

EU-UN Spotlight Initiative: at the forefront of ending violence against women and girls

Today in the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the European Union and the United Nations are hosting a high level event on the [EU-UN Spotlight Initiative](#) – inviting all countries, leaders, civil society representatives and local ambassadors to join the movement and take action to end violence against women and girls.

Ahead of the event, High Representative/Vice-President Federica **Mogherini** said: *“Violence against women is violence against the entire society – so the entire society must react to end it. The European Union is already by far the first investor in gender equality around the world, and together with our partners, we will continue to fight for women’s human rights.”*

Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven **Mimica** added: *“Over the last two years Spotlight has become a genuine movement. Thanks to the many survivors, activists, advocates, government and community leaders who have joined the initiative we are pushing ahead to end gender-based violence in all its forms. And to make sure that every woman and every girl, everywhere, is safe and free to realise her full potential.”*

Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed said: *“The Spotlight Initiative in partnership with national governments will also be introducing new country programmes for Afghanistan, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu in 2020. With our expanded global footprint, we can scale-up our collective efforts on violence prevention, protection and the provision of high-quality services, alongside broader efforts to ensure women’s economic empowerment and participation in all aspects of society.”*

Two years after its launch, the Spotlight Initiative’s activities are spanning the entire globe – thanks to the EU’s and UN’s engagement, and the support of partner governments and civil society at all levels. 13 countries have already started implementing Spotlight programmes, and around 2/3 of the European Union’s initial seed funding of €500 million have already been allocated.

In **Africa**, Spotlight aims to eliminate sexual and gender-based violence, including harmful practices. The programme worth €250 million is under implementation across Liberia, Malawi, Mali Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe. It will also include a regional component to scale up existing initiatives on fighting female genital mutilation and child marriage and joint activities with the Africa Union.

In **Asia**, the Spotlight Initiative is focussing on ending female trafficking and labour exploitation. The “Safe and Fair” programme, worth €25 million and

implemented through the International Labour Organization and UN Women, aims at ensuring that labour migration is safe and fair for all women in the ASEAN region. It focusses on countries of origin – Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Vietnam – and countries of destination – Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

Further, €32 million are devoted to projects addressing gender-based violence in “forgotten crises”. The initiative is now rolling out and includes activities in Yemen, Iraq and Palestine, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Sudan, Mali and Chad; Ghana, Liberia and Mali.

In **Latin America**, the €50 million initiative focuses on ending femicide, with targeted programmes in Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico, and on empowering regional networks.

The **Pacific** regional Spotlight programme was launched last March with a budget of €50 million and focuses on ending domestic violence in the region.

This will be followed by actions to tackle family violence in the **Caribbean region**, supported by an envelope of €50 million; the countries selected are Haiti, Jamaica, Grenada, Belize, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Background

Violence against women and girls still takes place every day, whether at home, at work, at school, in the street, or online. As many as 1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in their lives.

The European Union and the United Nations launched the Spotlight Initiative, a multi-year partnership to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in September 2017.

The EU has offered initial seed funding of €500 million inviting other donors and partners to join the Initiative to broaden its reach and scope.

Public participation, ambitious political action that are built on evidence-based policies, as well as increased resources and knowledge generation are all vital to the Initiative.

For More Information

[EU-UN Spotlight Initiative](#)

[Questions and Answers: EU-UN Spotlight Initiative to eliminate violence against women and girls](#)

[Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign And Security Policy](#)

[New European Consensus on Development – ‘Our world, our dignity, our future’](#)

[EU Gender Action Plan II \(2016 -2020\)](#)