



FINAL REPORT

United Nations Development Programme
Kazakhstan
Spotlight Initiative Regional Programme for CA and Afghanistan
29 January 2024



Reporting Period	July 2020 – December 2023
Donor	EU
Country	Kazakhstan
Project Title	Spotlight Initiative regional programme for Central Asia and Afghanistan – “Alliances for Change – Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practice in Central Asia”
Project number	00123511
Strategic Plan and/or CPD Outcomes	Programme Spotlight Initiative In Central Asia_ Ending Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Practice in Central Asia ROAR Output 2.3
Implementing Partner(s)	UNDP
Project Start Date	July 2020
Project End Date	31 December 2023
Budget	\$1,400,351
Total resources required	
Revenue received	○ EU funding USD 1,400,351 ○ Total USD 1,400,351

	Total programme budget – \$5,255,798 (EU only), of which UNDP was implementing the budget of \$1,018,957 in Phase 1 (July 2020- January 2023); and \$381,394 in Phase 2 (February – December 2023). Funding was received through Multi-Partner Trust Fund starting from late November 2020 – \$359,905 (1st tranche, 2020); \$119,917 (2nd tranche, 2021); \$539,135 (3rd tranche, 2021); and \$381,394 (final tranche, 2023). <table><tr><th></th><th>RUNO</th><th>Phase I allocation</th><th>Phase II allocation</th><th></th></tr><tr><td></td><td>UNDP</td><td>1018.96</td><td>381.394</td><td>26%</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>UN WOMEN</td><td>2541.62</td><td>365.761</td><td>55%</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>UNFPA</td><td>688.01</td><td>313.559</td><td>19%</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>TOTAL</td><td>4248.6</td><td>1 060.7</td><td></td></tr></table>		RUNO	Phase I allocation	Phase II allocation			UNDP	1018.96	381.394	26%		UN WOMEN	2541.62	365.761	55%		UNFPA	688.01	313.559	19%		TOTAL	4248.6	1 060.7	
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Unfunded budget	USD																									
UNDP Project Manager	Name: Natalia Maqsimchuk Email: natalia.maqsimchuk@undp.org Tel.:																									



Table of Content

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

II. BACKGROUND 2

III. PROGRESS REVIEW 3

IV. PROJECT RISKS AND ISSUES 29

 A. UPDATED PROJECT RISKS AND ACTIONS..... 29

 B. UPDATED PROJECT ISSUES AND ACTIONS 30

V. GENDER RELATED ACTIVITIES..... 30

VI. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES..... 31

VII. LESSONS LEARNED 31

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD 32

IX. FINANCIAL STATUS 33

X. ANNEX 35

I. Executive summary

The executive summary is a concise brief on the progress towards the project outputs during the reporting period. The section also includes key implementation challenges, lessons learned and way forward. It is also suggested to include key financial information, such as expenditure for the reporting period, cumulative expenditure and a delivery rate against budget.
(Suggested length - 400 words maximum)

The Spotlight regional programme supports Central Asian countries to implement their gender equality commitments and related SDGs on inclusivity and sustainability, and to strengthen actions to end all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

One of successes of the Spotlight Initiative has been its inclusiveness and ability to engage a wide range of actors – states, local authorities, civil society organisations, expert community and academia, media, and international organisations, – around discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Recognising multifaceted nature of root causes of gender-based violence, the programme followed whole-of-society approach to tackling gender discrimination and gender-based violence with an emphasis on collective action, cross-border networking and leveraging the unique expertise of each stakeholder group. This included action on legislative reform and institutional transformation, changing social norms and promoting civil society activism to strengthen both state and non-state responses to sexual and gender-based violence.

In the countries of Central Asia, the regional Spotlight programme identified region-specific GBV challenges and threats and analysed legislative and policy gaps and weaknesses in institutions mandated to protect women from violence and provide services to survivors of violence. It proposed tools to civil society groups, including youth, to promote gender-equitable attitudes. The programme also worked with service providers to improve the planning, funding and availability of specialised services for survivors. It adapted training courses on data on violence against women to the local context and strengthened women's NGOs through grant programmes and the establishment of the Alliance of Civil Society Organisations of Central Asia.

The programme succeeded in fostering synergies and opportunities for collaboration among UNDP country offices in Central Asia, building on existing programme interventions with Central Asian governments and NGOs on gender equality and violence prevention through studies, tools and capacity-building activities for key government sectors (law enforcement, health, social protection), civil society organisations (advocacy, awareness-raising, and service providers), expert community and media. Close cooperation with other UN agencies, the EU, international NGOs, regional programmes and women's civil society organisations in the region ensured coordinated efforts for maximum impact.

II. Background

The background should be a short introductory of the project. The situation analysis and the objective sections of the Project Document can be referred to for this section. Also include an up-to-date overview

of changes in the context and situations and comment on how these changes affected the relevance of the project. (Suggested length - maximum half a page)

Spotlight Initiative is the world's largest dedicated effort to end all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. It is implemented as a global multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations. Spotlight Initiative is built on understanding that violence is the result of structural, deep-rooted discrimination, which the state and society has an obligation to respond to through legislative and institutional reforms, social norms transformation, and civil society activism.

As of 2023, the Spotlight Initiative 1.0 consisted of 25 national and 5 regional programmes around the world. The Spotlight Initiative is based on solid evidence about what works to address violence against women and girls - but it also marks a radical shift in international efforts. From disparate and small-scale projects, it brings together communities, civil society, governments, donors and experts around a common approach based on local needs. The cornerstone "leave no one behind" principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and human rights-based approach guides implementation of these programmes.

The Spotlight Initiative regional programme for Central Asia addressed challenges related to the pervasive influence of gender-based social norms and harmful practices, including polygamous marriages, early marriages and bride kidnapping; a general lack of understanding and expertise on gender issues within governments at all levels; capacity weaknesses and under-resourcing of law enforcement and service providers; and barriers to access services and justice for survivors of violence.

III. Progress Review

Fill in the table with project indicators data:

This narrative part of this section should focus on results backed by evidence of achievements. It should make forceful arguments regarding the transformational change achieved, using quantitative and qualitative indicators. It must include a review and assessment of the intended project outputs and output targets in accordance with the Annual Work Plan (AWP). This section should also indicate any progress and achievements against the outcomes, outputs and indicators linked to of the Country Programme Document (CPD), UNDP Strategic Plan and Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF). Gender aspects should be incorporated in this section as well.

If the project was evaluated, it should be indicated in this section. Indicate main conclusions and recommendations and how these recommendations were or will be followed up.

Where possible, include photographs to demonstrate the project implementation, beneficiaries, etc. Give an overall and clear sense of the 'before-and-after' of the project intervention.

The latest approved AWP can be attached as an Annex.

(Suggested length - maximum 5 pages)

Expected outputs	Output indicators	Data source	Baseline		Value for the previous year if different from baseline	Target for the reported year	Actual value for the reported year
			Value	Year			

Output 1.1 National and regional partners in Central Asia have strengthened evidence-based knowledge and capacities to assess gaps and draft new and/or strengthen existing legislations on ending VAWG, including DV/IPV, and/or gender equality and non-discrimination that respond to the rights of the most groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards and treaty bodies' recommendations.	1.1.1 Number of draft new and/or strengthened laws and/or policies on ending VAWG and/or gender equality and non-discrimination developed that respond to the rights of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and are in line with international HR standards, within the last year.	<i>Assumptions/data source: External information on policy and law amendments.</i> In Kazakhstan: 1) Act No. 67-VII dated 12 October 2021 amended the Labour Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, according to which labour legislation no longer provides for restrictions on the employment of women. Link 2) Presidential Decree No. 853 dated 1 April 2022 updated the Concept of Family and Gender Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2030 and made additions to the action plan for its implementation. Link 3) Amendments to certain articles of the Criminal Code - Articles 106 and 107 of the Criminal Code of 19 May 2023. These amendments relate to the infliction of serious and medium damage to health and introduce the qualifier "committed against a person who is economically or otherwise dependent on the perpetrator". This makes it possible to increase the	0	2020	5	13
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					to execute a court ruling, court decision or other judicial act and executive document) of the Code of Administrative Offences of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the term of administrative punishment in the form of imprisonment has been increased. Link 5) On 17 March 2023 the Plan of Further Measures in the Field of Human Rights and Rule of Law for 2024-2026 was approved. Link 6) The Action Plan on Human Rights and the Rule of Law, which includes measures to address GBV, was approved by Presidential Decree No. 409 of 8 December 2023. Link 7) The Human Rights Ombudsman in the Republic of Kazakhstan has submitted a proposal to the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan to introduce a separate article 125-1 "Abduction of a person for the purpose of marriage" into the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Link 8) Draft Law on Women's and Children's Safety has been				
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					passed to the Senate on 21 February 2024. Link In Kyrgyzstan: 1) National Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality until 2030 and the National Action Plan 2022-2024 were approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 513 of 16 September 2022. Link 2) Draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Amendments to Some Legislative Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic in the Field of Safeguarding and Protection against Domestic, Sexual and Gender Violence", proposing amendments to certain provisions of the Criminal Code, the Code of Offenses, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Law "On Safeguarding and Protection against Domestic Violence," the Family Code, the Housing Code, the Penitentiary Code, the Code on Non-Tax Income, the Law " On Probation," the Law "On Courts of Aksakals," the Law "On Internal Affairs Agencies," the Law "On Agencies and Institutions of				
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					the Penitentiary System," concerning the protection, ensuring the rights and legitimate interests of victims, especially victims of domestic, gender and sexual violence. Proposed amendments relate to the detention of perpetrators, alimony, and State-guaranteed free legal aid, among others. <i>Source: Spotlight Initiative programme in Kyrgyzstan</i> 3) Draft Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Amendments to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women." <i>Source: Spotlight Initiative programme in Kyrgyzstan</i> 4) The Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic (Criminal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, Criminal Procedure Code of the Kyrgyz Republic) introduces stricter liability and the creation of protection mechanisms against repeated attacks on victims of crimes against sexual inviolability:					
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					Criminal cases on serious crimes (including rape) in connection with reconciliation of the parties shall not be terminated. In this connection, amendments have been made to article 57 of the Criminal Code and to articles 24, 505 and 507 of the Criminal Procedure Code. The statute of limitations for offences of sexual inviolability, the use of probation supervision and bail are excluded (amendments to articles 58 and 82 of the Criminal Code and article 112 of the Criminal Procedure Code). Link In Tajikistan: 1) Law on Equality and Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (Law on Discrimination) came into force on 22 July 2022. Link 2) Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Tajikistan strengthening punishment for sexual offences against children and adolescents came into force in November 2023. In Uzbekistan:					
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		and children introduces administrative and criminal penalties for domestic violence and sexualised crimes and increases liability for crimes against the sexual inviolability and freedom of persons with disabilities and minors, as well as for the commission of such crimes by a person performing his or her duties. Administrative liability is introduced for sexual harassment. Link					
	1.1.6 Number of legislation assessments completed within the last year.	<i>Project data</i>	0	2020		5 national 1 regional	6

1. The regional study on the architecture of response to gender-based violence in the countries of Central Asia examined the **adequacy of the architecture of prevention and response to GBV in the countries of Central Asia** in relation to recognised international norms and standards. The study compiled a **regional snapshot of national systems of prevention and response to GBV**, including key actors, coordination arrangements, availability and accessibility of services to survivors of violence, barriers for reporting violence and data on violence. **Five country reports** (updated at the end of the programme) and the **regional summary** highlighted the gaps between existing practices and international standards for the provision of SGBV services, as set out in the Essential Service Package - an internationally recognised standard of normative guidance to support national systems in responding to SGBV - and other international instruments.
2. Over **100 national experts, gender and women's rights activists, crisis centres and leaders of women's civil society organisations** participated in **4 national discussions** on the country-specific findings of the study (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) and contributed their opinions and recommendations to validate the findings of the study. These national meetings were convened to ensure that **the interests of all groups** were covered by the study, including **women with disabilities and women living with HIV**. A final **regional meeting** brought together **over 60 participants from 5 countries** representing law enforcement and the justice sector, crisis centres, civil society organisations and the international development community. Based on the recommendations of the study, they pooled their knowledge and expertise to develop a set of priority actions to advance the EVAW agenda. The proposed actions represent a variety of new and follow-up programming areas for EVAW's work with Central Asian governments, civil society organisations, local communities and international organisations. Some of these are listed below. Progress is being made on many of the proposed actions:
 - ❖ [Criminalising domestic violence](#) (Note: *Important legislative developments took place in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan in late 2023 (see above on legislation).*)
 - ❖ Improving the availability and accessibility of specialised services for survivors of GBV through improved standards and funding (Note: *In 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Republic of Kazakhstan and UNDP commissioned a study on tariff policy in relation to social services. Spotlight complemented this study with the methodology of per capita funding of services provided to survivors of violence in crisis centres with shelters. More information can be found in the following sections of the report.*)
 - ❖ Addressing insecurity of inheritance and other rights of women and their children in polygamous and early marriages (Note: *In 2023, Spotlight marked International Human Rights Day with a series of social media and print publications on the myths and dangers of polygamy, including analysis of marriage and family laws in Central Asian countries, links to international human rights and gender equality standards, women's personal experiences and expert commentary.*)
 - ❖ Amending labour laws to include a definition of sexual harassment to address the issue of GBV in the workplace (Note: *Uzbekistan introduced administrative punishment for sexual harassment as part of criminalisation of violence against women process. Parliamentarians in Kazakhstan also work to include amendments in the legislation relating to the definition of sexual harassment and respective criminal or administrative sanctions for the perpetrators. Ministry of Information and Public Consensus of the Republic of Kazakhstan has developed an [internal policy on protection against harassment](#).)*)
 - ❖ Introducing performance indicators for police officers.

- ❖ Correctional programmes for the perpetrators of domestic violence (Note: In response to the growing demand for the development of correctional programmes for perpetrators, Spotlight facilitated the exchange of information between the police and local NGOs and the European Network for Work with Perpetrators. More information is provided in the following sections of the report).
- ❖ Establishing a regional repository of resources on EAW for Central Asian countries. (Note: Spotlight launched a [Virtual Knowledge Platform](#) called [End GBV in Central Asia](#) to facilitate regional knowledge sharing and promote evidence-based decision-making. This platform provides information in multiple languages and plays a key role in supporting capacity-building initiatives. It is maintained by the Central Asia Alliance, ensuring its long-term usefulness and impact.) Through engagement and networking, dozens of CSOs strengthened their advocacy and agency to engage in informed dialogue with key stakeholders on prevention and response to GBV. This resulted in follow-up work on **costing services** for survivors of sexual and domestic violence, strengthening the **capacity of the police** to work with survivors of violence in **coordination with other service providers**, and the **criminalisation of domestic violence**.



Photo: Participants of the regional discussion of the architecture of response to gender-based violence in the countries of Central Asia (Almaty, September 2022)

Expected outputs	Output indicators	Data source	Baseline		Value for the previous year if different from baseline	Target for the reported year	Actual value for the reported year
			Value	Year			
Output 2.1 Key officials at national and/or sub-national levels in all relevant institutions of Central Asia are better able to develop and deliver evidence-based programmes that prevent and respond to VAWG, including DV/IPV, especially for those groups of women and girls facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, including in other sectors.	Indicator 2.1.6 Number of key government officials and other sector representatives trained on human rights and gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours towards women and girls, including for those groups facing intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, within the last year	Data source/assumptions: project data on the number of participants of trainings	0	2020		70	70

1. **Three regional products** focused on police, health and social sectors participation in the Multi-Sectoral Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (MSR to SGBV) are made available in the Russian language for countries of Central Asia (in partnership with UNFPA):
 - i. Situation analysis on SGBV and institutional environment for MSR to SGBV implementation in the region.
 - ii. Regional SOP models for SGBV case referral and case management for police, health, and social sectors;
 - iii. Sectoral training packages for professionals in the police health, and social sectors on provision of coordinated sectoral and one stop shop services for SGBV survivors.
2. **The 60 representatives from five Central Asian countries received knowledge on SGBV and institutional environment for MSR to SGBV implementation in the region, including the best practices applicable for CA countries on MSR to SGBV, use of regional SOPs model, training package on coordinated provision of services to survivors by police, health, and psychosocial sectors at the 2-day regional workshop in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The workshop was followed up by a 3-day training organized on coordinated provision of services to survivors of violence conducted for 35 representatives of police, health and social sectors, state and non-governmental specialized organisations providing services to survivors of violence.**



Photo: Participants of the regional workshop and training “Coordination – Quality – Effectiveness: Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender-Based Violence in Central Asia” (May 2022)

3. **25 representatives of police service from Central Asian countries exchanged experience and practice of response to SGBV** and are better equipped to develop and deliver response measures and participated in each of the following activities, **through a series of 4 practice sharing meetings and 6-day study visit to Kazakhstan** (10 participants). This work has resulted, among other, in engaging 2 experts from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of RK in the development of a training curricula for Kyrgyz police.



Photo: top right – Spotlight facilitates networking between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan police academies; left - Head of the Karaganda Academy of the Ministry of Interior of RK and students welcoming the Kyrgyz delegation; right - Head of the Aktobe Law Institute of the Ministry of Interior of RK showing the training field to the delegation from Kyrgyzstan (September 2021).



4. **Police and justice officials interacted with expert community and NGOs** through an informal **Community of Practice** to discuss the gaps in prosecution of domestic violence, the use of protection orders and other available administrative instruments, correctional programmes for perpetrators, professional training (10 facilitated regional convenings in total during 2022-2023):

- a. An informal **core group of 10-15 law enforcement representatives from all CA countries** (Informal Community of Practice, COP) was formed through a series of regional online and offline meetings to become the **owners and institutional memory** of the capacity building component of the Spotlight Regional Programme for Central Asia. This core group participated in all regional meetings on strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks for implementing the EAW agenda. For instance, in Kazakhstan, the training materials for police on cases of sexual and domestic violence were updated based on regional SOP on case referral and case management by the Spotlight regional programme.
- b. The **Community of Practice** hosted **three annual regional events** (Almaty, Tashkent and Astana) as part of the 16 Days campaigns in 2021-2023, including on the role of women in the police, police protection of the rights of women survivors of sexual and domestic violence, and criminalisation of domestic violence. All these issues were **central to the EAW agenda** in the Central Asian countries, so the events served as powerful **advocacy and catalyst for action** to transform the prevention and response to SGBV, and to bring justice and protection to women and girls suffering from violence.



Photo credit: UNDP Kazakhstan

Photo: Participants of the regional dialogue “Promises and Limitations of Criminalisation Efforts in Domestic Violence” (Astana, October 2023)



Photo: Participants of the regional round table “Law Enforcement Agencies to Protect the Rights of Women Subjected to Gender-Based Violence: Experience of the Countries of Central Asia” (Tashkent, November 2022)

The programme, lists of participants, presentations, materials and interviews with experts in social media and mass media can be found here on Trello boards:

<https://trello.com/invite/b/QtRQ2Q7E/ATTI3ac6c0c944ab60ecce64b384ee250f9677C3D378/криминализация-бытового-насилия-астана-октябрь-2023-г>

<https://trello.com/invite/b/M7da99Z5/ATTI844c4179d197499baf22bf2e3d2858c9E1074753/правоохранительные-органы-на-защите-прав-женщин-ташкент-ноябрь-2022>

<https://trello.com/invite/b/B9r5s9Sg/ATTIe8d9fcd9bf271258501bc1a51b782e3cb63CA256A/роль-женщин-полицейских-в-борьбе-с-насилием-виртуальный-диалог-декабрь-2021>

<https://www.zakon.kz/sobytiia/6410771-70-zhenshchin-v-mire-soobshchayut-o-domogatelstvakh-na-rabote-eshche-22-terpyat-molcha.html>



Photos: Staff of Administrative Police on protection of women against violence (MIA RK) participating the regional dialogue on criminalisation of domestic violence and training on domestic violence case management and referral (Astana, October 2023)

- d. These trainings on coordinated response to survivors of violence, victim-centered approach, effective use of referral system and early prevention of domestic violence were also taken to the local level to the police departments in Semei, Abai, Saran, Karaganda and Temirtau (Kazakhstan), in order to extend the outreach to local police and women, family and demographic policy committees with the help of experts and non-government organisations – the winners of the 2023 Spotlight regional programme grant contest. More information on grants can be found in the following sections of the report. *Photo: Spotlight expert Sagadat Sabitova delivering training in Semei on service provision to survivors of violence (November 2023)*



<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C18duMhCQFE/?igsh=OHZ0cnp5aXFoeHY=> (Public Fund 'Kaisar')

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/yujz78nKjop28ePW/?mibextid=qi2Omg> ("Family Center" Public Fund)

- e. The community of practice has contributed to the joint advocacy by the Government, UN Agencies, international organisations and NGOs to tighten sanctions on perpetrators of domestic violence and administrative measures for strengthening the preventive side of EAW work (see section on legislation above), to incorporate gender-sensitisation, human-rights based approach and trauma-oriented approach in professional training for law enforcement agencies and justice institutions (see Spotlight [Kyrgyzstan](#) and Spotlight [Tajikistan](#) reports).

5. In “**Knowledge created by NGOs for NGOs” 2021 Spotlight grant competition** 9 NGOs from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have strengthened their capabilities and agency to work on eliminating violence against women and girls. They documented and shared their experience of working with survivors of violence with peer NGOs. **Each grantee reached out to 5-10 other NGOs** with training and knowledge sharing events. Participants of the competition created local **networks, telegram-chats and safe spaces for women** (usually at schools) for sharing essential information on SGBV, access to legal, medical and other support services, development of skills for sustaining livelihood. Some grantees reported that participation in this activity helped them to identify areas for improvement through re-thinking and re-living their work experience. [Link](#)

6. **The 2023 Spotlight Grant Competition “NGOs building capacity of law enforcement and justice to respond to SGBV”** supported non-governmental organisations working with law enforcement and justice to improve the prevention of VAWG and women's and girls' access to essential, specialised, safe and responsive multisectoral services. **5 grants** were awarded to NGOs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. With the help of NGOs and locally driven solutions, Spotlight and its partners contributed to strengthening capacity and cooperation of police, prosecutors, judges and lawyers in preventing and responding to all forms of gender-based violence; implemented gender awareness training and dialogue with representatives of law enforcement and judiciary; and contributed to the development of a network of experts on the elimination of violence against women within the country and across the Central Asian region. In Kazakhstan, the focus was on **gender discrimination in the workplace** and building the capacity of local **lawyers** to handle such cases. In partnership with the Almaty and Astana Bar Associations, nearly **300 lawyers** engaged in a **marathon of three online trainings on discriminatory practices in the workplace and the protection of women from harassment and sexism**, as part of mandatory continuing legal education. **108 lawyers** received certificates of completion. In addition, a pool of **30 practising lawyers** was established to act as expert interlocutors on cases of violence, sexual harassment and discrimination against women. During project implementation, this network provided legal advice on **5 cases of discrimination and sexual violence against women and girls**. As part of advocacy the project reached out to the students of legal schools and representatives of private sector with the theme of discrimination and harassment. Ministry of Energy of RK requested a training session on conflict of interests and harassment in the workplace. All this work has contributed to the developments on human rights and the rule of law in Kazakhstan, specifically to inclusion of harassment in the workplace in the Plan for further measures on human rights and the rule of law for 2024-2026. Also in Kazakhstan, over **400 representatives of police departments in Abai, Saran, Shakhtinsk, Temirtau, Karaganda and Aktobe** received trainings on "Trauma-sensitive approach to working with victims of violence and human trafficking". The **training manual** developed for this activity is now **registered in the electronic libraries** of Karaganda Academy of the Ministry of Interior of RK and in Aktobe Law Institute of the Ministry of Interior of RK and is available for use by law enforcement training institutions. Tajikistan explored ways to **involve religious, local government and community leaders** in capacity building on gender approaches, awareness of signs of violence, respect for the rights of survivors of violence and existing referral mechanisms. Uzbekistan, with the support of experts from Kazakhstan, studied the experience of the Turkistan Oblast in Kazakhstan in **working with perpetrators of violence**. In Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, grantees sought to establish **mobile response groups** of trained representatives from the police, local authorities/communities, crisis centres and other service providers to assist women who have been subjected to violence. Kyrgyzstan worked to improve police practices in handling cases of sexual and domestic violence by training inspectors, investigators and other law enforcement personnel on standard algorithms and operational procedures. It is noteworthy that the grantees make use of and rely on the existing networks, expertise and knowledge products generated by the Spotlight regional programme, thus contributing to the sustainability of the results of the programme.

Expected outputs	Output indicators	Data source	Baseline		Value for the previous year if different from baseline	Target for the reported year	Actual value for the reported year
			Value	Year			
Output 5.2 Quality prevalence and/or incidence data on VAWG is analysed and made publicly available for the monitoring and reporting of the SDG target 5.2 indicators to inform evidence-based decision making	Indicator 5.2.1 of Number of knowledge products developed and disseminated to the relevant stakeholders to inform evidence-based decision making, within the past 12 months	Project data	0	2020		5	5

1. The **Spotlight Digital Challenge “IT vs Violence”** became a regional example of a powerful driver for change which addressed a problem of GBV through education, collaborative thinking and use of digital technologies. [Link](#)
- a. **200 online participants** learnt about gender-based discrimination and violence and online violence during **an initial intensive educational programme** delivered by the **leading ERAW experts and practitioners**. [Link](#).
 - b. of **800 registrations**, **73 mixed teams** from 5 Central Asian countries were admitted to the Spotlight Digital Challenge. In 48 hours, participants developed and presented **58 ideas** of solutions in three categories - prevention; collection and visualization of data on violence; and assistance to survivors of violence. [Link](#)
 - c. 14 teams received nominations and prizes of the Spotlight Digital Challenge. Gender composition of 14 winning teams - **33 girls and 22 boys**; 4 all-girls teams won in the nominations "Original idea" and "Best presentation"; among the winners are 7 teams from Kazakhstan, 1 team from Uzbekistan and 2 teams from Kyrgyzstan. [Link](#)
 - d. The eight teams met again for a pitching session in Almaty in November 2022 to share progress and discuss challenges in the development of their winning solutions. They were provided a remarkable opportunity to connect with specialists in the development and promotion of IT products and representatives of programs for incubation and acceleration of socially-oriented IT startups about learning, partnerships and financing programmes.
 - e. **7 out of 9 winners are continuing working on their idea**. “Made to Top” team from Uzbekistan is cooperating with the Association of Journalists of Uzbekistan. “God is a Woman” team from Kazakhstan participated in the Digital Knowledge Week – 2022 in Astana in IT Solutions Expo. “Kyzdar+1”, the all-girl winning team from Kyrgyzstan, became a nominee of youth film festival with a documentary on engaged fathers.





The Spotlight Digital Challenge increased young people's understanding of gender inequality and discrimination and highlighted the importance of individual and collective action. It has become a vibrant community of like-minded young people across Central Asia who are changing social norms through personal and professional interactions, volunteering in community projects and applying the Spotlight principles to their academic and work pursuits. Inspired by the Spotlight Digital Challenge, UNDP in Uzbekistan set out to build the capacity of local youth organisations to organise hackathons to inspire creativity and engage young people in developing solutions that contribute to a more equitable society. The Spotlight Digital Challenge was included in the UNDP Digital Solutions Catalogue. It also provided a working model for UNDP Kazakhstan's Accelerator Lab, which was implemented in many locations across Kazakhstan during Knowledge Week 2022.

2. In response to the findings of the regional study on the architecture of the response to GBV in Central Asian countries, and as a follow-up to the recommendations on the availability and accessibility of specialised services for survivors of violence, the Spotlight regional programme produced an overview of the financing of services for survivors of SGBV in Kazakhstan, including the scope and standardisation of services. The overview was supplemented with proposals to improve the allocation of available resources through the introduction of per capita funding for crisis centres. This knowledge product, consisting of an overview, methodology and formula, was presented to the regional online meeting of representatives of state and non-state crisis centres, international organisations and the expert community. The methodology was offered to the Applied Economy Research Centre - a local think tank commissioned by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and UNDP Kazakhstan to conduct a study on tariff policy in relation to social services. The knowledge product was also shared with the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic and

UNDP Uzbekistan. The proposed methodology complements initiatives on gender-responsive budgeting of government policies and programmes in Central Asian countries.

3. Three regional products focused on police, health and social sectors participation in the Multi-Sectoral Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (MSR to SGBV) are made available in the Russian language for countries of Central Asia (in partnership with UNFPA):

- a. Situation analysis on SGBV and institutional environment for MSR to SGBV implementation in the region.
- b. Regional SOP models for SGBV case referral and case management for police, health, and social sectors;
- c. Sectoral training packages for professionals in the police health, and social sectors on provision of coordinated sectoral and one stop shop services for SGBV survivors.

4. Regional Spotlight programme produced an analytical tool to monitor progress in SGBV legislation and SGBV response system in the countries of Central Asia. The proposed matrix shows the extent to which the national legislation of the Central Asian countries on the elimination of sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices is in line with the international standards enshrined in CEDAW and its General Recommendations, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international instruments. The assessment criteria are compliance, partial compliance and non-compliance. Areas of assessment include the existence of legal definitions of domestic violence, sexual violence, criminalisation of domestic violence, existence of minimum age of consent in legislation, prohibition of early marriage, bride kidnapping, polygamy, existence of standards for the provision of services to victims of violence, etc. The matrix is accompanied by an explanation of the methodology and a narrative for each of the assessment areas. The narrative describes the state of play in each Central Asian country. The matrix is currently limited to a few areas of assessment but can be expanded according to the needs of countries and users of the tool. The tool can be used to monitor progress in countries in the region and to share experiences between countries in developing and improving legislation to protect women and girls from violence. The matrix shows the directions of action needed to strengthen legislation to end SGBV and harmful practices and to achieve SDGs 5, 10, 11 and 16 in Central Asian countries.

5. Many knowledge products were also produced by NGOs. As mentioned above, the Public Fund "Kaisar" (Kazakhstan) registered its training manual on trauma-informed approach to work with survivors of violence and trafficking (in Russian and Kazakh) in the electronic libraries of the Karaganda Academy and the Aktobe Law Institute of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Public Fund "Women Lawyers for Development" (Tajikistan) developed a training module on "Provision of Coordinated Services by Police and Justice Authorities for Survivors of Sexualised and Gender-Based Violence" based on the Spotlight product mentioned above. Crisis Centre "Chance" from Kyrgyzstan developed a set of model documents for opening a crisis centre in Kyrgyzstan. Another Kyrgyz NGO, Ak Jurok, developed a knowledge product on setting up virtual platforms and providing services to survivors of violence online.

IV. Project Risks and Issues

This section identifies and analyses project risks and issues that:

1) had an impact on project deliverables¹ (quality, schedule, etc.) during the reporting period, or
2) were newly identified during the reporting period and are being addressed by the project (in the case of risks, “addressed” means to mitigate their effects or decrease the likelihood of impact, and in the case of issues, how to resolve them).

For details of project risk management, please refer the [POPP](#) and [UNDP Handbook](#) on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (page 48).

(Suggested length – half a page to 1 page)

a. Updated project risks and actions

- 1) Project risks related to the ability of the participating agencies to deliver according to the implementation plan in Phase I.

The programme had to reach a 70% implementation threshold at the end of Phase I to qualify for continuation in Phase II. Despite having the largest share of the budget and the lead role in most of the programme pillars, UN Women hired its Spotlight Manager at least 6 months later than UNDP and UNFPA. For example, UNDP's work in Pillar 1 was dependent on the results of UN Women's review of legislation on SGBV in Central Asian countries. In addition, in 2020, the regional programme, as well as participating countries and the rest of the world, faced the problems caused by COVID-19. To mitigate the risks of delays in the implementation of activities and under-delivery, UNDP revised the workplan, implemented acceleration measures and launched additional activities, taking advantage of massive cost savings resulting from the COVID-19 travel ban. Coherence in programme implementation was addressed through regular meetings with UNFPA and UN Women and joint planning between RUNOs.

- 2) Risks to the project related to insufficiency of co-ordination and reporting mechanisms.

The beginning of the project suffered from a lack of clarity and trust between the participating agencies and the RC office about the division of labour. There was some controversy about who does what within the Spotlight Initiative – coordination/coherence/visibility and donor reporting functions, particularly in the absence of a programme coordinator. In addition, the monitoring

¹ A deliverable is defined as the result of an activity or in other terms the product which contributes to the achievement of project outputs).

framework was not well defined to provide clear data on project progress. At one point, the EU delegation in Kazakhstan was even reluctant to support the funding of Phase II of the programme. Corrective actions included revision of the results framework, personal presentation of Phase I results by the project team, additional coordination meetings with the donor. The programme received Phase II funding, and the Spotlight Regional Steering Committee meeting in 2023 demonstrated that the communication and reporting challenges had been resolved.

b. Updated project issues and actions

Project Issue 1: Operational support

The project design placed two project assistants under the RC office management, with the idea that their time would be shared between RC, UNDP and UNFPA. Such an arrangement was not supported by a clear allocation of the time of these project assistants. In addition, in order to provide access to UNDP or UNFPA corporate services (Atlas, then Quantum), a person must have contract either with UNDP or UNFPA. This arrangement has therefore not worked as intended. Due to the 18% cap on project management costs, the agencies were unable to hire additional full-time support staff. UNDP came up with a solution to use PIU support by sharing an assistant with other UNDP projects. As a result, the UNDP part of Spotlight suffered from a lack of consistent and continuous administrative support. This affected the quality of planning and the delivery of outputs.

Project Issue 2: Fundraising

Fundraising was not part of the project work plan or sustainability strategy, nor was it backed up by human resources in the Spotlight regional programme for Central Asia. It is clear that momentum can be lost, commitment and priorities can shift, and data generated by Spotlight can become outdated as new proposals are developed and submitted to donors.

V. Gender Related Activities

This section should capture project's results on gender equality and/or gender mainstreaming, or major activities that, under sound assumptions, will contribute to improvement in women's life.

Spotlight Initiative is built on understanding that violence is the result of structural, deep-rooted discrimination which the state and society has an obligation to address through legislative and institutional reforms, social norms transformation and civil society activism.

The Programme achieved results across all its key pillars. The programme continued to contributing to the elimination of gender-based violence through: (i) comprehensive analyses, identification of gaps and recommendations on aligning SGBV legislation with international norms and standards; (ii) strengthening capacity of government agencies to provide services to the victims and survivors of SGBV; (iii) awareness-raising campaigns and advocacy initiatives aimed at changing the attitudes and behaviours of communities and individuals towards gender-based violence, (iv) creation of informal alliances and networks, supporting knowledge-sharing, public awareness and advocacy campaigns; (v) generating new research-based knowledge and missing

data into the nature and extent of gender-based violence in the region; and (vi) supporting regional women's movement.

VI. Cross-Cutting Themes

If relevant, this section should capture project's results on incorporating different cross-cutting themes, such as Rights-based Approach to Programming, Environmental Sensitivity and Sustainability, Crisis Response, South-South and Triangular Cooperation etc.

Spotlight Initiative has been selected as one of 12 High-Impact Initiatives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit in 2023. In just a few years, this partnership has provided a model, demonstrating that it is possible not only to end violence against women and girls, but to accelerate across the SDGs, from ending poverty, to increased health and education, and more inclusive institutions.

VII. Lessons Learned

This section should capture the lessons learned to ensure on-going learning, knowledge sharing and communication within the organisation and with the partners/donors. It should include analysis on the following contents:

- 1) Key project successes and factors which supported these successes;
- 2) Difficulties encountered and measures taken to overcome these difficulties;
- 3) Analysis on what could have been done differently / better to attain the project results;
- 4) Recommendations to improve future programming.

(Suggested length – half a page to 1 page)

- 1) The Spotlight Initiative is a transformative effort because it defined VAWG as both a women's rights issue and an issue that affects all people in all areas of life, including public health, education and the rule of law. This made the work of the Initiative a systemic effort, increasing the impact of each intervention. It addresses the root causes of violence against women and girls and the intersecting issues of sexism and asymmetrical power relations. The Spotlight Initiative should be maintained as an umbrella for the work of UN agencies on ERAW.
- 2) The Spotlight Initiative brought together the comparative advantages of UN system and enabled agencies to work together. It drew on UN Women's expertise in ending violence against women and girls, UNFPA's work on sexual and reproductive health and rights and data collection methodologies, and UNDP's expertise in SDG coordination and institution building, among others:
 - The Spotlight Initiative took the best of what's available in the UN System (expertise, capacities, networks, instruments) and put it together showing that multiple agencies can come together to act on a specific issue.
 - Emphasis on the power of collective action, cross-border networking and unique expertise of each stakeholder group to contribute towards increased quality of state and non-state response to sexual and gender-based violence.
 - Comprehensive approach – legislative and institutional reforms, social norms transformation and civil society activism.
- 3) The regional programme could have been better designed in terms of country, partner and stakeholder engagement mechanisms, addressing region-specific priorities and cooperation

with UN agency country offices. The duration of the Central Asia programme was not commensurate with the ambitious goals set for the programme. Spotlight Initiative regional programmes generally did not have a well-defined set of indicators to measure and report on progress. The 18% threshold for programme management costs, implementation and coordination arrangements and understaffing put excessive pressure on project managers.

- 4) The project of such a scale requires robust formal coordination mechanisms within and across participating UN Agencies and country offices and commitment from senior management to allocate time and resources to implementation of programme activities.
- 5) Implementation as “One UN” calls for innovative and flexible approaches, more effective use of programme and procurement instruments. To benefit from the One UN approach, it is necessary to identify areas where existing operations policies and procedures do not meet current needs and emerging challenges. These gaps can be opportunities to propose innovative solutions that meet the agency's objectives while remaining compliant.

VIII. Conclusions and Way Forward

This section should summarize the achievements, challenges and lessons learned as well as explain the way forward, including relevance of the project and necessary revisions that will be made to the project and plans of the upcoming reporting period. Any funding gaps, resource requirements as well as further partner engagement plans can be specified in this section. This should include any modifications that need to be made to indicators, baselines, targets as well data collection and monitoring to track progress.

If this is a Final Report and if applicable, also mention on sustainability of the project and/or plans on future projects that may supplement / scale up the achievements of this project.

(Suggested length – half a page to 1 page)

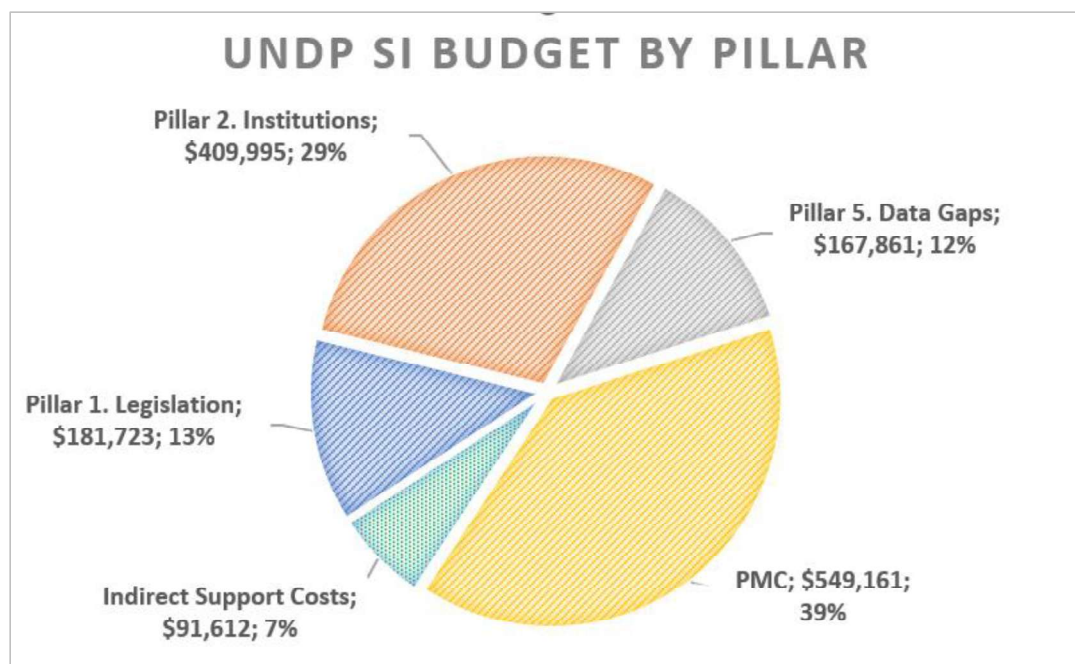
- 1) As the Spotlight Initiative has set in motion an unprecedented number of people, processes and organisations, it is important to continue investing in the elimination of gender-based discrimination and violence by addressing root causes of power imbalances between men and women, improving service delivery to survivors of violence and investing in human development, training and capacity building of service providers. This work should be done within the broader context of equitable development and zero tolerance of violence and gender-based discrimination.
 - Future initiatives should encourage and facilitate collaboration between state institutions and NGOs whenever possible to address service gaps and improve support systems for survivors of GBV.
 - Future initiatives should prioritise strategies to bridge geographic gaps to reach populations in rural or remote areas.
 - Future initiatives should emphasise the importance of data in programme planning and evaluation, as regular data collection and analysis are essential for identifying gaps, assessing intervention impact, and informing evidence-based policies.
 - Future initiatives must invest in defining a set of indicators for assessing the effectiveness of interventions.

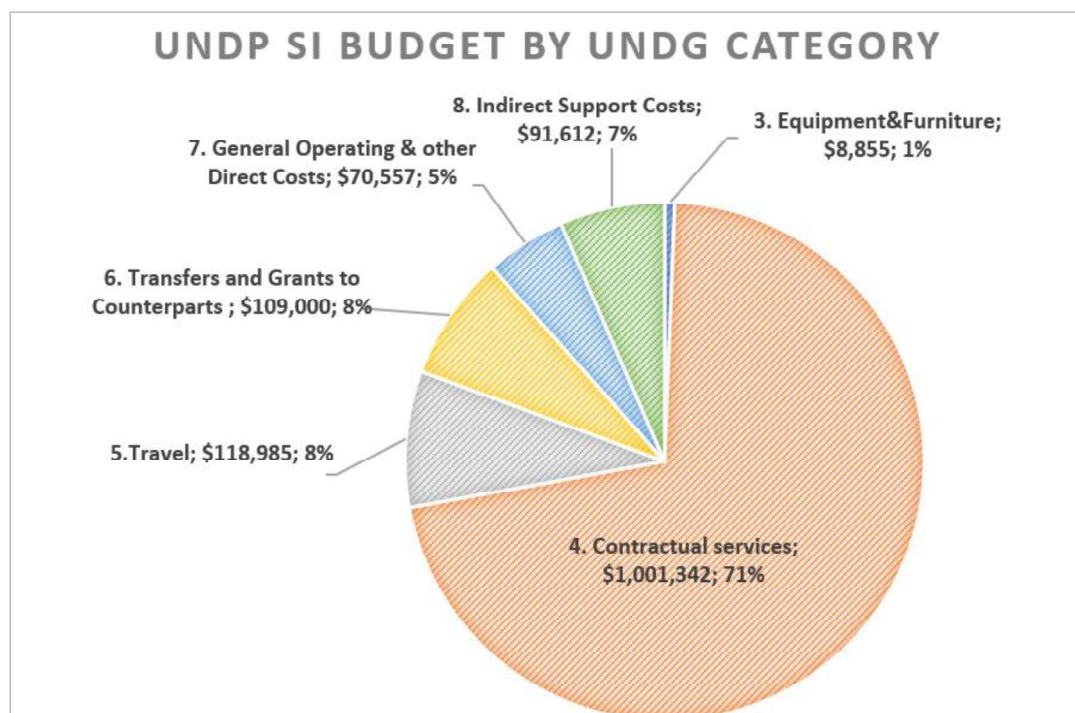
- 2) Whenever possible future initiatives should draw on the comparative advantages of the UN System, enabling entities to work together, including dedicated, strategic, and forward-looking fundraising.
- 3) It is important to have an effective knowledge management system in place to preserve and use the institutional memory and intellectual resources generated by the Spotlight Initiative. This will help to leverage existing frameworks, networks and expertise on ending violence against women and girls, rather than having to build such systems and knowledge from scratch in the future. Spotlight is an excellent source of data and ideas for new programming and resource mobilisation.

Financial Status

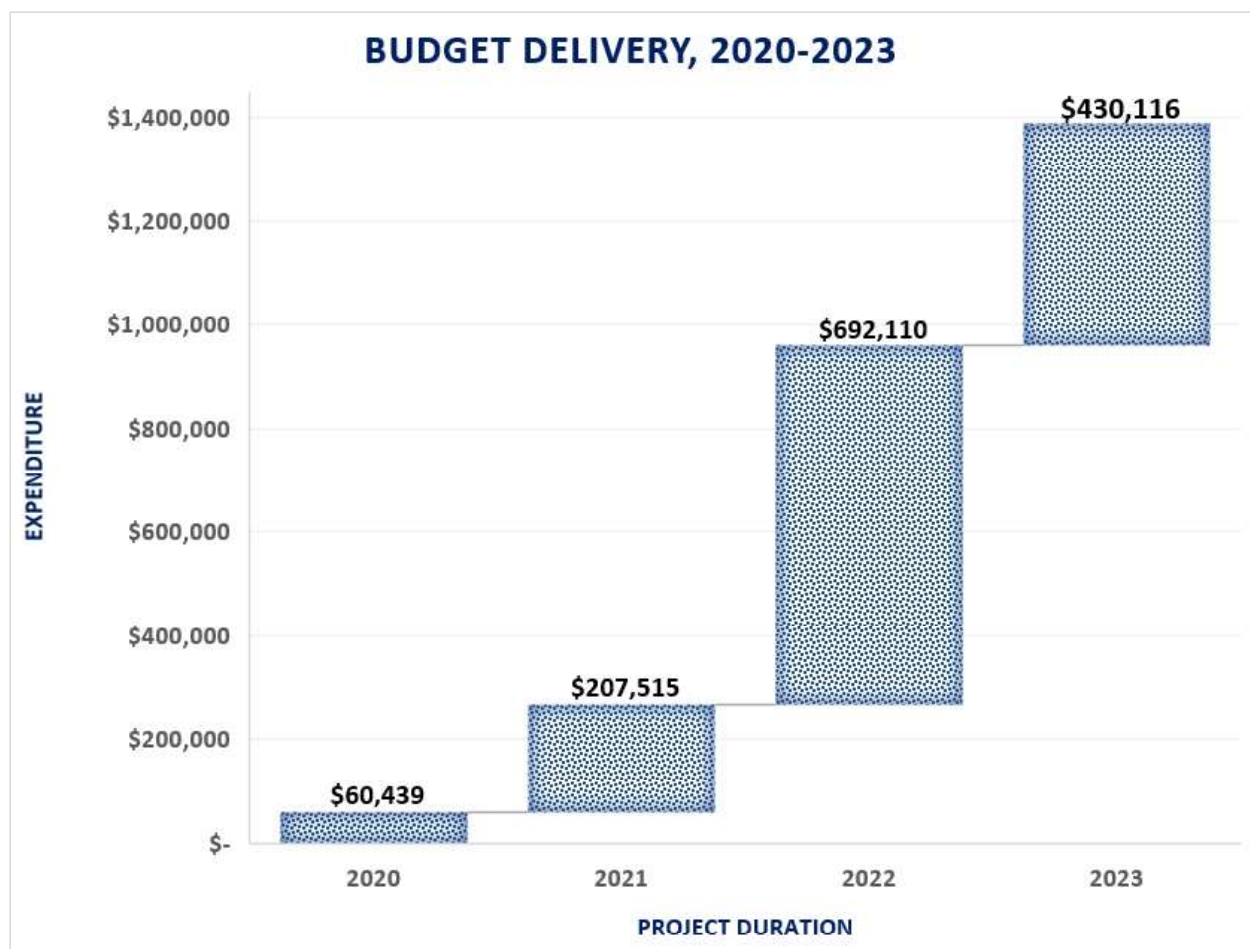
This section should provide overview of the project financial resources utilization for the entire project implementation period. The financial information should be based on Combined Delivery Reports.

Total programme budget – \$5,255,798 (EU only), of which UNDP was implementing the budget of \$1,018,957 in Phase 1 (July 2020- January 2023); and \$381,394 in Phase 2 (February – December 2023). Funding was received through Multi-Partner Trust Fund starting from late November 2020 – \$359,905 (1st tranche, 2020); \$119,917 (2nd tranche, 2021); \$539,135 (3rd tranche, 2021); and \$381,394 (final tranche, 2023).





The graphs above show that the main effort was concentrated on institutions (29% of the total budget). Contractual services were the predominant modality for implementing project activities (71% of total budget).



Budget execution, based on the Combined Delivery Reports for 2020-2023, reached a victorious delivery rate of 99%, with the prospect of reaching 100% when the 2023 payments get finalised.

IX. Annex

Insert the latest approved Annual Work Plan (AWP), relevant copies of media coverage, publications, etc. Specific reporting requirements from donors can also be inserted here.

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Prepared by Natalia Maqsimchuk Project Officer

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