



## Annex VI

### **Summary of 2020 results of the Fund for Gender Equality and the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women**

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) manages pooled-funding grant-making mechanisms to identify and support high-impact initiatives implemented by civil society organizations, especially women’s rights organizations through the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) and the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) which is managed by UN-Women on behalf of the UN system. The FGE contributes to achieving Outcome 2, “Women lead, participate in, and benefit equally from governance systems” and Outcome 3, “Women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy”, of UN-Women’s Strategic Plan 2018-2021, and the UN Trust Fund contributes to the achievement of Outcome 4, “All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence”. This annex summarizes results achieved by both funds in 2020.

#### **The Fund for Gender Equality**

##### *About the Fund*

The UN Women Fund for Gender Equality (FGE or Fund) is a unique global grant-making model that transforms financing from diverse donors into high-impact initiatives to accelerate women’s economic and political empowerment. Since its creation in 2009, the Fund has strengthened the capacities of 143 grantee partner organizations and delivered USD 65 million in grants directly to 121 projects in 80 countries, improving the lives of 570,000 people and benefitting millions more through policy and legislation enactment.

In 2020, the Fund has ended its journey and as it wraps up operations it is committed to be an important knowledge source in the women’s movement and international development spheres as a unique grant-making model committed to the principles of accessibility, trust and women’s ownership. This past year, the Fund concluded its final projects and embarked on a journey to document important knowledge products for UN-Women and the development community.

##### *COVID-19 and Women-Led Civil Society Organizations*

One of the knowledge products that the Fund initiated was to document the COVID-19 context and its impact on civil society actors. One of the key findings is that women-led civil society organizations (WCOS) have emerged as paramount social and political actors, able and willing to respond to the needs of women left furthest behind, and filling gaps where other public and private actors do not reach.

Vulnerable populations were left even more exposed, particularly women in construction, agri-food businesses, and textile and garment industries as well as domestic and migrant workers, and the support from civil society actors was critical. Grantee organizations reported that COVID-19 lockdowns and movement restrictions increased labour and domestic abuse and gender-based violence. The Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) in the Pacific region witnessed a 20 per cent increase in domestic violence reports on their Help Line and social media account. Atikha in the Philippines observed that migrant domestic workers around the world have been deprived of days off and/or been overexposed to the virus. In Lebanon,



an assessment found that more than two in three women said their income had decreased since the COVID-19 outbreak. In some countries, such as Italy, Filipino domestic workers faced with “no work no pay” depended on food donations to survive. The crisis has also exposed the vulnerability of families back home, who are highly dependent on remittances.

Despite their work and support to communities, the global pandemic has also challenged the survival of resource-stretched grassroots and WCSOs and many devised creative strategies to continue their work and support their staff. Trainings and awareness sessions went online and to social media spaces as an alternative to in-person workshops. WCSOs also prioritized efforts to closely monitor the evolving challenges and needs of women and girls on the ground, gathering data and testimonies. In the State of Palestine, the mobile app developed by the Mothers’ School Society (MSS) to document workplace violations among women workers in low-paying jobs expanded. It now monitors and reports violence and injustices that female workers experience amid the COVID-19 crisis, such as a lack of salary payments. Organizations developed guidance for remote work and self-care to address increased work hours in a challenging environment.

### *South-South and Triangular Cooperation Initiative*

The Fund also concluded its South-South and Triangular Cooperation initiative and documented its key results, fostering an empowered approach to learning and exchange across grantees. The initiative connected grantees with comparable profiles and complementary strengths, and facilitated exchanges around good practices in defining promising strategies and policies through a series of field learning trips. Women-led organizations from Algeria, Armenia, Lebanon, Paraguay, the State of Palestine and the United Republic of Tanzania took part in five different exchanges to share expertise around topics such as promoting rural entrepreneurship, economic inclusion, protection of the rights of the most vulnerable groups, and social protection.

Green Lane Agricultural Assistance (Green Lane) from Armenia was paired with the Lebanon Family Planning Association for Development and Family Empowerment (LFPAD) where both grantees gathered in Yerevan to discuss various ways of strengthening rural women’s agri-business marketing skills, food safety techniques and quality production standards. The cross exchange and close cooperation yielded enhancements to each grantees’ work, for example both sides learned from each others’ techniques and adopted some of them and increased marketability for their specific products. In Lebanon, municipalities donated space for food processing. After seeing the mayors visiting the food-processing facilities, the Armenian farmers decided to lobby their own municipalities for more political and financial support. As a result of enhanced lobbying efforts and closer cooperation with government officials, Green Lane secured facilities donated by local governments and women’s groups gained visible and positive recognition of their work in the community. “We saw that the [local] mayors visited the facilities, because it was actually the municipality that donated the space of production to the women,” explained Nune Sarukhanyan, President of Green Lane. “Our beneficiaries thought to themselves: we don’t have this type of support! We need to lobby with our municipalities and partner with them more closely for more economic and political support.”

### *2021 Grantmaking Lessons*

The final report in 2021 will distill the main learnings from the Fund’s journey into 10 principles for feminist funders and development actors working towards gender equality and justice. These principles are the result of the Fund’s process of sophistication and refinement throughout its decade of work and will present lessons on grant-making in the women’s rights space and redefining donor-grantee relationships for more effective and long-lasting change. .



## **The UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women**

### *About the UN Trust Fund*

The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund) is the only global, multilateral, inter-agency grant-giving mechanism specialized in funding and building the capacities of civil society and women's rights organizations to prevent violence against women and girls (VAW/G); improve access to adequate essential, specialist, multisectoral services for survivors and support effective implementation of laws and policies. Established by UN General Assembly Resolution 50/166 in 1996 and managed by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on behalf of the UN System, the UN Trust Fund contributes to the realization of the Agenda 2030, specifically Sustainable Development Goal 5 (targets 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) and UN-Women's strategic priority on ending the pervasive human rights violation of violence against women and girls.

### *Overview*

In 2020, the UN Trust Fund managed a grants portfolio of 150 projects aimed at preventing and addressing violence against women and girls in 71 countries and territories, across five regions, with grants totalling USD 72.8 million. Grant recipients are primarily civil society organizations; the majority (58 per cent) are women's rights organizations.

In 2020, 144,722 women and girls were directly served by UN Trust Fund grantees. The projects provided life-saving services and empowered women and girls directly, including changing lives of a minimum 26,519 survivors of violence, 21,040 women and girls with disabilities and 11,747 refugee and internally displaced women and girls. In total, the UN Trust Fund grantees reached 31,071,058 direct and indirect beneficiaries in 2020, aiming to create safe and thriving environment for women and girls.

### *Examples from the field of key results in 2020*

The global COVID-19 pandemic and the measures undertaken to curb its spread generated adverse consequences for women and girls worldwide. In response to these challenges, the UN Trust Fund promptly implemented a [5-point action plan](#) to assist grantees in adapting their interventions to respond to the increased rates of violence against women and girls, filling the vacuum of services available to survivors. In parallel, the UN Trust Fund documented civil society and women's rights organizations challenges and rapid response strategies to the crisis into two knowledge briefs to inform partners' policy, programming and funding decisions.

In partnership with the European Union and the United Nations Spotlight Initiative (EU/UN Spotlight Initiative), the UN Trust Fund was able to allocate an additional USD 9 million to 44 UN Trust Fund grantees in sub-Saharan Africa for their institutional strengthening and organizational resilience building through the crisis. As a result, 3,321 staff and partners of grantees reported improved knowledge on integrating COVID-19 responses and interventions to end violence against women.

In response to the impact of COVID-19, grantees provided direct and immediate support to women and girls in a variety of forms.

Grantees reached 72,629 rights holders/beneficiaries with food, hygiene supplies, sanitation and/or other emergency need parcels aiming to reach those most at risk of being left behind. Specifically in Liberia, United Funding and Development for Underage Mothers, which works through advocacy campaigns to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, supported 1,230 women and girls, including women with disabilities and women survivors and their families, to access food and other items to cope and respond to



challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The project also activated 10 women's groups, which provide referrals in cases of violence, and 200 women in the groups have raised awareness and sensitized community residents on sexual and gender-based violence. Twelve project communities developed community by-laws to prevent and protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence.

Grantee civil society and women's rights organizations adapted and responded to the surge in demand for services, incorporating COVID-19 preventative measures. For example, in Chad, the Public Interest Law Centre created a temporary shelter, beyond its permanent counselling centres, to provide additional support for women in need. Civil society organizations also reached out to service providers to support government responses for survivors. In Solomon Islands, the Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team provided phone credits for courts enabling them to return calls from survivors of violence and obtain the information needed to issue and review protection orders.

Many projects turned to virtual and radio modalities to reach women and girls with violence prevention programming and information on where and how to report violence and seek support. UN Trust Fund support assisted 59 organizations in developing and publishing integrated response messages to COVID-19 and violence against women and girls. In Honduras, the Centro de Derechos de Mujeres reached an estimated 1 million people through their radio programmes focused on preventing violence against women and girls and establishing safe spaces for women and girls in local indigenous communities.

Additionally, through the work and support of 57 UN Trust Fund grantees, 6,311 community and faith group leaders advocated publicly for changes in behaviours, practices and attitudes towards ending violence against women and harmful practices. In India, a final evaluation showed that the incidence of child marriage fell by 50 per cent by 2020 in the Jeevika operation area (24 districts) during a project implemented by UN Trust Fund grantee, the Sahayog Society for Participatory Rural Development. Physical violence within the household fell from 71.1 per cent to 46.5 per cent by the end of the project.

### *Lessons learned*

A key lesson emerging from the COVID-19 crisis is the importance of flexible and core funding for civil society and women's rights organizations to ensure swift programmatic adaptations and organizational resilience in times of crisis, in recognition of their essential role as first responders to women and girls. Working closely with grantees to support their immediate and long-term crisis response and planning, the UN Trust Fund has adapted its grant management procedures to be responsive to the working realities of civil society and women's rights organizations in rapidly evolving contexts.

As part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to economic shocks experienced by at-risk women and girls, including survivors of violence, several organizations implemented cash-based interventions to meet beneficiaries' needs. The UN Trust Fund assisted grantees with operational adjustments including through webinars on project modifications for organizations, a learning session and guidance note for the operationalization of cash-based interventions. Lessons learned through the UN-Women evaluation of cash-based interventions will inform the internal UN Trust Fund CBI Guidance Note in 2021.

The UN Trust Fund also swiftly adjusted its guidance and requirements for monitoring and evaluation to ensure safe and adequate execution of these activities. Evaluation and monitoring activities that required in person field visits were paused and grantees were provided advice on how to pivot to remote methodologies. Data collection challenges were mitigated by the UN Trust Fund through the provision of guidance on remote data collection and discussions around options for adaptations of programmatic indicators, where needed. Online learning sessions offered grantee organizations an opportunity to directly exchange experiences, challenges and opportunities.

In response to the needs voiced by civil society and women's rights organizations for funds to be flexibly released to address unforeseen developments, the UN Trust Fund introduced a new contingency funds budget line into the 24th Call for Proposals launched in September 2020 to resource civil society and



women's rights organizations in their work to respond to COVID-19 related increases in violence against women. The UN Trust Fund received request for funding from 1,498 organizations, for the total amount of over USD 758 Million.

The UN Trust Fund continued to build a global evidence hub on ending violence against women and girls, grounded in evaluated grantee results, to create a platform for collecting and disseminating practice-based knowledge and lessons learned from the work of grantees. To that end, an External Meta-Analysis of findings from 30 external evaluations of projects supported by the UN Trust Fund published in 2020 concluded that “almost half the projects in the sample reported some impact and observed reductions in violence against women and girls”<sup>1</sup> and that all projects showed some evidence of progress towards the precursors to ending violence against women and girls, such as improving the awareness of women and girls about their rights and their agency to exercise their rights to live a life free of violence. In addition, the study found that “data from UN Trust Fund projects constitute a valuable resource both for those interested in advancing knowledge in the field of ending violence against women and girls and for practitioners to learn from other hands-on experiences”.<sup>2</sup>

### *The UN Trust Fund's Strategic Plan 2021-2025*

At the centre of the UN Trust Fund's new Strategic Plan 2021-2025 is a strong emphasis on the human right of all women and girls to live a life free of violence. The goal is pursued through global solidarity and partnerships that enable civil society organizations, and especially women's rights organizations, to deliver survivor-centred and demand-driven initiatives in a manner that contributes to the growth of feminist movements globally.

With women and girls firmly at the centre of its work, the UN Trust Fund's new Strategic Plan takes forward priorities based on feedback and inputs from the extensive consultations. These highlighted the need to increase the proportion of flexible funding in grants and to create opportunities for grants of longer duration. They also underscored the importance of creating opportunities to pilot and test innovative approaches to ending violence against women and girls and of increasing the resources available to support the work of civil society and women's rights organizations, including by building their capacity.

The new Strategic Plan will also continue to focus on broadening and deepening work on building and enriching knowledge by capturing and sharing practitioner-based knowledge, high-quality evaluations and lessons learned and good practices.

In the next five-year period, the UN Trust Fund will continue to ensure that women and girls benefit from supported initiatives through improved access to essential specialist, safe and adequate multisectoral services, including access to justice; transformed social norms, a key factor in preventing violence; and more effective legislation, policies and national action plans that are shaped by the participation and voices of women and girls in decision-making processes.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://untf.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/10/what-can-we-learn-from-evaluations-of-projects-funded-by-the-un-trust-fund>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid