

LATIN AMERICA 2021 Regional Programme Results

| Total Budget Phase I (or Phase I + II Where Approved) | EU Contribution | UN Agency Contributions | Duration |
|---|-----------------|---|-------------|
| USD 6,030,510 | USD 5,000,000 |  USD 1,030,510 | 2019 - 2022 |

Recipient UN organizations: UN Women, UNDP, and UNFPA

Other partners: From the United Nations System: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and World Health Organization (WHO); Regional, Inter-Governmental and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs); Academia; and Private Sector.

Context

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Latin America at a time of political, economic, and social fragility, with countless countries facing low economic growth, rising levels of poverty and inequalities, and the instability of their democracies. In 2021, mobility restrictions continued and generated greater risks of violence against women and girls (VAWG), including femicide/femicide (FF), by intensifying their isolation, and creating additional barriers in accessing essential justice, education, health, and social protection services. The risk was exacerbated in contexts of high exclusion and vulnerability, especially affecting women and, among them, those who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and oppression, such as indigenous women, Afro-descendants, refugees, migrants, those who live in areas with the presence of organized crime, human rights defenders, and land defenders, etc. Civil society has been exhausted after two years of work in highly challenging conditions, and, at the government level, the pandemic has captured a large part of their attention, efforts, and prioritization, noting a weakening in the work in other areas of state responsibility, such as the prevention and response to VAWG+FF.

Spotlight Initiative's Response

The Regional Programme, working in close collaboration with the European Union Delegation, continued to analyze the role of the pandemic as a constitutive element of emerging situations in the region, as well as the most relevant data on the context and its impact on women and girls. Despite this challenging context, the Regional Programme continued to generate knowledge and innovation on ending VAWG+FF. The Regional Programme identified a great need to improve the participation of government authorities in a broader conversation for a holistic and coordinated approach to ending VAWG+FF, including with the different United Nations Agencies participating in the Spotlight Initiative. In addition, the Regional Programme recognizes the collection and exchange of knowledge between existing national and regional initiatives as an effective strategy to strengthen ties and improve joint results. In the spirit of UN Reform, the implementing partners also took stock of successful experiences of inter-institutional coordination in strategic alliances, which allowed joint efforts to prosper, processes to be optimized and partners to pool resources and thus achieve more strategic results.

Key Results

- ✓ **Transforming the reality of women in Latin America by strengthening regulatory frameworks (Pillar 1: Policies and Legislation):** The Spotlight Initiative and the Mechanism to Follow Up on the Implementation of the Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (MESECVI) have joined forces to promote the Inter-American Model Law to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate the Violent Death of Women for Reasons of Gender and the Latin American Model Protocol for the Investigation of Violent Deaths of Women for Gender Reasons. Both are key tools to develop awareness and political will to improve the response to VAWG+FF in the region, framed in the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against women, Belém do Pará Convention. As a result of this partnership, a series of studies and strategies to end VAWG+FF and promote progress in the adoption, adaptation, and implementation of the Model Law on Femicide, were developed. These resources seek to provide tools to the States Parties to the Belém do Pará Convention to contribute to strengthening the capacities of legislators, representatives of national mechanisms for women, the justice sector,

and CSOs in the region, as well as deepening the knowledge and harmonization of national legislation and policies with the principle of enhanced due diligence and the Convention of Belém do Pará.

- ✓ **Organizational diagnostic tool on VAW promotes five action plans to address VAW in private companies (Pillar 3: Prevention):** Ten companies in the region (Cementos Argos in Colombia, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic, Ege Haina, Grupo Mutual, AVON in Costa Rica, Garnier & Garnier Desarrollos Inmobiliarios, Garnier Arquitectos and Property Pro) participated in the pilot programme “Violence against women in the private sector” and five of these companies developed an action plan to address VAW within their environment. The tool identifies existing organizational practices in terms of prevention, care and punishment of violence, prevalence of cases of GBV and VAW through a multi-thematic survey addressed to the staff and technical group of each company. These data, automatically processed by the platform, are reflected in the following components: (a) Organizational Violence Index, which identifies the degree of commitment and effectiveness of the organization in terms of prevention and attention to cases of GBV and VAW, and the Indicators of Violence Against Women in the Workplace, which identify whether or not the company has an explicit commitment to zero tolerance of violence; and (b) a policy and management framework, which assesses whether the staff knows the organizational response mechanisms in situations of violence and whether they trust their correct actions. Upon receiving the organizational diagnosis on GBV with interpretations of the indicators and recommendations, five companies translated the results into an Action Plan for the Management of Organizational Violence that is tailored to their needs and capacities.
- ✓ **New guidance and an artificial intelligence tool are improving the analysis of cases of homicide of women in Latin America by using a gender perspective (Pillar 5: Data):** An artificial intelligence tool was designed for justice operators to support the analysis of female homicides using a gender perspective; and to improve the response of the justice system in the identification and subsequent treatment of femicide cases in the region. This tool was developed collaboratively with the National Council of Justice (CNJ) of Brazil. By broadening the understanding of the phenomenon of femicide, the use of this tool brings the classification of gender crimes closer to the reality of violence and, consequently, responses to the phenomenon of femicide may be more effective. This methodology, used in combination with the police policy of approaching the community, contributes to an improvement in citizen security.

One Story of Impact: In Latin America, shelter networks are a lifeline for women experiencing violence.

Only 1 in 10 women survivors of violence seek help from the police, globally. Of those that seek help, many withdraw from the justice process due to poor responses from police or other judicial actors. Women's access to justice starts with believing survivors and taking immediate and continued action. Applying the principles of leaving no one behind, the Latin America Regional Programme helped develop a guide for shelters and safe houses to address the specific needs of women survivors in the region, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In Argentina, the Spotlight Initiative also provided equipment to the hotline service to meet the increasing call volume and technical assistance to better analyze the data coming in. Diana Salas is among 199 women survivors housed at the shelter affiliated with the Inter-American Shelter Network (RIRE), supported by UN Women through the Spotlight Initiative in Latin America. The shelter has also provided psychosocial support and legal assistance to more than 1,057 women since 2017.

In their own words...

“I encourage women to seek help. At first, you think you won't be able to leave because you have children or you don't have enough to eat, but that's not true. You can do it!” - Diana Salas*, survivor of GBV

Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

As part of the Regional Programme's work on the use of innovative tools and technology to end VAWG, the partnership with IPSOS enabled a big data analysis to develop a study on online reactions and exchanges on the topic of VAWG before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. An interactive dashboard was designed and launched to show the results. The results and analysis will be used for future activities in 2022, possibly in partnership with the respective national programmes and country offices.