SDG monitoring processes, Private Sector in Media and Technology, and survivors of SGBV;

The Alliance will build a dialogue; a virtual space; be a regular convening space; be a generator of knowledge; be a builder of cross-border sharing and partnerships; and a leader in supporting national stakeholders in understanding the international norms and standards guiding the work on the ground on preventing, protecting against and responding to SGBV and harmful practices.

The Alliance will be owned and shaped by the five national Central Asian countries. Technical and coordination support will be provided by the UNCTs in the five countries, who will act as the secretariat of the alliance for the initial five years of establishment. This will ensure close coordination with the three SI Country Programmes as well.

The European Union Delegations will play a key role within the Alliance in ensuring synergies with the three SI Country Programmes, and fostering south-south cooperation between the Alliance and relevant EU-based networks and alliances.

Target Groups:

- Direct Beneficiaries: From all five Central Asia countries Representatives from the Offices of the President, who have oversight of the NWMs; NWMs; Ministries of Justice, Health, and Interior; Parliamentarians; Judiciary and Police; regional, national and grassroots NGOs supporting prevention, response and awareness of SGBV, as well as survivors and activists from marginalized groups;
- Indirect Beneficiaries: The target audiences of those national level institutions, CSOs and networks working around SGBV.

Note – the table below is a compilation of inputs from the UN Agencies in the five Central Asian Countries. The calculations are still ongoing and will be updated in the coming weeks. Given the regional nature of the programme, harmonising how the numbers of beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are calculated is something which the UN RCO in Kazakhstan will work in coordination with the programme's technical experts.

Calculation of Direct Beneficiaries is based on: numbers of parliamentarians, key officials, departments within government ministries, institutions and commissions who have the authority to implement policies and programmes around SGBV, as well as representatives from women and youth groups and other CSOs; data provided by UN-supported SGBV service providers on numbers of women and girls supported;

Calculations of Indirect Beneficiaries includes the primary target audiences of those institutions involved in the work, including CSOs and Government service providers working with survivors of SGBV, as well as calculations of affected populations, based on household prevalence and perception surveys as well as national studies on SGBV.

| Outcome | | |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Indicative numbers | Direct | Indirect |
| Women | 561 | 2,001,080 |
| Girls | 32 | 740,716 |
| Men | 551 | 46,520 |
| Boys | 16 | 17,200 |
| TOTAL | 1,160 | 2,805,516 |

Lessons Learned:

As no consistent mechanism exists there is often repetitive or overlapping discussions on similar areas among different international partners. In general, the self-convening environment in Central Asia is absent; with the UN and key international partners such as the EU and OSCE playing key coordination and convening roles. This is also true of any national and regional level dialogues between government and CSOs. In 2018, UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF jointly convened a regional SGBV conference in Bishkek, a strong sign of the UN's commitment to advance progress in eliminating SGBV in the region. In order to have sustained planning, funding and delivery there needs to be a consistent and concerted effort across the countries, in sync, to build the platform for a mechanism to bring significant results across the region. The SI provides the opportunity to achieve this through working on bringing all countries together in a consistent way, around specific thematic areas of SGBV.

Signature Interventions:

- **Building a mechanism for planning, funding, and delivering on SGBV work across the region** through convening of relevant stakeholders from 5 Central Asian countries and Afghanistan around thematic SGBV areas to build the Central Asia Alliance in a consistent and coherent fashion with maintained momentum. Close coordination will be ensured via the UN RCOs with the three on-going SI Country Programmes, in particular, to ensure relevance;
- **Innovation and learning to promote systems strengthening and core capacities in responding and preventing SGBV and harmful practices – Multi-sectoral Coordination, Costing and Financing Strategies:** With strong support from the UNCTs and the EU Delegations in the region, the Alliance's capacities, vision and members buy-in to the comparative advantage of cross-border partnerships will be shaped through practical work. Specifically, and with technical and logistical support from the UNCT, the following Models and tools will be developed regionally:
 - a) The Central Asia Review of SGBV Legislation and its alignment with international norms and standards (Outcome 1);
 - b) Capture of best practices in Central Asia and beyond, as well as provision of technical assistance in adaptation and national contextualization of Regional Models of SOPs on SGBV, tools and guides which align with international norms. Potential areas of dialogue will include: enabling policy environment, planning strategies which can strengthen SOPs, case management/referral networks to ensure a survival-centred approach. This will support implementation of best practice/international standards of legislative frameworks; Gender/SGBV strategies and systems shared through evidence-based advocacy



and best practices.

- c) Through SI support, the Alliance will be a key forum for dialogues with the five national Ministries of Finance and Offices of Presidents on the importance of gender-responsive budgeting as a primary basis to ensure practical implementation of adapted protocols as a basis for effective SGBV and harmful practices prevention and response. In consultation with the UNCT Afghanistan, efforts will be made to engage national stakeholders in the above Central Asia Alliance dialogues, where relevant to the Afghan context.

All regional dialogues – physical and via virtual spaces – will significantly deepen the understanding and skill set of the Alliance and senior political leaders on the importance of SGBV and the utilisation of GRB tools and approaches to tackle it; as well as improve their access to ready information to strengthen implementation of SGBV legislation.

Sustainability:

The following strategies will be implemented to ensure the sustainability of the Central Asia Alliance for SGBV. Firstly, the UN will advocate for the five governments take up hosting of the Alliance in future years, on a rotational basis, with national funding encouraged through the component on gender responsive budgeting. Secondly, the Alliance will be owned and shaped by the five national Central Asian countries – with only technical and coordination support provided by the UNCTs. Thirdly, the development of regional SOPs, models and protocols for handling SGBV (in the first 2 years of the programme) will provide demonstrable evidence that the Alliance can add value to regional and national efforts. Strategic dissemination of these materials and cases studies to show how these have informed national efforts (by the third year) will build the case for the utility and continuity of the Alliance. Lastly, active involvement of CSOs will ensure sustainability: The Alliance will provide a forum through which organizations can present results and make the case for investment, enabling the Alliance to thrive on a culture of mutual accountability. The Alliance has the potential to support burgeoning Civil Society and the women's movement in each country by providing space for CSOs to network and learn across the region. This will support an enabling environment for a sustained response to SGBV.

Within the three-year time period of the SI, the Alliance will be in a nascent state, and the UN will support and facilitate its convening until such time as the five participating countries – either via NGOs or government bodies – are able to take over the rotational chairing of the Alliance. The European Union (EU) Delegations in the five countries are expected to actively participate so as to ensure greater synergy with the SI-supported country programmes in the region, as well as to ensure key best practices from the EU are shared within the Alliance. The UNCTs in Central Asia will remain committed to the process of cross-regional alliance building in the area of SGBV in the long term, and this commitment will be captured in the emerging UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDFs) in the countries.

Regardless of the progress in establishing the Alliance, the development of the above Regional Models, Tools and Best Practices will be made available to all key national stakeholders working on SGBV in the countries. This will be ensured through the establishment and use of virtual platforms and national networks, as well as through use by UN Agencies and other international organisations working in and around SGBV at the national level.

Pillar 3 – Tackling Social Norms, Attitudes and Behaviours

Outcome 3: Gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviours change at community and individual levels to prevent SGBV and harmful practices.

Overview

Changing social norms - including gender norms - and the subsequent attitudes, beliefs and practices - requires community and nationally driven initiatives. Diverse and non-traditional partnerships are essential, engaging with government, civil society, survivors, youth, men and cultural and religious

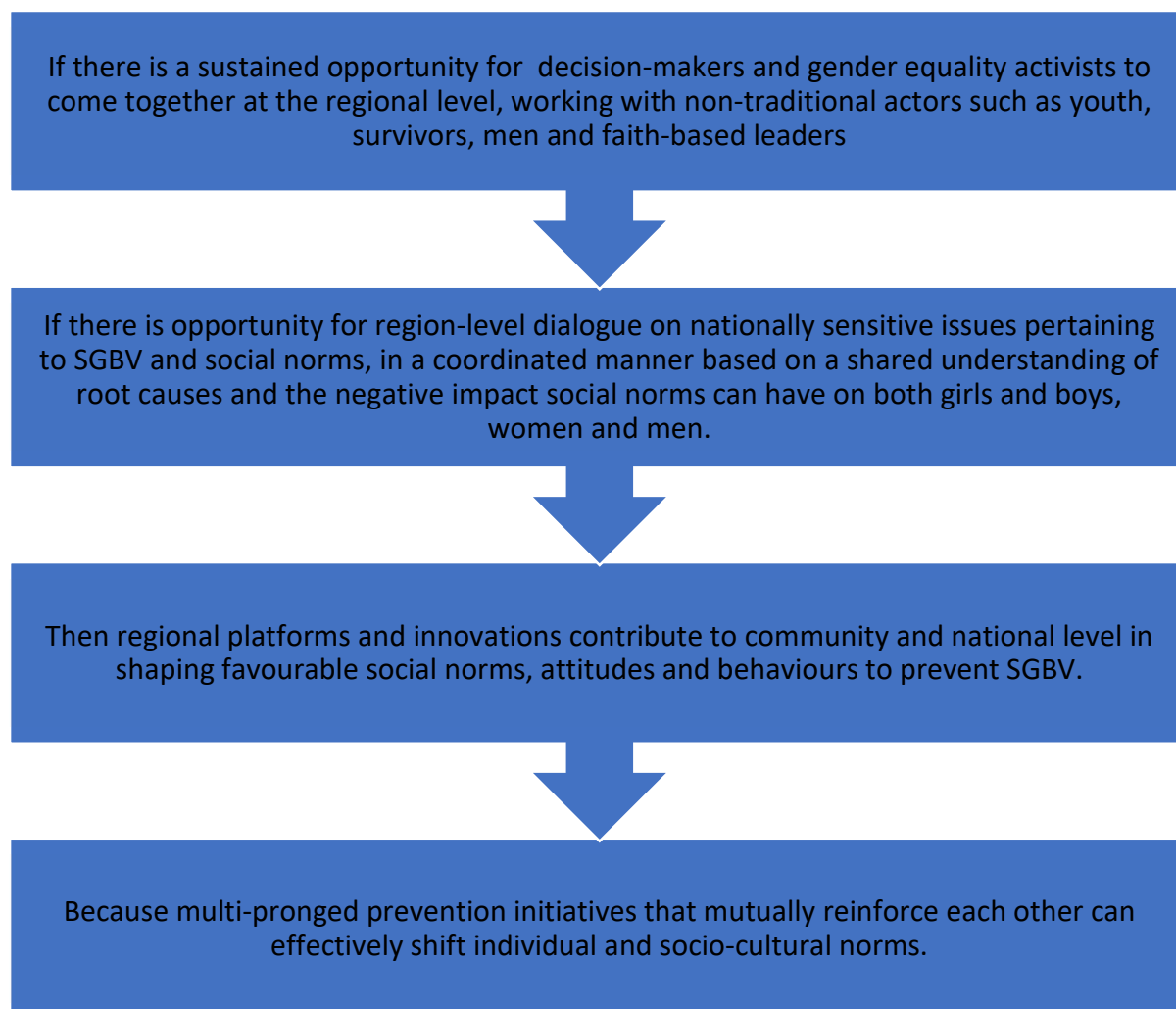


leaders. The messaging must resonate with a diverse but local audience. Education pedagogies and curriculum reinforce a number of negative gender norms and subsequent gender stereotypes. While healthy lifestyles are gradually being taught in some schools and youth friendly services are increasing in some urban centres of the region, overall sex education, including comprehensive sexuality education in school is not taught in the five countries. Ministries of Education and Universities put forward the same bottlenecks when national advocates attempt to change these traditionalist approaches.

To address stereotypical gender norms, eliminate SGBV, combat harmful practices those foster injustice, it is critical to engage men and boys at different levels of society in their capacity of agents of change and holders of solutions. Given the opportunities that social media offers, there is a need to strengthen awareness campaigns and work with men and boys to address negative attitudes, in particular for rural areas, and in local languages to reach the most vulnerable. Too often, due to limited funding and limited access to culturally relevant tools, those national and community organisations trying to tackle the negative impact of gender norms and socialisation as root causes of SGBV are only able to conduct short-term “advocacy and information” campaigns, which do not alter perceptions. Further, lack of comprehensive national data and analysis around SGBV, its prevalence, root causes, and how it is experienced differently by different groups of society, challenges sustained national dialogues.

In Central Asia, there is strong value addition in having a diverse regional Alliance focused on ending SGBV and harmful practices, which a) seeks to inject innovative ideas, tools and approaches into on-going and emerging national and community level social change; b) provides a diverse range of stakeholders - men, youth, survivors, religious leaders, government, and CSOs - an opportunity to strengthen partnerships in a safe, enabling regional forum which is not bogged down by national political sensitivities; and c) provides access for national stakeholders to learn from the broader best practices in EU, the Balkans, Central Asia and beyond. Through on-going national programmes, including support of the SI Country Programmes, these tools, learnings and regional alliances will strongly benefit national efforts in this regard.

Theory of Change:



Response:

Output 3.2: Central Asia advocacy and information platforms are established/strengthened to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours, including in relation to women and girls' sexuality and reproduction, self-confidence and self-esteem and transforming harmful masculinities.

The SI, under the leadership of the emerging Alliance wherever possible, will significantly invest in building regionally upon the momentum created through on-going national level social mobilisation. Pillar 3 will focus strongly on the continued need for greater cross-border dialogue on shared experiences, and the development of regionally specific approaches on social norm change to fill knowledge gaps at the national level. Significant interventions include: building on the Regional MenEngage Platform, the HeForShe Campaign, the Y-Peer Networks at the national level, mobilising men – including husbands and fathers and faith based leaders – to be champions for equality and non-violence at the regional level, and raising up to the regional level and building on the “#Don't Be Silent” movement which gives survivors of SGBV voice and leadership.

Multimedia communications materials and resources are available and may be further developed and disseminated in Russian, and support will be provided to translate these into national languages. Partnerships, including with bloggers and social media influencers can take key messages to virtual communities across the region, at multiple levels and through many channels (online and offline). Where necessary, tools and messaging for radio are being developed (see below). SI will support in convening



and nurturing partners who offer an entry point and/or space for reinforcing gender equality and women and girls' empowerment throughout the life cycle.

Target Groups:

- Direct Beneficiaries: From all five Central Asia countries Representatives from youth networks and adolescent girls and young women, survivors of SGBV, CSOs supporting response and prevention of SGBV, families, men, faith-based leaders (who are all men), gender equality advocates in Parliament and Government.
- Indirect Beneficiaries: Women, men, girls and boys throughout the Central Asia region. In particular, community and grassroots groups working on inclusion and issues of equality and non-violence.

Note – the table below is a compilation of inputs from the UN Agencies in the five Central Asian Countries. The calculations are still ongoing and will be updated in the coming weeks. Given the regional nature of the programme, harmonising how the numbers of beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are calculated is something which the UN RCO in Kazakhstan will work in coordination with the programme’s technical experts.

Calculation of Direct Beneficiaries is based on: numbers of youth, survivors, activists, men and faith-based leaders, CSOs, and government activists involved, as well as those impacted by campaigns.

Calculation of Indirect Beneficiaries is based on those communities targeted through regionally driven campaigns, information awareness and norm change dialogue; and also based on perception surveys and studies conducted. Calculations are based on affected populations, as per household prevalence and perception surveys, as well as national studies on SGBV.

| Outcome | Direct | Indirect |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Indicative numbers | | |
| Women | 53,390 | 2,512,558 |
| Girls | 67,220 | 1,090,006 |
| Men | 33,863 | 2,499,709 |
| Boys | 44,030 | 2,029,552 |
| TOTAL | 198,503 | 8,931,200 |

Lessons Learned:

Throughout Central Asia, the majority of prevention initiatives have been short term due to limited funding; have had limited access to social norm change tools and methodologies; have not sufficiently focused on men and boys; and often do not have access to a diverse set of partners including men or cultural, political and religious leaders. Sustained support in establishing these partnerships, including with the private sector, is essential for national and community-based organisations. Often because of funding and capacity constraints, short term, institutionally driven “campaigns” are held which result in important information awareness, but do not necessarily change attitudes and behaviours. At the community level, these factors are often compounded by a perceived “sensitivity” around root causes of SGBV.

Access to culturally relevant best practices and international standards for supporting positive gender socialisation and tackling negative social norms is essential. Being able to access the necessary diverse group of partnerships, and to have a safe and enabling environment to have dialogue on issues which are sensitive in community contexts is key to reaching the root causes of SGBV.

The strategy being utilised in the SI programme will seek to break down the traditional “silo-ing” when tackling negative social norms, instead working towards transformative change in the power relations between men and women and to have effective, zero tolerance to violence and harmful practices such as Child and forced Marriage and Early Unions. Cohorts – youth, men, survivors, faith-based leaders,



government and NGO advocates – will all come together to jointly develop Regional tools, platforms and innovations.

Signature Interventions:

All work under Pillar 3 will closely be informed by the six participating UNCTs both in terms of identifying political sensitivities and needs, as well as partners to engage.

- Through UN Women’s support, and the work of the #Don’t Be Silent movement in Kazakhstan and the HeForShe Campaign there is building momentum around SGBV survivors speaking out and breaking through the stigma surrounding SGBV. The UN will support a broad range of actors to upscale the concepts of #Don’t Be Silent movement to the regional level. Guided by the Alliance against SGBV for Central Asia (outcome 2), regional-level partnerships with government, community-based and regional NGOs, gender equality advocates and survivors of sexual violence will be established to drive the Central Asia-wide **#Don’t be Silent movement giving voices and a safe space to the survivors of SGBV**. Jointly, and with the Alliance’s support, activists will establish and moderate **on-line platforms for survivors, their families and communities**. Given the varying levels of connectivity in the five countries, a #Don’t Be Silent movement will also establish partnerships with **national radios and NGOs in the five countries, whereby they will moderate weekly radio shows for survivors and** advocates to discuss the prevalence of sexual violence and its impact, the root causes, and the services and rights of survivors.

Through establishing **private sector partnerships with the key Mobile Phone providers in the region, a Central Asia #Don’t Be Silent movement will develop a Mobile Phone application which:**

- a) Generates real-time understanding of the perceptions of society of all ages on sexual violence, root causes, and the effectiveness of the state-lead responses and prevention programmes. This will be done through the app conducting regular “polls” similar to the U-Report methodology;
 - b) Provide up-to-date, user friendly Information on the laws, services, and support for those who have experienced sexual violence;
- **Empowering Youth to Challenge Gender Norms and Stereotypes:** Youth Peer Networks (Y-Peer) exist in most of the countries involved in the SI Regional Programme. Through mobilising their partnerships with each other at the Regional level, the SI Regional Programme will inject new momentum, ideas, innovation and partnerships with the Y-Peer leaders to bolster national level change of Education and overall school environments.²⁶ Linking the Europe and Central Asia as well as national Y-Peer Networks currently advocating for greater Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, a Central Asia Y-Peer Network will be strengthened and linked to the Central Asia Alliance. Complimentary regional social media mobilization, by youth, young women and men and adolescent girls and boys, will support regional multi-media resources and convening for online and subsequent offline action across countries.

Ensuring the inclusion of youth most at risk, and 50/50 participation of girls and boys, the Central Asia Y-Peer Network will be supported to:

- a) Facilitate their access to Best Practices and Tools of advocating for social norm change, as well as increasing their understanding of building their communication and advocacy skills, as well as their overall understanding of gender-based discrimination and its root causes;
- b) Mobilise social influencers to increase young women and men, girls’ and boys’ understanding of the prevalence and root causes of SGBV, including linking with the Central Asia #Don’t be Silent movement;
- c) Develop a long-term strategy – under the framework of the Alliance - for the Central Asia Y-Peer Network to become a driving force in tackling the harmful social norms, behaviours, attitudes and practices which are at the root of SGBV.

²⁶ Y-Peer is a comprehensive youth-to- youth global network of CSOs, community-based organisations and youth which aims to promote healthy lifestyles and to empower young people at different levels through peer to peer approach.



- d) Work with young men in challenging society's perceptions of masculinity, gender roles, and the urgent need to end all forms of SGBV and harmful practices. (see below);

Mobilising Men as Champions and faith based leaders - to end SGBV: Working in coordination with the Alliance and the Central Asia Y-Peer Network, and building on the UNFPA-supported MenEngage Platform for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and the HeforShe campaign, the programme will support the identification of men across the region – social, cultural, sports and political leaders as well as supportive husbands and fathers – who can champion the ending of SGBV and gender-based discrimination. In seeking **to challenge the concepts of masculinity, and to “call out” actions as toxic masculinity**, male champions and faith-based leaders will be supported at the Regional level to produce Regional tools for social norm change which may be used regionally, nationally and at the community level.

Additionally, these champions will be supported in producing videos illustrating their journeys in becoming agents of change to end SGBV and harmful practices. Different materials on the supportive role that husbands, and fathers can play within a family will also be reviewed and adapted for use at regional level. In partnership with regional media sources, hold panels/talk shows on Radio and TV (and later put on You-Tube) with these men debating the root causes of SGBV and the shared responsibility of ending gender-based discrimination. Efforts will focus on also bringing together male champions and faith-based leaders – the Alliance and youth mobilised by the SI. In partnership, these stakeholders will support cross-border learnings and best practices on the power and impact of faith-based organisations have when tackling toxic masculinities and advocating for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Sustainability:

The work under Pillar 3 will complement ongoing work by the participating UN agencies, in particular UNFPA's on-going work with men, youth, faith-based leaders, social innovation. Building on the UN-Women's work in support of survivors and with the Kazakhstan movement, #Don't Be Silent a number of partnerships have been established and traction within regional media will all help promote and extend its impact. Furthermore, the existing MenEngage platform (including existing website, Facebook and Twitter channels) and the HeForShe Campaign will be leveraged to reach an established base of practitioners, policy makers and men and boys. These existing initiatives will enable the SI to easily reach a wide audience with tools, research and innovative media content. At present, all UN agencies at the country level are increasing their engagement with these non-traditional actors, including men and faith-based leaders, around women's empowerment and gender equality. The groundswell of support and regional networks established by Y-Peer will link with global platforms as well as nurture action across the region. The SI investments in building Regional Tools for social change will take the on-going national efforts to a higher level, with the emerging UNSDCFs highlighting social norm change as essential to gender equality and subsequently increasing the UN's overall investment in this area in the coming five years.

Pillar 5 – Closing the Data Gap

Outcome 5:

Quality, disaggregated and globally comparable data on different forms of SGBV collected, analysed and used in line with international standards to inform laws, policies and programmes.

Overview:

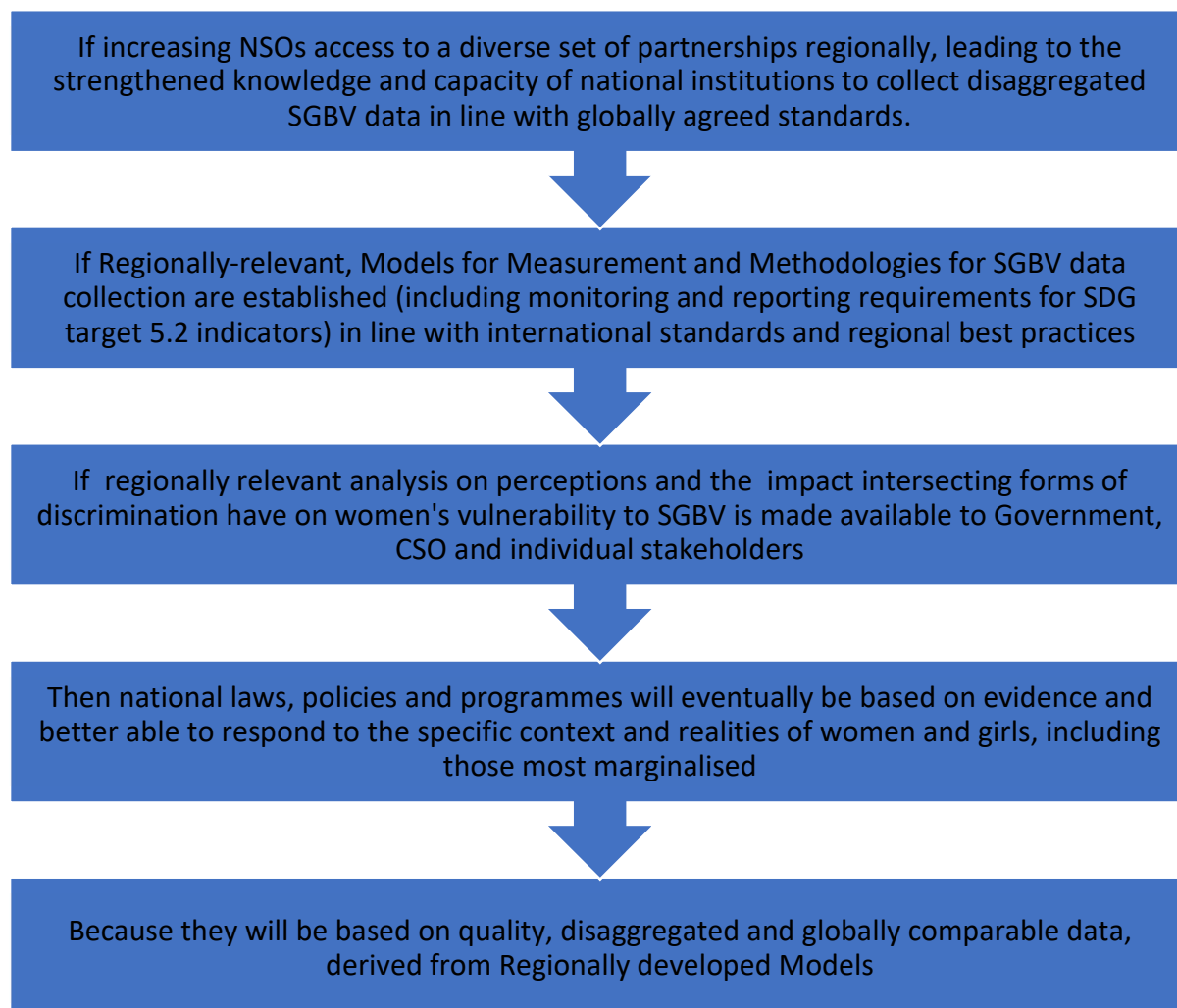
Data gaps on many of the gender-related SDG Indicators is an overarching challenge in Central Asia. Kazakhstan carried out a comprehensive prevalence study on Violence Against Women in 2017; Turkmenistan plans to start conducting in 2020 a survey on “Health and Status of a Woman in the Family”; Tajikistan has recently expressed an interest to conduct a prevalence of violence survey; and in Kyrgyzstan, the Gender in Society Perception Study (GSPS) has been launched as well as components of a men's attitude survey on SGBV and gender equality were rolled out in 2013. Excepting Kazakhstan and to some extent the study on men's attitudes towards SGBV and gender equality in Kyrgyzstan, the majority of SGBV data in the region does not result in internationally comparable data given the varied methodologies used.

Given the under-reporting and the sensitivity surrounding SGBV and harmful practices, technical and financial support is required to review the methodologies and types of data collection available in other countries and bring that expertise through regional exchanges. Further, investment is needed in setting up standards for the collection of all types of data on SGBV, including Administrative Data – an integral part of a multi-sectoral response to SGBV - which must avoid re-victimization and which seeks to streamline and harmonise the types of data collected, in line with international standards.

A key issue remains accessibility of data in a user-friendly manner, and one which links multiple efforts under the SDGs at the national and regional level to improve monitoring of these commitments. Further, there is an urgent need to bring together analyses on intersecting forms of discrimination and how/if this impacts one's vulnerability to SGBV and one's access to services, support and justice.

Limited knowledge remains on men's perceptions regarding gender equality and SGBV – assumptions are regularly made, but activists seldom distinguish assumptions between age groups and seldom understand the reasoning behind how/if perceptions result in violence, and what are the root causes of these perceptions.

Theory of Change:





Response:

Pillar 5 seeks to highlight the important gains made in recent years around closing the national data gaps as it pertains to human and sustainable development. Working with the emerging Alliance against SGBV for Central Asia (outcome 2) and folding in representatives from the countries' National Statistical Offices (NSOs), regional Standards for the collection of Prevalence, Administrative, and Perception data will be developed. In drawing on the [Accelerator labs](#) established in the region to date, the SI will also support using "big data", including crowd sourcing to understand prevalence and perceptions of SGBV and harmful practices. The Accelerator Labs are UNDP's new way of working with national partners (CSO, academics, private sector, governmental institutions) to find radically new avenues of work to act effectively in addressing wicked development challenges such as SGBV. This includes involving SGBV survivors, generating big data, using artificial intelligence to analyse data etc.

The SI for Central Asia will invest in conducting analysis of men's perceptions of SGBV, as well as creating accessible and user-friendly graphics of how vulnerability to SGBV intersects with other forms of discrimination; and the degree to which the Central Asian countries are achieving the SDG targets on SGBV. The data and knowledge generated under the SI will be accessible on digital platforms operated and utilized by the Central Asia Alliance, disseminated and utilised at the national levels.

Output 5.1: *Partners in Central Asia, including relevant statistical officers, service providers in the different branches of government²⁷ and women's rights advocates have strengthened knowledge on the collection of data related to SGBV in line with international and regional standards to inform laws, policies and programmes.*

Focus under this Pillar will be building the capacity and outreach of the Alliance to support the development of Best Practices and Models for the collection of data on SGBV. Through the regular convening of the NSOs, the Alliance will present the global standards in terms of the collection of Prevalence Data on SGBV; the collection, use and protection of Administrative data (including case management and referral data and guidelines); and the collection and use of data on Perceptions and Attitudes towards gender equality, and SGBV. Efforts will be made to include the Afghanistan NSO in some of these regional dialogues, where it is relevant to partners.

Based on these discussions, the NSOs and Alliance together will jointly adopt Central Asia SGBV Data Collection Models in the areas of Prevalence Data; Administrative Data; and Data on Perceptions and Attitudes. These will also be developed in consultation with other international organisations active in population survey and data processes to ensure replication of the Models.

Output 5.2: *Central Asia partnerships contribute to quality prevalence and/or incidence data on SGBV is analysed and made publicly available for the monitoring and reporting of the SDG target 5.2 indicators to inform evidence-based decision-making.*

Focus will be on data and innovation, enhancing Government and non-government use of data on SGBV, with the UN System supporting key stakeholders and the Central Asia Alliance to use on-going ECA and Global SDG monitoring processes. Related databases may also be used as a learning and exchange platform. Strong emphasis will be given to visualising the progress and challenges to achieving the SGBV-related Targets and Indicators in the SDGs.

Target Groups:

- Direct Beneficiaries: From all five Central Asia countries Representatives from NSOs, Offices of the President, who have oversight of the NWMs; NWMs; Ministries responsible for producing administrative and official data on SGBV (Health, Education, Interior, Justice, Social Welfare); regional, national and grassroots CSOs supporting prevention, response and awareness of SGBV;
- Indirect Beneficiaries: All users of SGBV data supported by the SI programme.

²⁷ Statistics offices, justice, security and health sector



Note – the table below is a compilation of inputs from the UN Agencies in the five Central Asian Countries. The calculations are still ongoing and will be updated in the coming weeks. Given the regional nature of the programme, harmonising how the numbers of beneficiaries (direct and indirect) are calculated is something which the UN RCO in Kazakhstan will work in coordination with the programme’s technical experts.

Calculation of Direct Beneficiaries is based on numbers of officials and CSOs who are engaged in the programme’s work around Data and Statistics.

Calculation of Indirect Beneficiaries is the number of estimated users of data supported, as well as calculations based on affected populations, as per results provided by household surveys and studies related to SGBV.

| Outcome | | |
|--------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Indicative numbers | Direct | Indirect |
| Women | 907 | 726,379 |
| Girls | 0 | 391,875 |
| Men | 357 | 3,254 |
| Boys | 0 | 2,500 |
| TOTAL | 1,264 | 1,124,008 |

Lessons Learned:

A key challenge in the past has been the sensitivities around the gathering and presentation of SGBV data, which governments are not always open to collecting data according to internationally recognized methodology which should bring representative results, while doing no harm to women in the process. Different sources of data available - demographic and household surveys, official statistics, reports; non-official: research, baseline and household surveys, reports; emerging digital spaces: internet, radio, social media – were collected in such a diverse manner which negatively impacts the quality of data, and the representative nature of the data and cross-border comparability. Due to the sensitivity around exposing potential levels of violence against women and girls, the methodologies used to assess prevalence of SGBV and all SGBV data has varied from country to country in the region; and did not always align with international norms and standards. The creation of Regional Models which sets the standards on SGBV Prevalence, Admin and Perception Data will be done in consultation with international and regional partners of the UN, and will support the replication of the Models. The internationally recognized WHO methodology for prevalence of violence against women and girls already implemented in Kazakhstan will become the framework around which to share this experience with other countries in the region and to facilitate data gathering based on this methodology in order to have internationally comparable data available across the region.

Signature Interventions

- The SI programme will focus on **filling Common Data gaps on SGBV in Central Asia on the intersectional nature of inequalities and SGBV through developing Central Asia-level Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses on SGBV as it is experienced by those often vulnerable and facing intersecting forms of discrimination, including women living with disabilities; women living with HIV; LGBTI community; and elderly women.**
- A key knowledge gap in Central Asia is the perception of men around gender equality and SGBV. Working with the Alliance, male champions and youth networks, as well as survivors and regional experts, **a region-wide analysis of Men’s Perceptions of SGBV will be carried out for the first time in Central Asia.**
- In addition to the **Regional Models for Collecting Prevalence, Administrative and Perception data around SGBV**, the [Accelerator labs](#) of UNDP in Central Asia and beyond the region, will address the key development issues in the region including the gender inequality issue and development challenges such as SGBV. The **Accelerator labs will establish a new way of**



working with national partners (survivors of SGBV, CSOs, academia, businesses, government establishments, National Statistical Institutes etc.) **to find radically new avenues of work to act effectively to collect, analyse and use the data on different forms of SGBV and harmful practices to inform policy implementation and to produce social change.** The Accelerator Labs can also support the design of innovative solutions and use of data across the other pillars, such as addressing challenges related to institutional response to SGBV for example.

Sustainability:

All work under the SI's Pillar 5 will be anchored to on-going and planned data and SDG monitoring initiatives now being negotiated under the UNSDCF's and participating agencies' Country Programmes in the region. Further, through the direct engagement of the NSOs at the regional level, there will be efforts outside of the SI programme to engage other international actors in support of piloting these Models in the different Central Asian countries. There are possibilities for harnessing private sector leveraging for innovation and sustain investment over the long term.

Pillar 6 – Strengthening CSO Capacities and regional women's movement

Outcome 6: Women's rights groups (WRGs), autonomous social movements and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Central Asia - including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization – will more effectively influence and advance progress on GEWE and ending SGBV.

Overview

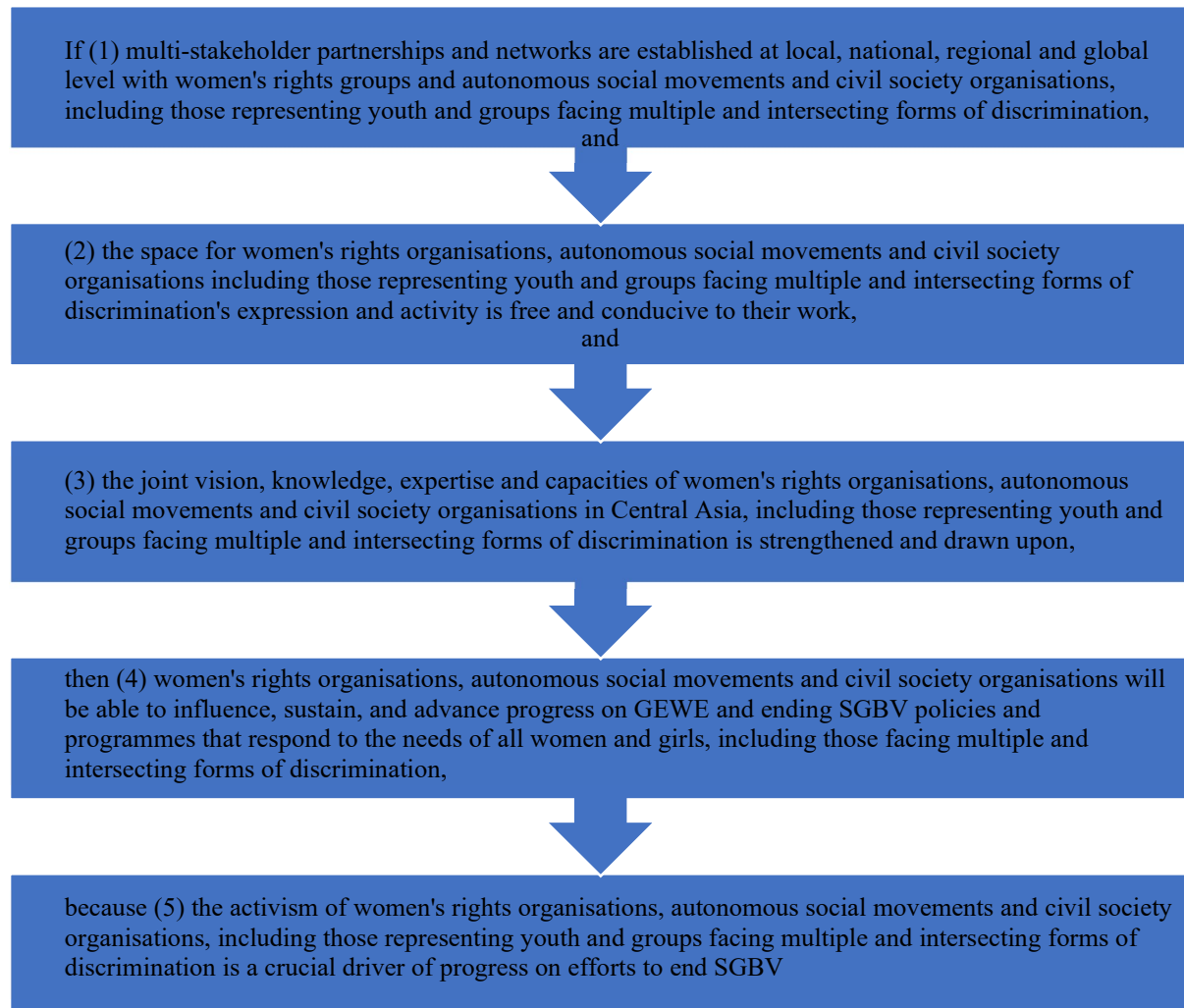
Although there are varying degrees of capacities of CSOs and involvement of women's movement building across Central Asia, in general women's rights groups lack core resources and have limited capacity to apply for funds, which is hindering their capacity to meaningfully advocate for and support the needs and priorities of women in the region. Moreover, CSOs in the region lack a coherent vision and understanding of topics pertaining to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the capacity to initiate, lead and monitor transformative change in the lives of women and girls. CSOs are also generally concentrated in urban areas, leaving a large gap in representation of the voice and needs of women in rural areas and an incoherent approach to movement building. Lack of resources limit the ability of grassroots organizations to travel, gain access to information, and build needed capacities to meet the requirements to access funds through the UN or international organizations. Provision of small grants and capacity development support would enable CSOs to develop a coherent approach to engaging in transformative change on GEWE and would support CSOs and grassroots organizations to gain the needed capacities to access future funding through women's funds or other mechanism to sustain their activities and mission. Central Asia does not currently have a local regional organization or grant making entity. Strengthening a local women's right entity to provide leadership at the regional level, would allow increased ownership and alignment with regional priorities and could pave the way for a sustainable regional funding mechanism for the Central Asia women's movement.

There is currently a lack of networking platforms for CSOs at the regional level in Central Asia to engage in joint regional advocacy, sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices. CSOs tend to remain fragmented across the region due to limited resources and competition for international funds. There is a need to develop capacities and provide opportunities for women's rights organization, including rural organizations and those representing women groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination's, to connect and learn from experiences and inspire innovation and new ways of working. Capacities also need to be developed to meaningfully engage in decision making processes and to be able to form strong feminist movements, connected with national and regional movements, to demand accountability decision-makers.

Through technical and financial support to less-resources and underrepresented grassroots CSOs, coupled with strengthened linkages between traditional and newer CSOs, including youth organizations and CSOs representing the most marginalized groups, it is expected that the Central Asian women's

movement will be more coherent and aligned with local priorities and realities in the region.

Theory of Change



Response:

Output 6.1: Central Asian Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs,²⁸ have increased opportunities and support to share knowledge, network, partner and jointly advocate for GEWE and ending SGBV, more specifically, with relevant stakeholders at sub-national, national, regional and global levels

The SI initiative will invest in strengthening regional leadership, coordination, knowledge sharing and networking of women rights organizations to support CSOs collective and strategic engagement with governments and other actors within the broader Alliance for Central Asia on SGBV. A regional CSO network, linked to the Central Asian Alliance, will be established, involving WROs, CSOs, activists and women's rights defenders across the six countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, to build a coordinated and strong women's movement for joint advocacy, activism and accountability. In addition, active women leaders in the region will be involved in the CSO

²⁸ Including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization



network. Linkages will be made between traditional feminist activists in the region and newer, more intersectionality-focused groups, with the aim to foster a more coordinated and coherent women's movement in the region. Focus will be placed on ensuring participation and voice of less resourced CSO, including rural grassroots organizations, younger less established organizations and youth and LGBTI organizations. Moreover, the network will be supported through exchange with international experts on various topics pertaining to women's movement building, including potential knowledge sharing and support for setting common standards on areas such as quality control, monitoring and evaluation, financial management and codes of conduct. A virtual knowledge platform will also be established to facilitate remote knowledge exchange, sharing of best practices and joint development of advocacy strategies. This will also provide the space for CSOs to introduce and promote the scale up of innovations across countries. The knowledge platform could be hosted by a Regional CSO (supported under output 6.3). However, CSOs will be supported to identify the most suitable mechanism for hosting the knowledge platform.

Given restrictions enforced in some Central Asian countries, some activist and CSO are restricted from traveling outside the country and even from using social media and other platforms for virtual engagement. An assessment of the institutional/governmental barriers to the full engagement of various CSOs will be carried out during the first phase of the SI to identify the best mechanism for supporting their involvement in the regional women's movement building.

Output 6.2 Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs are better supported to use social accountability mechanisms to support their advocacy and influence on prevention and response to SGBV and GEWE more broadly

As outlined in Pillar 1, the SI will carry out a comprehensive regionally led legislative review to assess national progress in aligning SGBV legislation with CEDAW and related General Recommendations, the Istanbul Convention, the CRC General Recommendations, the Istanbul Convention, the CRC and related General Comments, the ICPD Programme of Action, the BPfA and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and related General Comment, which will form part of launching the Central Asia Alliance on SGBV. In order to strengthen the role of CSOs to strategically and collectively engage as accountability holders in their engagement with the Central Asia Alliance and other national and international platforms, CSOs and active women leaders in the region will receive monitoring tools and technical assistance to develop strategies and strengthen their capacity to monitor and advocate for progress on the road map for aligning national laws and regulations with the before noted international standards and conventions. To build these capacities, CSOs will be supported through linkages with international expertise and best practices in accountability measures.

Output 6.3: Women's rights groups and relevant CSOs representing groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalisation have strengthened capacities and support to design, implement and monitor their own programmes on ending SGBV.

With focus on strengthening capacities of grassroots organization that do not have the technical capacities to access funding from international organizations, the regional Spotlight Initiative will provide small grants to CSOs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. CSOs will receive grants to strengthen their institutional capacities, including improving their organizational systems, tools and processes and training their workforce in technical and managerial skills. This will support CSOs to be able to sustainably operate, and gain capacities to access additional funding sources to sustain their activities and meaningfully engage in joint advocacy for progress on ending SGBV. This support will help grow and strengthen grassroots CSOs across the Central Asian countries that are currently hindered from actively participating in movement building due to lack of institutional capacities. A comprehensive assessment and outreach strategy will be carried out to identify CSOs to be targeted under this component of Pillar 6, to ensure support to smaller less known grassroots organizations, representing the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Capacity development support will be incorporated with the provision of the small grants to support efficient monitoring, ensure quality control, and best use of funds and to ensure coherent approach to strengthening CSOs capacities for involvement in the women's movement.

As there are a limited amount of CSOs in the region with a regional scope and there is currently no local regional grant-making entity, a scoping study will be carried out to map regionally active CSOs and to identify an existing local women's right organization in Central Asia with potential to become a regional grant making body. This would be carried out in close cooperation with CSO representatives to ensure alignment with local needs and that mechanisms are established to ensure appropriate representation from all the Central Asian Countries that would be covered by the grant making entity. The identified women's right organization will receive technical support on requirements for grant-making and to gain the capacity to provide regional leadership and influence policy making. This will include a study and knowledge sharing visit with an already established international grant-making entity to learn from international best-practices. Through this support a regional funding mechanism linked to regional and national needs and priorities for the Central Asia women's movement will be established. The grant-making entity will also receive support to develop strategies for resource mobilization and use of alternative funding mechanism, such as crowd sourcing, to support the regional women's movement. In addition, CSOs from all 6 countries, involved in regional movement building will be engaged to provide capacity building support for the involvement of other CSO in regional movement building, based on a self-assessment of capacity development support needs, which could for example range from strengthening expertise on SGBV; advocacy and communication skills; leadership, operational and management skills; resource mobilisation; and practical support for legal registration. This will also include support to develop a coherent understanding of topics pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment with focus on developing a common vision of how to create transformative change and to support CSOs in taking a leading role in creating and maintaining the regional women's movement. Given the different levels of CSO development and existing restrictions to certain CSOs within the different Central Asian countries, the support provided will be tailored to the specific context and realities faced by CSOs.

Target groups

- **Direct Beneficiaries:** Feminist and Women CSOs, human rights defenders and grassroots organization, including those representing youth and groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, in the 5 Central Asian countries will be supported through small grants and capacity development (with priority given to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as they do not have dedicated SI country programmes unlike Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). In addition, Afghanistan along with the 5 central Asian Countries will be supported in strengthened capacity, coordination, knowledge sharing and strategic engagement of CSOs with the Central Asian Alliance.
- **Indirect Beneficiaries:** women, men, boys and girls, and vulnerable and marginalised groups whose interests, voice and concerns are represented by the supported CSOs and grassroots organizations. Society at large will benefit from more accountability on human rights issues and advanced gender equality,

| Outcome 6 | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Indicative numbers | Direct | Indirect |
| Women | 3,567 | 1,295,170 |
| Girls | 1,529 | 431,724 |
| Men | 925 | 10,793 |
| Boys | 349 | 3,597 |
| TOTAL | 6,370 | 1,741,284 |



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

Lessons learnt

Funding constraints are an on-going challenge in the region. In recent years, various international donors have, for example, favoured projects that focus on increasing the capacity of institutions that work with survivors of VAW, while neglecting NGO-run specialist services for VAW victims. This despite the existence of diverse and vibrant women and gender focused CSOs that deliver services and actively participate in public policymaking.

Support to CSOs in the region has traditionally been driven by international organizations, with a limited reach to rural grassroots organizations, and strict requirements for accessing financial support. This has led to an underrepresentation of rural organizations, competition amongst feminist and women CSOs, hindering a coherent women's movement. Moreover, it has caused a disconnect between CSOs and the needs of the constituents that they represent, as CSOs have been incentivised to focus on the priorities and areas of concern of the international organizations supporting them. Support is needed to strengthen linkages and coordination between the different groups of CSO for a more coherent movement building and to strengthen the capacities of underrepresented grassroots women CSOs that are currently not able to meaningfully engage in the women's movement due to lack of resource and capacities. Prior experience has also demonstrated a need for integrating substantial capacity development support with financial support to CSOs to build project management skills, efficient monitoring and evaluation and to ensure coherent approaches.

CSOs in the region also lack a common understanding and position on topics such as sex work, reproductive health information and services for marginalized groups such as women with disabilities, minimum standards for provision of quality services to survivors of GBV etc.. The inclusion of marginalized voices, such as LGBTI, women living with HIV, migrants and others, remains a regular challenge in light of a variety of complex and contested socio-political environments within and among the Central Asian countries. Data and knowledge generation have proven to be very important to inform the day to day programming of projects/initiatives, including those which could be implemented by CSOs. Capacity development of CSOs therefore need to incorporate aspects on ethical and quality data collection, documentation and use of knowledge, including for analysis and evidence-based advocacy. There is also a need for creating spaces for meaningful and open knowledge sharing around what does and does not work in programming in order to understand the reasons and the way forward. Women CSOs as grantees also need to be provided with the time and opportunities for learning and sharing knowledge. In addition to capturing progress on the reduction of violence, it is also critical to capture learning on organizational processes, structures and core values needed to catalyse transformative approaches to ending violence against women and girls.

Signature Interventions

- Establishment of a regional network and knowledge hub for women and feminist CSOs, women's rights defenders and activist, closely linked to the new Central Asia Alliance on SGBV, to strengthen joint advocacy, coherent and strategic engagement and improved accountability mechanisms within the Alliance.
- Establishment of a regional grant-making entity, with capacity to act as a leader on regional women's building.
- Provision of small grants, with integrated capacity development support, to strengthen the capacities of underrepresented Women and Feminist CSOs at the grassroots level, to ensure their sustainability and engagement in the women's movement. Priority will be placed on reaching CSOs in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, given that Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also have separate SI country programmes.

Sustainability

Through the financial and capacity development support provided to CSOs there will be a larger cohort of CSO that have the institutional capacity to qualify for additional funding from different funding sources from both within and outside Central Asia. CSOs will receive specific technical support for their



organizational development, and operations (including financial management, monitoring and reporting, resource mobilization etc.) with the aim to strengthen their operational sustainability, while sustaining gender equality principles. In addition, through the SI a local regional grant-making entity will be established with the capacity to continue to support Women and Feminist CSOs in the region beyond the duration of the SI. An assessment will be carried out during the first phase of the SI to identify a CSO with potential to become a regional grant making entity and to assess the type of support needed to ensure its sustainability. The identified CSO will receive substantial support to strengthen its operational and technical capacity, including through a study tour with an already established international grant making entity. This support will also include a large focus on ensuring the financial sustainability of the entity through targeted support to develop resource mobilization and sustainability strategies, including outreach to link the newly established grant making entity with international donors and the identification of alternative funding mechanisms, such as crowd sourcing. The virtual platform for CSOs in the region set-up as part of output 6.1 could potentially be used as a platform to facilitate this. Moreover, the regional grant making entity will be linked to the regional CSO network supported under output 6.1. and will benefit from the collective knowledge and technical support provided to the CSO network. CSOs involved in the regional CSO network will be closely engaged in the establishment of the regional grant-making entity to ensure regional ownership and collectively carry out resource mobilization to sustain its funding base to support CSOs in the region. There is currently no competing regional grant-making mechanism. With the establishment of this entity international donors will have a new mechanism to better reach and fund grassroots organizations in the region. This support will further enable CSOs in the region to sustain their operations and continue to strengthen the women's movement. Strengthened spaces and mechanisms will also have been developed to enhance dialogue between CSOs and decision-makers and new models of regional CSO coalition building will be established (e.g. through the use of online platforms) to enable CSOs to continue to raise their needs and hold decision-makers accountable beyond the duration of the Spotlight Initiative. The creation of a CSO network will also provide the space for intergenerational consolidation of efforts and collective power, to bring new ideas and visions on how to improve efficiency of efforts and to scale up innovative practices.

III. Alignment with SDGs and National Development Frameworks

The SI for Central Asia will support the region's advancement towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The eradication of SGBV and harmful practices, which relate to two important SDG targets (5.2 and 5.3), has an impact on other SDGs. The act of guaranteeing that women and girls exercise their right to live a life free of violence, is closely related to the goals and targets regarding the right to a healthy life (SDG 3), the reduction of inequalities (SDG 10, targets 10.2 and 10.3), inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities (SDG 11, targets 11.2 and 11.7), and the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16, target 16.1 and 16.2). Under the Regional programme, key partnerships will also be developed for the achievements of the 2030 Agenda (SDG 17). The implementation of SI in Central Asia and Afghanistan constitutes a substantive opportunity to support regional efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, and to promote their development at a local scale.

The SI Regional Programme will support accountability for results through a human rights-based approach, capacitating both rights holders and duty bearers to ensure meaningful participation, civic engagement, and supporting the role of communities and civil society organizations in shaping public discussion and social accountability across the region.

IV. Governance

The Regional Programme fully embraces the Spotlight Initiative's principles of inclusiveness, transparency, accountability, consensus-based decisions, participation and ownership of relevant stakeholders.

The Regional Programme will be steered and governed by the Regional Steering Committee, chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) for Kazakhstan, and whose membership consists of the following:

- UN RC for Kazakhstan (Chair);



- Representative of EU Delegation in Kazakhstan
- UN Women Representative in Kazakhstan (Technical Coherence and RUNO);
- UNFPA Representative in Kazakhstan (RUNO);
- UNDP Resident Representative in Kazakhstan (RUNO);
- Representative(s) of Civil Society²⁹, ensuring 20% representation.

Invited participants: the UN Resident Coordinators from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Afghanistan may be invited to participate in the Regional Steering Committee when relevant.

A modality of Government involvement in the management of the Programme - that is appropriate for a Regional Programme - will be considered in the course of Programme implementation, in close consultation with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan.

Any changes made to the structure will ensure that civil society will maintain a 20% representation on the Regional Steering Committee.

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.

The Regional Steering Committee meets twice a year. As the highest governance structure for the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Asia, the Regional Steering Committee provides strategic oversight for the Programme. The Regional Steering Committee makes decisions that are in accordance with the objectives, approach and scope of the Regional Programme, and guides the implementing partners and responsible parties in the execution of the Regional Programme. Where consensus and/or agreement could not be reached among the members of the Regional Steering Committee, the UN RC for Kazakhstan would make the final decision.

The following are the typical roles and responsibilities of the Regional Steering Committee:

- Ensure accountability, effective management and implementation of the Regional Programme through proper communication and coordination.
- Approve annual work plans, review output level results and adjust implementation with the aim of ensuring maximum Programmatic impact.
- Review and approve periodic and annual Regional Programme narrative reports developed with the RUNO project team and cleared and submitted by the Programme Coordinator.
- Approve programmatic or budgetary 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.

Recognizing the absence of regional institutions that could be natural partners to this Regional Programme, the Regional Programme will strive to engage relevant regional institutions on a case by case basis. Such institutions may include the UN Regional Preventive Diplomacy Centre for Central Asia, World Bank regional office in Almaty, and UNECE-ESCAP Special Programme for the Economies in Central Asia (SPECA), and the OSCE

The Regional Programme will heavily engage with relevant Civil Society organizations in Central Asia and Afghanistan. A Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CS-RRG) consisting of a maximum of 15 civil society representatives from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan will be formed. The CS-RRG members will provide 1) guidance and advisory support to the work of the Regional Programme, 2) advocate for the cause of the Regional Programme, and 3) offer implementation support where relevant and not excluding other Civil Society organizations. During the program formulation process, an *Interim* CS-RRG was formed by the civil society representatives from

²⁹ CSO representatives to be self-selected among the CS-RRG



the 6 participating countries. Making the best of the very limited time made available for the programme formulation process, the members were invited at the recommendation of the UN Resident Coordinators based in the six participating countries. The RCs in turn had received suggestions from their UN country team or UN Gender Thematic Group or identified the members from within the Civil Society representatives participating in the Spotlight Country Program formulation processes³⁰. The UN RC for Kazakhstan spoke with all recommended Civil Society representatives to confirm their availability and sought their comments for draft Regional Programme Document before its finalization.

The UN RC for Kazakhstan will continue to regularly consult (mostly virtually) with all UN RCs in the countries of Central Asia and Afghanistan, and through them with the UNCTs, to ensure that the Regional Programme remains relevant and is supported by the stakeholders from their respective country, and share such information with the Regional Steering Committee. RUNO representatives in Kazakhstan will consult their peers in their Regional and Country offices.

At the technical level, it is envisaged that technical coordination meetings take place for each of the four Programme Pillars on a regular [trimester] basis among the SI Regional and Country Programme teams.

Day-to-day project management is spearheaded by the members of a single, coherent Programme Management Unit sitting in the same location, consisting of the following members:

- Programme Coordinator (UN Resident Coordinator’s Office), who reports to the UN RC as First Reporting Officer on strategic matters and guided day-to-day by the RC Office Team Leader and RUNOs, and who also reports as Second Reporting Officer the RUNO in charge of Technical Coherence, UN Women;
- 1 Technical Coherence Specialist (UN Women), who reports to the UN RC and to the UN Women Representative;
- 1 Communications Officer (RCO), who reports to the Programme Coordinator, and is guided and supported by the relevant RC Office Staff (RCO Communications Specialist);
- 1 Monitoring & Reporting Officer (RCO), who reports to the Programme Coordinator, and is guided and supported by the relevant RC Office Staff (RCO Data & Reporting Analyst);
- 5 Project Officers (3 UN Women, 1 UNFPA, and 1 UNDP contracts), who report to the Programme Coordinator as First Reporting Officer, and to the respective RUNO representatives as Second Reporting Officer;
- 4 Administrative & Finance Assistants (2 RCO and 2 UN Women – Pillar 6) who provides services to the 5 Project Officers under the direct supervision of the Programme Coordinator.

³⁰ The members of the *Interim* CS-RRGs are as follows:

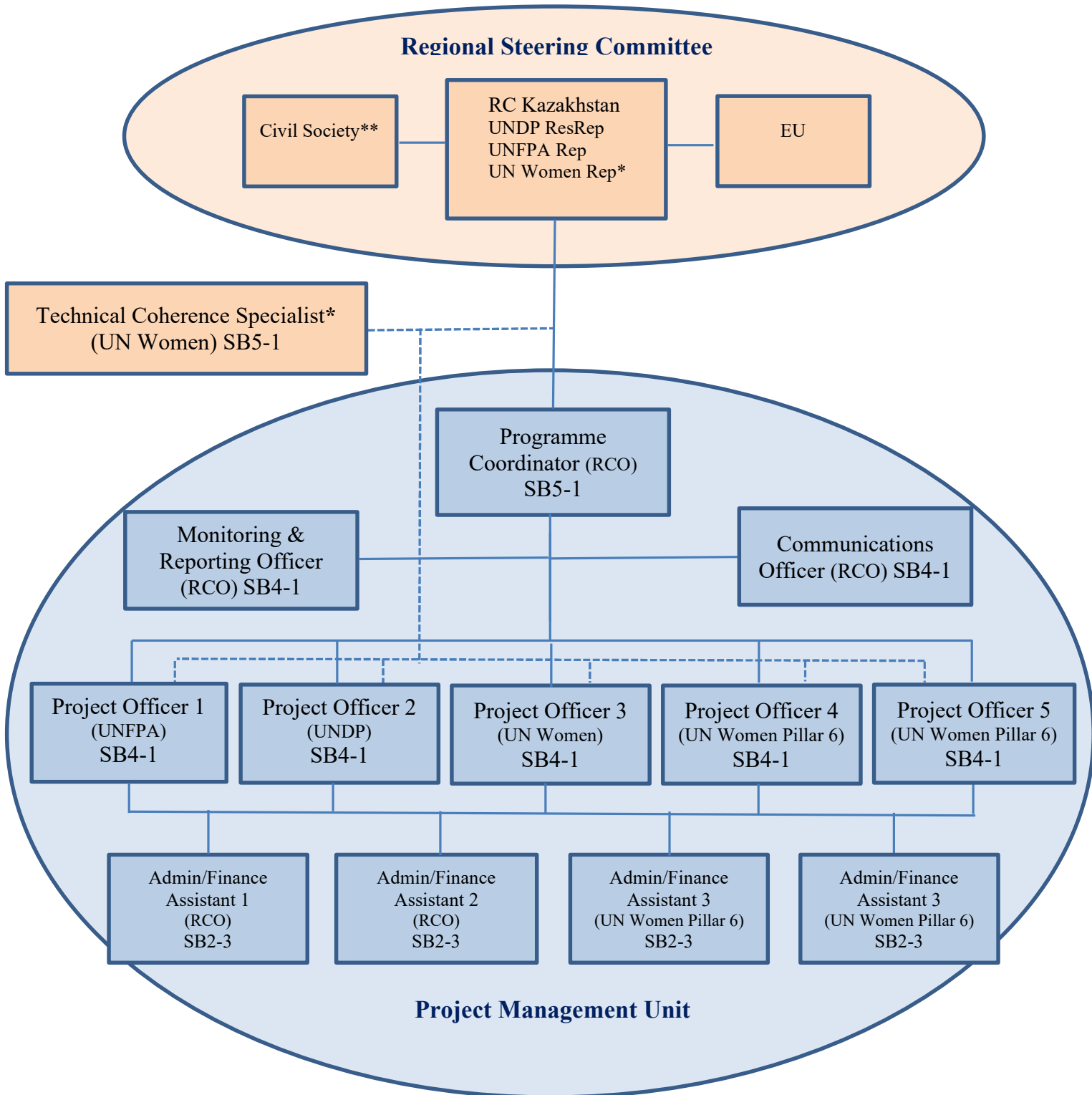
1. Ms. Palwasha Hassan (Afghanistan), Executive Director, Afghan Women Education Center;
2. Ms. Lailuma Naseri (Afghanistan), President, Afghan Justice organization;
3. Ms. Assiya Khairullina (Kazakhstan), Head of NGO “League of Women of Creative Initiative”;
4. Ms. Lyazzat Kaltayeva (Kazakhstan), Chair of Association of Women with Disabilities “Shyrak”;
5. Ms. Dina Smailova (Kazakhstan), Activist representing the interest of the Victims of VAWG;
6. Ms. Jenifer Lewis (Kazakhstan), Director of Degree Programs, Nazarbayev University TBC;
7. Ms. Olga Ryl (Kazakhstan), Director of “Korgau Astana” Foundation and Legal Aid Center “Chance”;
8. Ms. Tolkun Tulekova (Kyrgyzstan), Association of Crisis Centers;
9. Ms. Avazkan Ormonova (Kyrgyzstan), “DIA” public foundation;
10. Ms. Gulnora Beknazarova (Tajikistan), Center for Sociological Research “Zerkalo”;
11. Ms. Tatiana Bozrikova (Tajikistan), Public Foundation Your Choice;
12. Ms. Gulya Chorekiyeva (Turkmenistan), Director, NGO Yenme (Overcoming) TBC;
13. Mr. Sabir Agabalayev (Turkmenistan), Deputy Director of Keik Okara;
14. Ms. Dilovar Kabulova (Uzbekistan), Director, Civic Initiatives Support Center;
15. Ms. Natalya Plotnikova (Uzbekistan), NO Opa-Singillar – Network of Women with Disabilities; and
16. Ms. Evgeniya Korotkova (Uzbekistan), Coordinator, NGO “Ishonch va Hayot” for People Living with HIV/AIDS (Confidence and Life).



The Regional Steering Committee and Programme Management Unit are schematically drawn in the diagram below:



Diagram of Regional Steering Committee and Programme Management Unit



* Technical Coherence

** Following the principle of a minimum 20% representation on the Regional Programme Steering Committee, two or more members of the CS-RRG will be nominated by the Group to represent it on the multi-stakeholder Committee.



V. Accountability

The Programme Oversight and Coordination functions sit in the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator for Kazakhstan to bring all the pieces of the programme together. This includes approving the Annual Work Plan, approving consolidated reporting; promoting agencies' leadership to advance programme elements; convening the Regional Steering Committee; and overseeing implementation schedules, delivery and budgets as articulated in the Regional Programme Document. In doing so, the UN RC Kazakhstan is guided by the deliberations and decisions of the Regional Steering Committee that the RC Kazakhstan chairs, drawing on the technical expertise of the RUNOs. This also includes responsibility for the overall planning, communication, monitoring and review of the Programme as well as facilitating strategic partnership amongst relevant stakeholders. Where there is no consensus among the members of the RUNOs, Regional Steering Committee and stakeholders, the UN RC for Kazakhstan will make final decisions. The UN RC for Kazakhstan is accountable to the UN Deputy Secretary-General for the overall design, implementation arrangement, and achievement of the Programme's strategic results.

The UN RC for Kazakhstan will be supported by the RC Office staff (once they are all hired) in fulfilling the above responsibilities: The RC Office Team Leader (P5 international staff) will regularly provide the programme oversight by liaising with the Technical Coherence Specialist and the Programme Coordinator; the RCO Communications Specialist (NOC – P3 equivalent national staff) will dedicate 15% of his/her time to guide the work of Project-level Communication Officer while the RCO Data Monitoring Analyst (NOB – P2 equivalent national staff) will also dedicate 15% of his/her time to guide the work of Project-level Monitoring & Reporting Officer. These RCO Specialist/Analyst will also support the Programme Coordinator in managing the project communications and visibility strategy as well as in preparing the regular/annual project reports.

The Heads of RUNO (Resident Representatives) in Kazakhstan are accountable primarily to the RC, and are mutually accountable to each other, for the timely and quality delivery of *all* programmatic and financial results and outputs of the Regional Programme components and activities assigned to the respective agency, in full compliance with their policy and procedures, while fully respecting the Spotlight Initiative's spirit of joint work among the RUNOs. RUNOs Regional Advisors will support accordingly as per the line of accountability and oversight in the respective agency, and RUNO Country Representatives based in other countries of the region will play advisory roles to the Resident Representatives of the respective RUNO based in Kazakhstan. The RC will regularly convene meetings of RUNOs to periodically review progress of the Regional Spotlight Initiative implementation, provide feedback and discuss and agree on issues that require strategic decision-making. These meetings will enable continuous improvement of the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan. RUNOs must seek approval of the Regional Steering Committee for deviations from the approved plans, including the possible utilization of savings generated from specific budget items.

In the spirit of joint programming and in order to ensure technical coherence as well as avoid "working in silos", it is also important that specific synergies and cooperation within and across Outcomes/Pillars be developed. UN Women has been designated to ensure such a technical coherence in consultation with the RUNOs, through advisory support to the RC and day-to-day guidance given to the Programme Coordinator. The Technical Coherence Specialist ensures technical coherence and quality across the Outcomes/Pillars and work of different RUNOs. To facilitate this effort, the Project Management Unit will be co-located and all Project Personnel (regardless of their RUNO affiliation) will work as a single team, reporting to the Programme Coordinator.

VI. RUNO(s) and Implementing Partners

The RUNOs for the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia are based in Kazakhstan but will draw on the full capacities of their presence in Central Asia, as well as the Regional Offices.

UNDP: Gender equality and women's empowerment are at the heart of UNDP's work, integrated into all aspects of the work. UNDP's programmes in region on the SDGs focuses on building synergies across the goals and addressing the gaps in the national implementation of goals commitments that will make the achievement of 2030 Agenda and gender equality possible. Throughout Central Asia, UNDP



is focused on strengthening human rights mechanisms at the national level, both their legislative remit and capacities. UNDP in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan worked with national partners in designing legislation, secondary policies to tackle different forms of SGBV, including addressing impunity of perpetrators and reforming discriminatory laws to be aligned with international standards and human rights conventions. In Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, UNDP is training judges, prosecutors, police, local women-led councils, and legal aid providers to enable them to improve the design of policies and services on access to justice including for cases of SGBV. UNDP Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan support the creation of SGBV response mechanisms in rural areas. In the region, UNDP has a strong record in designing and running prevention strategies with civil society, with the media and young people, working with journalists and media outlets, partnering on community-based education to produce appealing campaigns to change harmful social norms and behaviours. In the region, this includes a video campaign on survivors' stories in Central Asia #Hearmetoo was a highlight of the 16 Days campaign last year. UNDP with (UNICEF) made an award-winning film on bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan. In some countries outside the region UNDP supports creative online campaigns to focus on the role of bystanders in addressing gender-based in public spaces. Throughout the Central Asia region, UNDP supports NSOs to build their skills on collecting and reporting on SDGs, including innovation in data collection. Under the SI Programme, UNDP will coordinate with UN Women under Pillar 1 in conducting the Regional Legislative Review; under the RC, will partner with UN Women in the establishment of the Alliance and will lead the development of SOP Models targeting judiciary and police in Pillar 2; will coordinate with the other RUNOS in the mobilising of men in Pillar 3. In Pillar 5, UNDP will support connecting the Regional Modelling on Data, innovation in the use of "big data" and building capacities to the broader regional work on monitoring the SDGs. UNDP's annual programme delivery in Central Asia for 2019 is US\$95,829,292 with 701 personnel deployed in the region. UNDP Kazakhstan has 142 personnel; UNDP Kyrgyzstan has 148 personnel; UNDP Tajikistan has 174 personnel; UNDP Turkmenistan has 76 personnel; and UNDP Uzbekistan has 161 personnel, UNDP Afghanistan has 393 personnel.

UNFPA: UNFPA's Strategic Plan globally and through the regional programme includes three transformational results to which all programmes are aligned: Ending Preventable Maternal Deaths, Ending Gender Based Violence and Other Harmful Practices, and Ending Unmet Need for Family Planning. At the regional level (Eastern Europe and Central Asia), UNFPA co-chairs the UN Regional Issue-based Coalition on Gender together with UN Women, which ensures additional joined up technical support to all countries in the region. In all five Central Asian countries, UNFPA is either leading, co-leading or actively contributing to gender equality and equity programmes. Since 2015, UNFPA has actively supported integration of Multi-Sectoral Response to GBV Model via policy dialogue, development of tools, and capacity building. Through its national and Europe/Central Asia-wide investments in the Y-Peer Networks and MenEngage Platform, UNFPA in Central Asia has worked extensively in mobilising non-traditional partners in support of ending SGBV. UNFPA's strengths in census, domestic violence surveys and GBVIMS (GBV information management system), among others, also provides unique opportunity to enhance GBV data availability, standardization, and utilization at both country and regional levels. UNFPA will participate in Pillar 1 in a consultative process with the Regional Legislative review; and will lead work in Pillar 2 in institutionalization of Multi-sectoral Response to SGBV Model and sectoral SOPs and exchanging best practices around integration of UN standards on Essential Services and coordination. Under Pillar 3, UNFPA will work closely in support of the Y-Peer Network, EECA MenEngage Platform, and involving faith-based leaders, building on its national work in all three areas in Central Asia focusing on social norms change and prevention of violence. In Pillar 5, UNFPA will work with the other agencies in developing SGBV Data Models, including administrative data collection as part of Multi-sectoral coordination and response. UNFPA has a dedicated long-term presence in all five Central Asian countries with full-fledged country offices with personnel ranging from 10 to 17 in each office and two International Representatives (covering three and two countries respectively). In all country offices, UNFPA works through five-year country programmes. The total core programme resources for the 5 countries amounts to USD 3.35 million annually. Additional resources are provided from non-core funds as well as contributions from the Regional Office, based in Istanbul. UNFPA also has a sub-regional office in Almaty with an International Programme Coordinator and support staff. Annual Programme Delivery was USD 1.3 m (for



Kazakhstan in 2018); Number of personnel deployed in Nur-Sultan is 13 and 4 in Almaty (there will be additional staff from 2020).³¹

UN Women (RUNO & Technical Coherence Agency): As the lead agency on gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN Women in Central Asia is well placed to be both a RUNO and provide technical coherence for the SI. To deliver on the Entity's three pronged mandate of supporting international norm setting around gender equality, supporting programmatic/operational work on the ground to advance gender equality, and supporting the UN RC in coordinating the UN System's work on gender equality, UN Women Kazakhstan and its country presences in Central Asia have strong technical capacity in support of the SI. In Central Asia, UN Women has supported governments in adopting and enacting legal reforms, drawing on their extensive global knowledge based as well as its leadership in the UN System on integrating international norms and standards around gender equality, including ending SGBV. The Entity has helped governments integrate anti-violence measures into their national development plans and supports national efforts for stopping SGBV, while also ensuring that adequate resources are in place to pay for them. Through its work, UN Women has fostered a comprehensive and holistic strategy for prevention that focuses on strengthening leadership and local capacities, promotes institutional change and involves all levels of society in SGBV programmes - such as by engaging individuals and communities in the design of tailored programmes that target the most critical and vulnerable groups. Through its HeForShe Campaign and its launching of the #Don'tBeSilent movement for survivors of SGBV, UN Women has made significant progress in mobilising key champions for change. Under the SI Regional Programme, UN Women will partner with UNDP in implementing actions under Pillar 1 (Legislative Review); will support the establishment of the Central Asia Alliance, in close partnership with UNDP, and will work on GRB and costing Models (Pillar 2); will support women's survivors (#Don't Be Silent Movement), and work with men (Pillar 3); and will engage in both supporting Regional Models on data, as well as rolling out the region's first study on men's perceptions on SGBV and will implement the actions under pillar 6 to strengthen the regional women's movement building and capacity of grassroots organizations through a combination of establishing networking mechanisms, capacity development support and provision of small grants to CSOs. UN Women has been working in the region since 1999. Coverage of Central Asia is now through Country Offices for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, with the latter also covering Tajikistan where there is a programme presence and Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan is covered with support from the Regional Office. Afghanistan remains one of UN Women's largest Country Offices worldwide.³² Annual Programme Delivery US\$1,092,770 (Kazakhstan), with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan delivering US\$2,638,280 in the last year. Number of staff deployed: 13 (Kazakhstan), 22 (Kyrgyzstan); and 5 (Tajikistan).

Implementing Partners:

The SI Regional Programme for Central Asia will determine its implementing partners in consultation with the emerging Alliance, and in building on existing partnerships established by the RUNOs through their on-going work.

The RUNOs have strong partnerships at the national level among NWMs, NSOs, Ministries of Justice and Interior, Policy, Ombuds person's offices and national Human Rights Mechanisms, Ministries of Health and Education, Ministries of Social Welfare, Parliamentarian and Offices of the President. Additionally, all RUNOs have worked with men, youth, and faith-based leaders. As part of the broader UN Development System Reform, all agencies have coordinated together under the RCs in support of strengthened monitoring and implementation of the SDGs and have worked closely with the national mechanisms established in this regard. Through work with networks of women police officers and women judiciary; networks of youth, a region-wide Parliamentary network on Women's leadership, and the on-going work with MenEngage, the SI will seek to build on on-going emerging networks.

Through their work in changing social norms and subsequent attitudes and behaviours, the RUNOs in each country have partnerships with CSOs, activists and survivors – including those at the grassroots – in addressing SGBV and harmful practices.

³¹ UNFPA Afghanistan 2018 Programme Delivery was USD 13.6 m with a total of 64 personnel.

³² UN Women Afghanistan Country Office has a Programme Budget of US\$11,363,955 for 2019 and 47 personnel.



VII. Partnerships

The programme was designed by the UN Country and Regional Teams in Central Asia and Afghanistan, in close coordination with the EU Delegation in Kazakhstan and with instructions from the DEVCO team in Brussels, as well as in consultation with selected CSOs in the 5 Central Asia countries and Afghanistan. The RUNOs will draw on the Spotlight Secretariat's expertise, networks and learnings from other SI programmes world-wide in the implementation of the SI for Central Asia.

Participatory methods were used to gather stakeholders' views on the root causes of SGBV and harmful practices in Central Asia, formal and informal sources of support for women and girls experiencing violence, current and potential stakeholders in preventing and responding to gender-based violence, and current strengths and challenges at both national and regional levels according to each pillar of the Spotlight Initiative. Key recommendations were developed for relevant Spotlight contributions and these were incorporated into the strategy and activities.

The activities have been planned to involve the broadest possible range of partners at regional level. The EU, which participated in the design of the Initiative will be a major partner in the implementation of the programme and a leading member of the Steering Committee. The EU Delegation will play a crucial role in terms of advocacy, strategic advice and positioning of the Initiative on the agenda of Governments and other development partners. In accordance with the Spotlight Strategy, CSOs, women's groups, and faith-based organizations will be actively involved, both as implementing partners and as beneficiaries. A small number of international CSOs will be engaged as implementing partners, based on needs and the International CSOS comparative advantages.

Civil Society National Reference Group: Given the crucial role of civil society to the success of the SI, a Civil Society Regional Reference Group (CS-RRG) will additionally serve as an institutional mechanism to provide advice and advocate to realise the results envisioned in the SI for Central Asia. The CS-RRG will be constituted in adherence to the principle of leaving no one behind and ensuring representation of groups of women and girls left furthest behind, and all others relevant in the national context.

Currently, an interim group is in place however, a new group will be created through an open competitive process, organized in coordination with the EU. A mix of regional, national and grassroots CSOs will be prioritised in the membership of the CS-RRG. Members of the Group serve on it in their individual capacities. The CS-RRG will institute measures to avoid any **conflicts of interest** as when, for example, a civil society representative is associated with a CSO that serves as an Implementing Partner of the Spotlight Initiative for the Regional Programme. Following the principle of a minimum **20% representation on the Regional Programme Steering Committee**, two or more members of the CS-RRG will be nominated by the Group to represent it on the multi-stakeholder Committee. The CS-RRG will have the following functions and responsibilities:

- Provide advice on the overall strategic direction of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme and on cutting-edge national and local policy issues on addressing SGBV and Harmful Practices;
- Provide advice and perspectives on current on addressing SGBV and Harmful Practices-related issues at regional, national and local levels where the Spotlight Initiative's leadership and support to civil society advocacy is important;
- Partner on high-level advocacy and communications as well as political dialogue, including by supporting visibility and promotion of the Initiative's goals at the regional, national and local levels;
- Support efforts at dissemination of the messages of the Spotlight Initiative on addressing SGBV and Harmful Practices to the public, from the regional to the community level, especially to marginalized groups, youth and the media;
- Provide advice on ongoing interventions, possibilities for scaling up the Spotlight Initiative for the Regional Programme;



- Provide advice on funding priorities at regional, national and local levels and on-going interventions and recommendations for up-scaling achievements and addressing challenges;
- Serve as an interactive space and open forum for dialogue between the Spotlight Initiative and organisations, groups and networks working on addressing SGBV and Harmful Practices, including on global, regional, national and local developments, trends and risks related to such work;
- Engage in broader consultations with groups and networks, especially at the local and grassroots levels, at regular intervals to update them and solicit input on the performance of the Spotlight Initiative for the Regional Programme and for advocacy, research, learning and action;
- Provide any other relevant information, analysis and lessons learned that could feed into the future programming and advocacy efforts of the Spotlight Initiative; and
- Provide feedback to the Governing Body (including via an annual monitoring report) on the Spotlight Initiative for the Regional Programme's implementation as well as advice on addressing challenges.

VIII. Intersectional approach

While no woman or girl is exempt from violence, the risks and experiences for some are greater and the responses to their specific needs may be non-existent or weak. Women and girls in certain stages of life (adolescents and older ages), who are migrants, refugees/IDPs, ethnic or racial minorities; those living with disabilities and those living in rural areas, among others, are often the most discriminated against, creating overlapping inequalities and situations of multiple and intersecting disadvantages, explaining how and why certain groups are systematically left behind. Recognising this, the Spotlight Initiative has placed at its centre the principle of “leave no one behind”.

At the heart of leaving no one behind, is leaving no one out. It is imperative and a basic principle of the Spotlight Initiative that women and girls, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, must be meaningfully engaged to elevate their voices and ensure that their experiences, knowledge, recommendations and agency are not only respected, but central to the design of interventions. The Spotlight Initiative is attempting to give the necessary space and support to such women and girls, as well as to the groups that represent them.

Women's rights groups, autonomous social movements and CSOS have the capacity to support and organize those voices. They have the capacity to articulate the social perspectives of all groups of women, including youth, marginalized groups and/or groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization. It is with this principle at heart that the Spotlight Initiative will ensure that the women's movement and civil society can be meaningfully engaged and involved in decision-making at all levels of the Spotlight Initiative, and that they participate in the design, implementation and monitoring of interventions on SGBV and harmful practices. In addition, the regional women's movement and civil society organizations, particularly grassroots organizations and those representing the most marginalized groups and/or groups facing intersecting forms of discrimination/marginalization, will be directly supported through pillar 6 of the Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for Central Asia.

IX. Coherence with existing programmes:

Please see the attached Table summarising the SI Regional Programme for Central Asia's coherence with related programmes in the five countries as well at the Central Asia-regional level.

X. Monitoring & evaluation:

The key functions of the M&E framework are to ensure that the right decisions are taken so that the Spotlight Initiative's activities: (i) are being implemented according to plan; (ii) have the intended impact on the beneficiaries and agents of change; (iii) are effectively delivering benefits and the benefits are being sustainably managed and owned by communities; (iv) are relevant to the needs of, and prioritized



by, targeted beneficiaries/agents of change (including those most at risk and facing intersecting forms of discrimination); and (v) are being monitored so as to identify problems and risks early and ensure the progress of the Initiative is on track.

The M&E framework will be customized to the needs of the program and aligned with the objectives of the Spotlight Initiative at regional level. To best ensure that the objectives are achieved, the management of the Spotlight Initiative at regional level will consistently track results at the output and outcome levels. This will enable appropriate results-based management allowing adjustments to program components.

The effectiveness and sustainability of programme benefits will be monitored closely. Ownership by programme stakeholders will ensure that benefits are both effectively delivered and continue beyond program-completion. The development results being tracked need to incorporate the aspirations and challenges of targeted communities to be truly relevant to their needs.

The M&E framework is based on several principles corresponding to the following approaches:

- (i) **A results-based management approach:** The aim of the M&E framework is to ultimately enhance results-based management. Therefore, management at global and national level need to keep abreast of M&E data and tools and use the same in planning.
- (ii) **A framework focused on people and beneficiaries/agents of change:** The M&E framework will focus on benefits flowing to all people, including those facing intersecting forms of discrimination; monitoring will not be limited to inputs or activities. Instead the final benefits of each program activity should be measured, wherever possible, in terms of economic and social benefit and number of beneficiaries/agents of change reached. Concurrently, the M&E framework will be community-based with results should be measured by directly involving beneficiaries, agents of change and stakeholders.
- (iii) **A targeted M&E framework:** Following the principle to “leave no one behind”, the M&E tools and data will give special attention to gender, youth and intersecting forms of discrimination. Wherever possible, gender and youth issues will be highlighted, and results data will also be disaggregated accordingly. The Spotlight Initiative will endeavour for data to be disaggregated at a minimum by income, sex, age, ethnicity, disability and geographic location. Data disaggregation will also be explored to include 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.
- (iv) **A sustainability-focused framework:** The M&E framework, and related indicators, will place special attention on the sustainability of program initiatives. Given the importance of the Spotlight Initiative as a UN flagship Initiative, sustainability-related indicators and impact measurement indicators will be incorporated in the M&E of all interventions.

Indicators: A menu of indicators has been designed by the Spotlight Secretariat and agreed with the European Union. In keeping with the levels of monitoring (and levels of the results chain) the Regional Team selected from that menu:

- *Output indicators* which describe the goods and services the project provides to enable the target groups to take the desired action (1st level).
- *Outcome indicators* which describe the action the target groups must take, in order to improve their condition and the benefits they derive from the action (2nd level).

Quantitative or qualitative targets will be associated to each indicator, corresponding to the final objectives to be achieved at the end of the Programme, once the baseline study has been finalised.



XI. Innovation

The Spotlight Initiative provides an unprecedented opportunity to deploy innovative approaches to achieve gender equality at scale in order to eliminate violence against women and girls working through a targeted and concerted investment, comprehensive approach, and evidence-based programmatic theory of change. Thus, the regional programme will identify and adapt interventions that have evidence of success and best practices and will incorporate experimental approaches to test new pathways to achieve accelerated results. All innovative approaches in Central Asia will be closely observed to assess opportunities and risks, in line with the *Do No Harm* approach. The purpose of innovation is to accelerate impact; therefore, programmes demonstrating significant outcomes will be scaled up and will be shared as an innovative practice.

To advance the development of creative and innovative ideas and approaches, the Spotlight Initiative will 1) stimulate co-creation in which beneficiaries play an active and ongoing role in the conceptualization, development and implementation of innovative programmes and activities, including through civil society, 2) encourage innovations in partnerships, as well as programmes and activities, and 3) promote innovative uses of non-technology methods and technology applications to reach and serve beneficiaries.

Programmatic Innovation:

- Promote inclusive innovation, with a focus on supporting the poorest and most vulnerable. Marginalized and vulnerable groups will have a decisive role in the design, testing, learning and adoption of innovative solutions. Effective networks and mechanisms for their participation will be created.
- Learn quickly and ensure the impact of promising innovations before scale-up.
- Facilitate collaboration and co-creation across public, private and civil society sectors.
- Identify and share scalable solutions that demonstrate high potential to achieve and sustain significant impact and cost-effectiveness.
- Introduce new methodologies (e.g. procedures, protocols) or technologies (e.g. devices) to address VAWG (prevention and response).
- Systematize and evaluate experiences to analyze their potential and replicability in order to track and learn from innovation.

Operational Innovation:

Operationalizing the United Nations Development System (UNDS) reform as a flagship programme and leveraging the comparative advantage of UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes around EVAWG is an opportunity to explore how business operations in Central Asia can be streamlined through common business operation strategies such as common back office functions to improve operational efficiency.

- Develop new and or enhancing existing modalities: for coordinated management and “Delivering as One” among UN agencies.
- Maximization of cost (Cost savings): The Central Asia Regional Programme will tap into various organizational process assets, engage in joint procurement processes where possible, coordinate common operations, and ensure that synergies are made with other ongoing initiatives.

Increased efficiency in operational procedures will be tracked and measured as a metric of innovation for the Spotlight Initiative in Central Asia.

XII. Knowledge management:

Knowledge Management is a central component of the Spotlight Initiative in Central Asia. Key principles include people-centred, embedded in all pillars of the country programme, the dissemination of knowledge to the public and a participatory method to programme delivery and being contextualized



and customized to the local environment.

The objectives of the Knowledge Management Strategy will be: 1) to increase awareness and understanding of the SI's implementation and impact in Central Asia; (2) to communicate and share good practices and lessons that emerge through the implementation of the SI interventions (3) to generate local, context-specific knowledge on 'what works' and 'what does not work' to be shared on regional and global virtual knowledge platforms and (4) to strengthen women's rights groups', civil society groups', and capacities of governments to generate, disseminate and use EVAWG knowledge. As such, the Central Asia regional team has identified specific tools and techniques which will effectively manage knowledge and these approaches will be further developed in the Central Asia KM Framework. Some Activities will include:

- **Knowledge capture:** Collating the evidence-base on Spotlight Pillars from existing national and global resources and conducting a situation analysis improve understanding of EVAWG in the country
- **Addressing knowledge gaps:** Activities will be designed to specifically meet identified knowledge gaps
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Strategizing innovative, context-specific monitoring and evaluation strategies of all Spotlight activities to determine 'what works' and 'what does not work'. This knowledge will be shared on regional and global knowledge platforms to encourage peer support, collaborative problem-solving and strategizing; and the sharing of tools and other resources.
- **Dissemination and Public Engagement:** Communicate and share good practices and lessons that emerge through the implementation of the SI interventions and establish participatory mechanisms with multiple stakeholders to continually assess and discuss what works and what does not
- **Build Knowledge Management Capacities:** Conducting national and/or regional knowledge exchange workshops on particular topics/practice to strengthen institutional capacity to generate disseminate and use knowledge products.
- A dedicated Monitoring, Evaluation/Knowledge Management Officer will be recruited to oversee knowledge management activities. He/she will also ensure that the outputs from M&E activities are translated into knowledge that informs programme implementation and reporting and that KM activities are closely aligned with the SLI Communication and Visibility Strategy.

XIII. Communication and visibility

The UN and the EU Delegations in the region have an existing and strong track-record in partnering on advocacy for development issues, freedom of the press, and human rights.

All communication and visibility around the Spotlight Initiative are aligned with the Initiative's *Communication and Visibility Guide*. The Spotlight Initiative brand identity was jointly developed by the United Nations and the EU. The Spotlight Initiative brand conforms with UN and EU branding and visibility policies. All Communications will be led and initiated by the Spotlight Initiative's Communications Specialist, who will be a member of the UN Communications Group, comprised of UN Agency Communications Focal Points to ensure the visibility of the Spotlight Initiative. The Annual Communications and Visibility Plan will be developed and implemented by the UN Communications Group.

The programmes will have four specific communications objectives:

- Raise awareness and generate visibility around SGBV and harmful practices at the regional level
- Illustrate and promote the impact and results of Spotlight Initiative through communicating and exchanging regional and global best practices on preventing and responding to SGBV and harmful practices
- Promote positive attitudes and social norms needed for ending SGBV and harmful practices



through engaging different stakeholders

- Ensure sharing and wide dissemination of best practices among countries - including by the EU within EU countries to generate interest, visibility and support for the SI, its donors and partners

The Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Action has been used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Regional Programme. A more detailed plan is available in Annex 2.



TABLE F - PROGRAMME RISK MANAGEMENT MATRIX

| | Risks | Risk Level: Very High High Medium Low (Likelihood x Impact) | Likelihood: Almost Certain – 5 Likely – 4 Possible – 3 Unlikely – 2 Rare – 1 | Impact: Extreme – 5 Major – 4 Moderate – 3 Minor – 2 Insignificant – 1 | Mitigating Measures | Responsible Unit/Person |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| | Contextual risks | | | | | |
| | Changes in political landscape | Medium | 3 | 2 | Maintain good relations with government partners in countries in the region | Resident Coordinator |
| | Changes in government priorities – lack of commitment to EVAWG | High | 3 | 4 | Maintain regular communication with CA governments to facilitate continued commitment | Resident Coordinator RUNOs |
| | Programmatic risks | | | | | |
| | Low capacity of NWM, parliaments, NSOs, CSOs (as RPs) to engage | High | 3 | 3 | Regular engagement with NWM, parliaments, NSOs, CSOs into implementation Providing capacity building | RUNOs Project Coordinator |
| | Conflict of interest occurred during implementation of activities conducted by CSOs using SI grant funds (transfers to CSOs/Counterparts) (Pillar 6) | High | 3 | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Systematic engagement of the Pillar 6 Project team in projects implementation. – Regular monitoring through desk review and site visits. – Inclusion of Pillar 6 Project Officers into the Steering team/committee managing | Pillar 6 project team (Project Officers and Project Assistants) |



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

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| | | | | | projects. | |
| | CSOs' low delivery rate and failure to achieve results (Pillar 6) | Medium | 3 | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint development of projects' work plans and budgets. - Systematic monitoring through desk review and site visits. - Development of CSOs' risks management plans. | Pillar 6 project team (Project Officers and Project Assistants) |
| | Control of local and law enforcement authorities over CSOs' activities during implementation of projects in the framework of SI Regional Programme (Pillar 6) | High | 3 | 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination with local authorities and the Government by UNCTs in participating countries. - Raising awareness about the SI Programme through official channels. - Integration of results of the Assessment of institutional/governmental barriers to identify the best mechanism for engaging CSOs in regional women's movement building. | Pillar 6 project team (Project Officers and Project Assistants) |
| | Difficulty to link Afghanistan to CA experience | Low | 3 | 1 | Regular communication with RUNO counterparts in Afghanistan for engagement at relevant moments of Regional Programme | RUNOs Resident Coordinator |
| | Lack of engagement of | Medium | 3 | 2 | Engagement through EVAWG | RUNOs Project |



Spotlight Initiative

To eliminate violence against women and girls

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| | specific stakeholder groups, e.g. men or youth at scale for regional approach | | | | champions of RUNOs; effective communication and advocacy approaches | Coordinator Communications Associate |
| Institutional risks | | | | | | |
| | Lack of collaboration in PMU with personnel recruited from different agencies | Medium | 2 | 3 | RUNOs to participate in all panels for recruitment of PMU personnel (including agency Project Officers) | Programme Coordinator Resident Coordinator |
| | Programme components out of sync among RUNOs | Medium | 2 | 3 | Programme Coordinator and UN Women to have regular programme meetings with all Project Officers | UN Women with technical coherence role Programme Coordinator |
| Fiduciary risks | | | | | | |
| | Unfunded gap not met | Low | 2 | 1 | Outreach to Government of Kazakhstan for potential funding Discussion with other funding sources – other IOs, private sector | Resident Coordinator RUNOs |
| | RUNOs not able to deliver programme | Medium | 1 | 3 | RUNOs set up clear responsibilities and outline support of Agency Programme/Ops personnel for oversight | RUNOs |
| | Assumptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Political commitment of governments in the region to EVAWG ✓ All five countries work collaboratively across all 5 programme components (consistent engagement of Turkmenistan being possibly a challenge) ✓ Russian can be used as a common language for 5 Central Asian countries ✓ Logistical, language, and other connection with Afghanistan can be managed effectively and with minimal cost (or costs covered by Afghanistan Spotlight Country Programme) | | | | | |



TABLE 3: BUDGETS and COUNTRY RESULTS FRAMEWORK – see excel document attached.

Once finalised, the following tables will be incorporated to this document.

Table 3 A – 3-YEAR WORK PLAN

Table 3 B – BUDGET BY UNDG CATEGORY

Table 3 C – BUDGET BY OUTCOME

Table 3 D – MENU OF PILLARS/OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Table 3 E – RESULTS FRAMEWORK



ANNEX 1: Multi-stakeholder engagement in the Regional Programme development process

Consultations.

The UN RC for Kazakhstan held consultations with CSOs from across the five countries and Afghanistan. An Interim Reference Group was established so that the UN could solicit initial feedback on the early stages of programme formulation.

Key recommendations which have emerged from discussions with the Interim Reference Group:

- The overall proposed programme focus is highly relevant for Central Asia and Afghanistan. All CSOs consulted are willing to provide their detailed inputs to the Version 1 of the Programme Document, once received.
- The CSOs would like to see a virtual network established of CSOs in Central Asia to support work on SGBV, although there were not detailed recommendations on the focus or priorities of such a network. CSOs recommended that the network be coordinated on a rotational basis. The idea of a broad-based Alliance therefore resonated with the Interim Reference Group. It was proposed that any regional networks be chaired by CSOs whenever possible, and that this rotate around the five Central Asian countries.
- The CSOs would like to see as much emphasis as possible on tackling social norms as a root cause to SGBV;
- The CSOs want to be sure to have enough time to review the regional programme document in detail, if possible.



| Name of organisation/agency | Name and title of representative | Area of focus of work | Type of organisation (civil society organisation, government, EU delegation, academia, etc.) | Dates of consultations |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------|
| Afghan Women Education Center | Ms. Palwasha Hassan (Executive Director) | Peace-Building education and human rights promoting | Non-profit organization, Afghanistan | Oct 3, 2019 |
| Afghan Justice Organization | Ms. Lailuma Nasiri (President) | Promotes democracy, governance and rule of law | non-profit, and non-partisan organization, Afghanistan | Oct 3, 2019 |
| "League of women of creative initiative" | Ms. Assiya Khairullina (Director) | Fighting violence against women | NGO, Kazakhstan | Oct 4, 2019 |
| Association of Women with Disabilities "Shyrak" | Ms. Lyazzat Kaltayeva, (Chairperson) | Support to women with disabilities | Association, NGO, Kazakhstan | Oct 4, 2019 |
| Fund "HeМолчи.kz " | Ms. Dina Smailova (President) | fighting violence against women | NGO, Kazakhstan | Oct 4, 2019 |
| Fund "HeМолчиДети.kz " | Mr. Almat Mukhametzhanov (Chairman of the Board of Trustees) | fighting violence against children | NGO, Kazakhstan | Oct 4, 2019 |
| "Korgau Astana" Foundation and the Youth Information and Legal Aid Center "Chance" | Ms. Olga Ryl (Director) | Support to adolescents in difficult situations, those having run-ins with the law, and to women, victims of violence | Non-profit organization, Kazakhstan | Nov 7, 2019 |
| Association of Crisis Centers | Ms. Tolkun Tyulekova (Executive Director) | Shelter for victims of domestic violence | PF, Kyrgyzstan | Oct 16, 2019 |
| "DIA" (Business-like active women) | Ms. Avaskan Ormonova (Director) | Protection of socio-economic and political rights of women | PF, Kyrgyzstan | Oct 16, 2019 |
| Center for Sociological research "Zerkalo" | Ms. Gulnora Beknazarova (Expert) | Sociological research on gender related issues – early marriage, justice, access to water and | Company, Tajikistan | Oct 2, 2019 |



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| | | sanitation, violence | | |
| Public Foundation Your choice | Ms. Tatiana Bozrikova (Expert) | Human rights activist | PF, Tajikistan | Oct 2, 2019 |
| “Yenme (Overcoming)” | Ms. Gulya Chorekiyeva (Director) | Social support to disadvantaged, like PWD, por, elderly, orphanage kids etc | NGO, Turkmenistan | Oct 8, 2019 |
| “Keyik Okara” | Mr. Sabir Agabalayev (Deputy Director) | Outreach and consultancy support to youth and disadvantaged | NGO, Turkmenistan | Oct 8, 2019 |
| “Civic Initiatives Support Center” | Ms. Dilovar Kabulova (Director) | Support to socially disadvantaged women etc. | NGO, Uzbekistan | Oct 7, 2019 |
| “Opa-Singillar” | Ms. Natalya Plotnikova (Director) | Support to disabled women | NGO, Uzbekistan | Oct 7, 2019 |
| “Ishonch va Hayot” (confidence and life) | Ms. Yevgeniya Korotkova (Gender specialist) | Support to people living with HIV | NGO, Uzbekistan | Oct 7, 2019 |



ANNEX 2: COMMUNICATION AND VISIBILITY PLAN

The Regional communication plan of the Spotlight Initiative will be aligned with the global visibility and communication plan of the Spotlight Initiative, which harmonizes the guidelines of the EU and the Secretariat (UN).

Objectives:

General communication objectives: Position the Spotlight Initiative, its donors and partners at regional and global level in the public, political and media agenda, as a **reference programme to prevent and combat SGBV and harmful practices globally and in the region. Ensure that the EU receives the relevant visibility as a main actor in the eradication of SGBV globally and in Central Asia and Afghanistan.**

Specific communication objectives:

1. **Raise awareness and generate visibility around SGBV and harmful practices at the regional level** (with links to Afghanistan, where relevant) in support of advocacy for legal and policy reform, strengthening intersectional standards for service provisions and institutional response to survivors of SGBV and harmful practices and filling data gaps on SGBV as part of Agenda 2030.
2. Illustrate and promote **the impact and results of the Spotlight Initiative** through communicating and exchanging regional and global **best practices** on preventing and responding to SGBV and harmful practices including through sharing **human-centered stories** illustrating the impact of Spotlight interventions in terms of prevention and response to SGBV.
3. Promote positive attitudes and social norms needed for ending SGBV and harmful practices through engagement of young people, faith-based leaders, men and boys, survivors of SGBV and harmful practices, women's rights advocates and activists, key decision makers, influential people and other stakeholders. in communication efforts to enable them to speak up against SGBV and harmful practices and become influencers.
4. **Ensure sharing and wide dissemination of best practices among countries** – including by the EU within EU countries – to generate interest, visibility and support for the Spotlight Initiative, its donors and partners

Examples of Key Messages:

1. SGBV is not a private matter but a major key development issue and public health crisis inflicting lasting harm on an estimated XX% of the population in the region, with massive costs for societies as a whole.
2. For Central Asia societies to stop SGBV from reproducing everybody needs to assume their responsibility and break this cycle of violence to protect the next generation from harm.
3. Men and boys in particular have a key role to play in ending SGBV. Without their engagement in changing underlying norms and stereotypes, there will be no lasting progress towards ending SGBV.
4. Harmful practices such as child, forced and early marriages are not a private matter but crimes that need to be recognized as such in law and practice.
5. Girls who are married too early are too often deprived of their rights to health, education and safety. They are neither physically nor emotionally ready to become spouses and mothers. They face a much higher risk of experiencing complications during pregnancy and child birth and suffering domestic violence.
6. With little access to education and economic opportunities for girls who marry and have children too young, they and their families are more likely to live in poverty.
7. Strengthening and promoting social justice as an accelerator of elimination of SGBV.
8. There are best practices around the world including in EU countries that we can learn from and adapt to our settings

Tactics:

Changing beliefs and social norms about SGBV and harmful practices. Supporting campaigns



promoting social norm change in relation to the status of women and girls in society. Facilitating a shift from SGBV being considered as a private matter to becoming an issue of public concern (Also facilitating a shift from SGBV being seen as a woman’s problem to also being seen as a men’s problem as well as a problem of the society as a whole). Drawing attention to health and socio-economic implications of SGBV and harmful practices and the nature of inter-generational cycle of SGBV. Advocating for criminalization of all forms of GBV.

Amplifying Voices for Positive Change. Women-survivors, men, religious leaders, young people, and young women-influencers can play a key role as agents of change for ending sexual and gender based violence and harmful practices against women and girls. By harnessing and diversifying the voices of people and empowering them to bring about change with innovative solutions

Highlighting the roles different actors have in ending SGBV and harmful practices. Engage stakeholders from all relevant sectors, including media, influencers, sports, private sector etc. in speaking out against SGBV and harmful practices and contributing to the multi-sectoral response effort

- Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and harmful practices such as child marriage are a significant public health concern and human rights violation in Central Asia, with gender stereotypes, customs and practices at the heart of gender inequality and violence.
 - The levels of acceptance of violence by women from their husbands reportedly ranges, according to the recent MICS, from 14.2% in Kazakhstan (2015), to 32.8% in Kyrgyzstan (2018), and up to 35% in Turkmenistan (2016). The last MICS in Tajikistan (2005) showed that tolerance towards violence was at an extremely high at 74.4%, while the MICS in Afghanistan (2011) showed a tolerance rate of 91%.
 - Knowledge by men and boys, in particular among men policy makers, religious leaders, media, and young men would contribute to respecting and protecting women and girls’ rights.
 - Harmful practices such as child marriages and bride kidnapping remain a challenge to the well-being of women and girls in Central Asia.
 - Change driven at the levels of an individual, at community level and at society level to facilitate a challenge to existing norms and stereotypes.
 - Teenage pregnancies in Central Asia remain high, with adolescent birth rates for the Central Asian region ranging from 25 to 30 live births every 1,000 adolescent girls 15-19.
 - Cultural norms, stigma and taboo related to adolescent sexuality are factors limiting access to health and education information on contraception for youth and thus affecting adolescent pregnancies. In the context of restrictive social and cultural norms, early marriage and child bearing are often seen by families as protective, as they are often unaware of the increased risk this may bring to the young bride or mother.
- ***Enforcement, accountability and system strengthening.*** Responding to SGBV and harmful practices would accelerate achieving the SDGs and addressing it requires fostering a conducive environment (political action, strong legislative framework) as well as promoting a multi-sectoral coordinated response by a variety of institutions (social services, psychosocial support, law enforcement, justice institutions and healthcare). Providing communication for development support that zeroes discrepancy between de-facto and de-jure status of women. Collecting and analysing data can provide an evidence base for policy-making and programming.

Audience:

| Target Audience Segments and partners | | |
|---|---|--|
| Policy Makers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Government Line Ministries, National Women’s Machinery; | Partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survivors of SGBV; ● Religious and traditional Leaders; | Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survivors of SGBV and harmful practices; |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentarians; • Regional platforms and organizations. • Members of European Parliament and officials in Brussels • Embassy Representatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs, CSOs, Academia, • Private sector, • Celebrities and influencers; • Media organizations; • Other UN Agencies • Young women influencers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth and Youth leaders; • Parents and guardians; • Traditional leaders; • Men and women; • Girls and boys • Young women and men; • Religious institutions; • Academia |
|---|---|---|

Communication Activities:

General communication objectives: Position the Spotlight Initiative, its donors and partners at regional and global level in the public, political and media agenda, as a **reference programme to prevent and combat SGBV and harmful practices globally and in the region. Ensure that the EU receives the relevant visibility as a main actor in the eradication of SGBV globally and in Central Asia and Afghanistan.**

Key indicator(s)

- i. **Outcome indicator 1.1. Proportion of target countries with laws on SGBV that adequately respond to the rights of all women and girls are evidence-based and in-line with international human rights standards and treaty body's recommendations.**
- ii. **Outcome Indicator 2.1 Proportion of countries that have functioning national and/or sub-national coordination and oversight mechanisms at the highest levels for addressing SGBV that include representation from groups often marginalised**
- iii. **Outcome Indicator 3.1 Percentage of people who think it is justifiable for a man to (subject) beat his wife/intimate partner (to violence), by sex and age;**
- iv. **Outcome Indicator 3.3 Proportion of countries with at least 3 evidence-based, transformative/comprehensive prevention strategies/programmes that address the rights of those marginalised and are developed in a participatory manner**

Other relevant indicator(s)

- v. **Outcome Indicator 2.3 Proportion of countries where SGBV is integrated in 6 other sectors (health, social services, education, justice, security, culture) development plans that are evidence-based and in line with globally agreed standards**
- vi. **Outcome Indicator 5.2 Proportion of countries with publicly available data, reported on a regular basis, on various forms of SGBV at country-level**
- vii. **Outcome Indicator 5.3 Proportion of countries where national statistics related to SGBV incidence and prevalence are disaggregated by income, sex, age, ethnicity, disability, and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts**

| Activities | Indicators | Timeframe | Audience(s) | Partners |
|--|--|-----------|------------------|--|
| <p><i>Online and offline launch of the initiative, with visibility of the European Union and the UN. It will include a press release, social media strategy and dissemination documents with key messages (see below). This high impact and strategic event will be the opportunity to present the regional partnership of the Spotlight Initiative. The communication strategy for the event will take into consideration the need to cover the entire region and have a high impact on networks and media, in line with the activities below</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. of hits. - No. of shares. - No. of references in the media | Q1 2020 | All of the above | Government partners, EU, Media, including social media, UN Agencies, Youth leaders/Adolescent Girls influencers, Religious leaders, Celebrities, Private Sector. |



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| <p><i>Elaboration and implementation of a strategy for the dissemination of key events according to key actors, for which editorial products will be prepared.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal notes on key report releases / publications. - News of events. - Good practices news. - Planned activation during key dates related to SGBV - Networking initiatives - News from key people (champions of the Spotlight Initiative) | <p>2020-2021</p> | <p>All of the above.</p> | <p>EU, UNRCO, UN Agencies, Spotlight Secretariat</p> |
| <p><i>Communication, dissemination and branding: raising awareness of the Spotlight Regional Programme, its rationale and impact.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous flow of information on the initiative, including data from the region (challenges and statistics) and Messages highlighting relationship of SGBV with 2030 Agenda and the SDGs - Quarterly newsletters (featuring key people/champions, programme updates and data from the region) - Knowledge products produced - Messages of empowerment in order to challenge the misconceptions of the public informed by harmful stereotypes. - Human change stories - Multimedia content (photo/video) - The Spotlight initiative brand is promoted in line with the branding guidelines | <p>2020-2021</p> | <p>All of the above</p> | <p>EU, Media, including social medial, UN Agencies, Youth leaders/Adolescent Girls influencers, Religious leaders, Celebrities, Private Sector.</p> |

Resources

Human Resources

A full-time communications and reporting officer will be part of the Regional Project team. This person will coordinate and work closely with the communications personnel in the RC office and RUNO agencies as well as discuss from time to time with relevant EU personnel.

Financial resources

USD 47,900 in staffing (Communications Officer position) and USD 62,844 of communications activities have been included in the programme management budget. Furthermore, 15% of UN RCO's Communications Specialist time (equivalent to USD 8,094) has been committed to support the communications and visibility of this regional programme.